

Lecture 02: Tenses Overview Part One

a. Present simple Vs Present Continuous

1. Present simple

The present simple tense is used to express general truths, habitual actions, or facts that are always true. For example, "I work in an office" or "The sun rises in the east."

Affirmative Statements: Subject + base form of the verb (+ -s or -es for third person singular).

Example: "She works hard every day."

Negative Statements: Subject + do not/does not + base form of the verb.

Example: "I do not like coffee."

Questions: (Wh-) Question word + do/does + subject + base form of the verb.

Yes/No Question: do/does + subject + base form of the verb

Example: "Do you enjoy reading?"

Usage: For general truths or facts: "Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius."

Habits or routines: "I jog every morning."

Permanent situations: "She lives in London."

Third Person Singular: Verbs ending in -s, -sh, -ch, -x, or -o, add -es:

Example: "He watches TV every evening."

Time Expressions: Often used with adverbs of frequency like "always," "usually," "sometimes," etc.

Remember, the present simple is not used for actions happening right now; that is the role of the present continuous tense.

Here are examples illustrating the present simple tense:

Affirmative Statements:

I play tennis every weekend.

The sun rises in the east.

Dogs bark when they are excited.

Negative Statements:

She does not eat meat. –

We do not have class on Saturdays.

It does not snow in this region.

Questions:

Do you like chocolate? –

Does he speak Spanish? –

What do they usually do on weekends?

Usage:

General truths: "The Earth revolves around the sun."

Habits or routines: "She reads a book before bedtime."

Permanent situations: "He owns a small business."

Third Person Singular:

He cooks delicious meals.

She washes her car every Sunday.

It fixes itself automatically.

Time Expressions:

I always brush my teeth before bed. –

They rarely go to the movies. –

The train usually arrives on time.

These examples showcase how the present simple tense is used in various contexts.

2. Present continuous

The present continuous tense, also known as the present progressive, is a verb tense in English that is used to describe actions happening at the moment of speaking or actions occurring around the current time. It is also used for temporary actions and ongoing activities.

Structure: The present continuous tense is formed using the present participle (the -ing form of the verb) along with the auxiliary verb "am," "is," or "are," depending on the subject.

Example: I am reading a book. (Action happening now)

She is working on a project. (Action in progress)

They are playing soccer in the park. (Ongoing activity)

Negative Form: To form the negative, use "am not," "is not," or "are not" with the present participle.

Example: "He is not watching TV right now."

Question Form: In questions, the auxiliary verb is moved to the beginning of the sentence

(Wh) question.

Example: What are you doing?

Yes/No question

Example: "Are you coming to the party?"

Usage: Actions happening now: "I am typing a message."

Ongoing activities: "They are studying for exams."

Future Plan: "She is staying with us for a week."

The present continuous tense emphasizes the dynamic nature of an action or situation that is occurring around the time of speaking.