

University of Basrah

College of Arts

Dept. of Arabic Language

Ph.D. and M.A Arabic Students

Lecture 2

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scholar.google.com/citations?hl=en&user=D0Pe1cUAAAAJ

Simple Present Tense–How It’s Used, With Examples

The simple present is a **verb tense** with two main uses. We use the simple present tense when an action is happening right now, or when it happens regularly (or unceasingly, which is why it’s sometimes called present indefinite). Depending on the person, the simple present tense is formed by using the root form or by adding -s or -es to the end.

I feel great!

John loves books..

I’m sorry to hear that you’re sick.

Here’s a tip: Want to make sure your writing always looks great? Grammarly can save you from misspellings, grammatical and punctuation mistakes, and other writing issues on all your favorite websites.

The other is to talk about habitual actions or occurrences.

Muna practices the piano every day.

Ms. Jackson travels during the summer.

Hamsters run all night.

Typically, when we want to describe a temporary action that is currently in progress, we use the **present continuous**: Pauline can't come to the phone right now because she **is brushing** her teeth.

How to form the simple present

In the simple present, most regular verbs use the root form, except in the third-person singular (which ends in **-s**).

First-person singular: *I write*

Second-person singular: *You write*

Third-person singular: *He/she/it writes* (note the **-s**)

First-person plural: *We write*

Second-person plural: *You write*

Third-person plural: *They write*

For a few verbs, the third-person singular ends with **-es** instead of **-s**. Typically, these are verbs whose root form ends in **o, ch, sh, th, ss, gh, or z**.

First-person singular: *I go*

Second-person singular: *You go*

Third-person singular: *He/she/it goes* (note the **-es**)

First-person plural: *We go*

Second-person plural: *You go*

Third-person plural: *They go*

For most regular verbs, you put the negation of the verb before the verb, e.g. “She won’t go” or “I don’t smell anything.”

The verb **to be** is irregular:

First-person singular: *I am*

Second-person singular: *You are*

Third-person singular: *He/she/it is*

First-person plural: *We are*

Second-person plural: *You are*

Third-person plural: *They are*

How to make the simple present negative

The formula for making a simple present **verb** negative is **do/does + not + [root form of verb]**. You can also use the contraction **don’t** or **doesn’t** instead of **do not** or **does not**.

Pauline does not want to share the pie.

She doesn’t think there is enough to go around.

Her friends do not agree.

I don't want pie anyway.

To make the **verb to be** negative, the formula is **[to be] + not**.

I am not a pie lover, but Pauline sure is.

You aren't ready for such delicious pie.

How to ask a question

The formula for asking a question in the simple present is **do/does + [subject] + [root form of verb]**.

Do you know how to bake a pie?

How much does Pauline love pie?

The Verb *to Be* in the Simple Present

Infinitive	I	You, We, They	He, She, It
to be	am / am not	are / are not	is / is not

Present continuous

Learn about the present continuous and do the exercises to practise using it.

Level: beginner

The present continuous is made from the **present tense of the verb *be*** and the ***ing form*** of a verb:

<i>I am</i>	<i>working</i>
<i>You are</i>	<i>playing</i>
<i>He is</i>	<i>talking</i>
<i>She is</i>	<i>living</i>
<i>It is</i>	<i>eating</i>
<i>We are</i>	<i>staying</i>
<i>They are</i>	<i>sleeping</i>

We use the present continuous to talk about:

- **activities at the moment of speaking:**

*I'm just **leaving** work. I'll be home in an hour.
Please be quiet. The children **are sleeping**.*

Present continuous 1

Present continuous 2

- **future plans or arrangements:**

*Mary **is going** to a new school **next term**.
What **are you doing** **next week**?*

Present continuous 3

Present continuous 4

Present continuous questions

We make questions by putting **am, is** or **are** in front of the **subject**:

***Are you** listening?
Are they coming to your party?
When **is she** going home?
What **am I** doing here?*

Present continuous negatives

We make negatives by putting **not** (or **n't**) after **am, is** or **are**:

*I'm **not** doing that.
You **aren't** listening. (or You're **not** listening.)
They **aren't** coming to the party. (or They're **not** coming to the party.)
She **isn't** going home until Monday. (or She's **not** going home until Monday.)*

Stative verbs

We do not normally use the continuous **with stative verbs**. Stative verbs include:

- verbs of **thinking and feeling**:

<i>believe</i> <i>dislike</i> <i>know</i> <i>like</i>	<i>love</i> <i>hate</i> <i>prefer</i> <i>realise</i>	<i>recognize</i> <i>remember</i> <i>suppose</i> <i>think (= believe)</i>	<i>understand</i> <i>want</i> <i>wish</i>
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- verbs of the senses:

<i>appear</i> <i>feel</i>	<i>look</i> <i>seem</i>	<i>smell</i> <i>sound</i>	<i>taste</i>
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- others:

<i>agree</i> <i>be</i>	<i>belong</i> <i>disagree</i>	<i>need</i> <i>owe</i>	<i>own</i> <i>possess</i>
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We normally use the simple instead:

I understand you. (NOT *I am understanding you.*)

This cake tastes wonderful. (NOT *This cake is tasting wonderful.*)

Level: intermediate

We also use the present continuous to talk about:

- something which is happening **before and after a specific time:**

*At eight o'clock we **are** usually **having** breakfast.*

*When I get home the children **are doing** their homework.*

- something which **we think is temporary**:

*Michael is at university. He's **studying** history.
I'm **working** in London for the next two weeks.*

- something which is **new** and **contrasts** with a previous state:

*These days most people **are using** email instead of writing letters.
What sort of clothes **are** teenagers **wearing** nowadays?
What sort of music **are** they **listening** to?*

- something which is changing, growing or developing:

*The children **are growing up** quickly.
The climate **is changing** rapidly.
Your English **is improving**.*

- something which happens **again and again**:

*It's **always raining** in London.
They **are always arguing**.
George is great. He's **always laughing**.*

Note that we normally use *always* with this use.

Level: advanced

We can use the present continuous to talk about the **past** when we are:

- **telling a story**:

*The other day I'm just **walking** down the street when suddenly this man comes up to me and asks me to lend him some money. Well, he's **carrying** a big stick and he looks a bit dangerous, so I'm **wondering** what to do ...*

- **summarising** a book, film or play:

*Harry Potter is a pupil at Hogwarts school. One day when he **is playing** Quidditch he sees a strange object in the sky. He wonders what **is happening** ...*

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Of all the English verb tenses, the present perfect is one of the most complicated because there's not always a direct translation in other languages. So in this guide, we explain everything you need to know to use it *perfectly*, including how and when to use it, with plenty of present perfect tense examples.

What is present perfect tense?

The present perfect tense is one of the common [verb tenses](#) in English, used to show an action that happened in the past that is directly related to the present, such as actions that are still continuing or that indicate a change over time. We cover a complete list of when to use the present perfect tense below.

Don't let the name confuse you—even though the word *present* is there, the present perfect tense deals with actions that happened or started in the past. In fact, the present perfect tense is often used interchangeably with the [simple past](#) tense, although there are some special situations in which you can only use one or the other, also explained below.

How do you use the present perfect tense?

In the present perfect tense, the main [verbs](#) always use the auxiliary verbs (helper verbs) *has* or *have*. The main verb takes a participle form, specifically the **past participle**. The past participle is often the same form as the simple past form of the

verb, unless it's an [irregular verb](#), which each have their own unique past participle form. We explain in more detail how to form them in our [guide to participles](#).

Only the auxiliary verbs are conjugated to fit the [subject-verb agreement](#) in the present perfect tense; the past participle of the main verb remains the same no matter what the subject is. Generally, you use *have* for all subjects **except** the singular third-person, which instead uses *has*.

First-person: *I have come a long way.*

Second person: *You have come a long way.*

Third-person plural: *They have come a long way.*

Third-person singular: *He/she/it has come a long way.*

The present perfect tense has specific constructions for standard statements, negatives, and questions, explained below. We also discuss how to use the present perfect tense with adverbs and with the passive voice.

The present perfect tense for statements

For general statements, the most common use of the present perfect, use *have* or *has* plus the past participle form of the main verb.

[*have/has*] + [past participle]

Charlotte has become friends with Wilbur.

We've broken up before, but this time feels different.

The present perfect tense for negatives

To use the present perfect tense in the negative, simply add the negative word (like *not* or *never*) **after** the auxiliary verb but **before** the past participle.

[*have/has*] + [negative] + [past participle]

*I **have not slept** well since exams started.*

*My Midwestern friend **has never seen** the ocean.*

This construction works for *neither, nor* sentences, too.

*It's 11 in the morning, and she **has neither eaten breakfast nor gotten** dressed.*

Please note that it's clearest to **avoid contractions when using the present perfect tense with the negative**, at least in American English.

I've not seen the Eiffel Tower.

I have not seen the Eiffel Tower.

The present perfect tense for questions

When asking a question in the present perfect tense, the auxiliary verb comes first, followed by the subject, and then the past participle of the main verb. This follows a similar construction as questions with the auxiliary verb *do*, which also comes before the subject.

[*have/has*] + [subject] + [past participle]

***Have you eaten** dinner yet?*

Has the party started?

How to use the present perfect tense with adverbs

Although you can still use adverbs after the verb (as you do normally), with the present perfect tense you can also place the adverb between the auxiliary verb and the past participle.

[*have/has*] + [adverb] + [past participle]

*They **have gradually advanced** their career from cashier to senior manager.*

*All the guests **have already arrived**.*

Be careful, though. Certain adverbs—especially *yet* and *just*—have special rules for where they're placed. Moreover, because these adverbs relate to time, they're often used together with the present perfect tense.

The adverb *yet*, used often with a negative or in questions, almost always comes at the end of a sentence or clause.

*Sadly, he **hasn't finished** the race **yet**.*

***Have you finished** your homework **yet**?*

Conversely, the adverb *just* is always placed between the auxiliary verb and the past participle.

*I've **just woken up**.*

*Their plane **has just landed**.*

How to use the present perfect tense in the passive voice

When discussing writing, we often talk about the [active vs. passive voice](#).

Although we recommend using the active voice as much as possible, sometimes the [passive voice](#) is unavoidable.

To use the present perfect tense in the passive voice, use *been* (the past participle of the verb *be*) before the past participle of the main verb.

[*have/has*] + [*been*] + [past participle]

*She **has been given** an award.*

*You **have just been handed** a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.*

How to use the present perfect continuous tense

You can also combine the present perfect tense with the [present continuous](#) tense to show an ongoing action that started in the past and continues to the present. This hybrid tense is called the [present perfect continuous tense](#). The construction is similar to using the present perfect tense in the passive voice, except that the main verb uses the **present participle** instead of the past participle.

[*have/has*] + [*been*] + [present participle]

*She **has been seeing** a physical therapist since her surgery.*

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Like all continuous tenses, the present perfect continuous tense can **not** be used with stative verbs like *want*, *need*, *love*, or *hate*.

6 examples of when to use the present perfect tense

Knowing when to use the present perfect tense is an important part of English grammar, but it can be confusing even for native English speakers. Below, we explain the six main uses of the present perfect tense, including examples.

1 An ongoing action that started in the past, but has not yet been completed

This is the main usage of the present perfect tense, which demonstrates the relationship between an action started in the past and its effects on the present.

*The professor **has taught** here for two decades.*

*They **have played** piano since the age of three.*

Note that you can also use the present perfect continuous tense for this situation, as long as the action has not been completed yet (and it's not a stative verb). The difference between the present perfect tense and the present perfect continuous tense, in this case, is emphasis:

- The present perfect tense emphasizes the **effects or consequences** of the action.
- The present perfect continuous tense emphasizes the **action itself or the length of time**.

So, for example, if you want to plainly say where you live, use the normal present perfect tense.

*I've **lived** in Lagos my whole life.*

If you want to emphasize how long you've been living in a place, use the present perfect continuous tense.

*I've **been living** in Lagos my whole life.*

What about an action started in the past that has already been completed? For that, you can use the simple past.

*She **worked** there for five years but was fired last week.*

2 A series of the same action completed multiple times in the past, likely to happen again in the future

When the same action has happened a few times already, you can use the present perfect tense if the action will likely happen again in the future. If the action probably won't happen again, you can use the simple past tense.

*I've **seen** the movie six times! [probably will see it again]*

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*I **saw** the movie six times! [probably will not see it again]*

3 An action that was completed very recently (often used with *just* or *now*)

If an action was only completed very recently, you can describe it with the present perfect tense. Even though the action happened in the past, it was so recent that it's directly connected to the present. These cases usually use adverbs like *just* or *now* to show that the action happened not long ago.

*I shouldn't eat anymore because I've just **brushed** my teeth.*

*We've **finished** practice now, so let's go home.*

4 A change over time

The present perfect tense is often used to emphasize a change that happened over an extended period of time.

*My cousin **has grown** so much since I saw her two years ago.*

*Thanks to the many months of playing, I **have become** an expert at Wordle.*

5 An uncompleted action that is expected to be finished (in the negative)

If an action started in the past but was not completed, you can describe it with the present perfect tense if it's likely to be completed in the future. This situation uses the negative form to show that the action is still unfinished and often uses the adverb *yet*.

*The jury **has not reached** a verdict yet.*

*I **haven't finished** my paper, but it's due in an hour!*

6 To add significance to a completed action

Last, you can use the present perfect tense to make any past action sound more important. The present perfect tense is often used with great achievements or accomplishments, as well as dramatic or rare events. This makes it appropriate for newsworthy events or major life experiences.

*Macbeth **has killed** the king.*

*I've **met** the love of my life!*

When **not** to use the present perfect tense

Now that you know when to use the present perfect tense, let's talk about when to avoid it.

A lot of times, the difference between the present perfect tense and the simple past tense is a matter of emphasis or whether or not the action is truly finished.

However, there's one rule in particular that should be mentioned: **Do not use the present perfect tense with a specific time.**

I have gone for a walk on Tuesday.

I went for a walk on Tuesday.

This might be confusing, however, because you **can** use the present perfect tense with a broad time period. The present perfect tense is only incorrect if used with one specific time. Using the present perfect tense with a general time range is perfectly acceptable.

I have gone for a walk every Tuesday this year.

What is the present perfect tense?

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When is the present perfect used?

The present perfect tense is commonly used with events that started in the past and continue into the present. However, it has a few other uses too, including events that happened very recently in the past.

