

GRAMMAR

WAYS TO SPEAK ABOUT THE PRESENT

THE BASICS

PRESENT SIMPLE	<i>She always / usually / sometimes does the dishes after dinner.</i>	Она всегда / обычно / иногда моет посуду после обеда.	Регулярное / постоянное действие / состояние
PRESENT CONTINUOUS	<i>She is doing the dishes at the moment.</i>	Она сейчас моет посуду.	Действие в развитии
PRESENT PERFECT	<i>She has already/just done the dishes.</i>	Она уже/только что помыла посуду.	Действие в прошлом (точное время не указано)
PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS	<i>She has been washing the dishes for fifteen minutes / since 2 o'clock.</i>	Она моет посуду пятнадцать минут / с двух часов.	Действие, продолжавшееся в течение некоторого времени до момента речи*



Notes:

1. With **state verbs** (see Unit I) **the Present Perfect** is used in this meaning.
I've known Eric since I was 20 and we have been married for nearly six years.

2. With verbs describing continuous, uninterrupted processes, such as live, work, study, wait, speak, play, etc. both **the Present Perfect Continuous** and **the Present Perfect** can be used with little difference in meaning.

He has been waiting for the right offer for some time.
She has waited a long time for rest.

Exercise 1. Choose the correct verb form in *italics* for each sentence. Explain your choice.

1. On average, men get / are getting slightly less sleep than women.
2. Keith has been doing / has done research for 20 years.
3. He has completed / completed the task and is relaxing / relaxes now.
4. I have seen / have been seeing you someplace before.
5. He has no passport as he has never been / was never out of the country.
6. They are / have been friends since childhood.
7. Where is the money? — I have made / made some investments.
8. It seems that he speaks / is speaking no English though he lived / has lived in that country for some time.
9. Have you had / been having breakfast yet?
10. We have been discussing / are discussing the situation for some weeks now.

THE PARTICULARS

PRESENT SIMPLE

1. Primary uses

Повторяющееся / регулярное действие	Я плаваю в озере каждое утро. Они ездят в Италию раз в год. Он никогда меня не слушает .	<i>I swim in the lake every morning.</i> <i>They go to Italy once a year.</i> <i>He never listens to what I say.</i>
Постоянное действие / состояние	Мой брат Генри живет в Йорке. Он ненавидит ходить по магазинам в субботу.	<i>My brother Henry lives in York.</i> <i>He hates shopping on a Saturday.</i>

TIME EXPRESSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRESENT SIMPLE USED FOR REPEATED/REGULAR ACTIONS

<i>always, often, usually, normally, sometimes, seldom, occasionally, from time to time, time and again, now and then</i>	<i>every year (month, week, day), once a year (twice / three times a year), daily, on Sundays (Mondays, etc.) ever, never</i>
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Note that adverbs of frequency such as *always, often, usually, ever, never*, etc. usually go in **mid position**, that is before the **main** verb, but after the verb “**be**”.

*She **often** goes to the theatre.*

*She is **always** happy and helpful to everyone.*

2. Other uses

The Present Simple can be used to give past events more immediacy

a) in a narrative or an anecdote

*An Englishman and a Scotsman **collide** on a sharp bend in the road. To the amazement of both, they **are** unscathed (невредимы), though their cars **are** both destroyed. In celebration of their luck, both **agree** to put aside their dislike for the other from that moment on...*

b) in newspaper headlines

*Egypt and Israel **sign** trade deal.*

Exercise 2.

Paulo Coelho (not live) the life of a celebrity. He (spend) half the year in Rio de Janeiro, the city of his birth, but he (feel) most at ease in a tiny village St. Martin in the Pyrenees Mountains. When not writing, he (cut) the grass, (practice) archery (стрельба из лука), (read) and (keep) in touch with the world electronically. “I (have) 500 television channels and I (live) in a village with no bakery,” he says with a laugh. Mr. Coelho (be) a Catholic and he (spend) every New Year’s Eve in Lourdes where the shrine (гробница, усыпальница) to the Virgin Mary is. But Mr. Coelho (not be) a Roman Catholic writer. Indeed, many of his books (speak) to readers in countries with cultures and beliefs as different as Egypt and Israel, India and Japan. His explanation? “I (know) we (have) the same questions,” he says. “But we (not have) the same answers”.

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

Действие в развитии в момент речи	Я не знаю, о чем ты говоришь .	<i>I don't know what you are speaking about.</i>
Действие в развитии в настоящий период времени	Что ты делаешь в Вашингтоне?	<i>What are you doing in Washington?</i>



Note: The Present Continuous can be used with the time expressions *always*, *constantly* and *forever* to show that the speaker is annoyed. Remember that when no emotional colouring is implied, **the Present Simple** is used for repeated actions.

Compare: *Little Billy always **tells** lies to his mother, but she never believes him.* (neutral)
*He **is** always **telling** lies.* (annoyance)

TIME EXPRESSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

*now, at present, at the moment,
still, nowadays, these days*

Exercise 3.

Group the sentences according to the use of the Present Continuous:

- action in progress at the moment of speaking
- action in progress at the present period
- repeated actions causing the speaker's annoyance

1. He is forever scratching his head and his backside.
2. Unemployment is rising faster in Darlington than in many development areas.
3. George is trying to change the conversation.
4. I'm a football man, and I'm working with footballers at the moment, that's my job.
5. New problems are constantly arising.
6. Large companies grow like dinosaurs and are forever reorganizing.
7. Scientists in California are developing a new kind of computer memory, based on a photochemical process.
8. My sons are always fighting and I can't stand it any more.
9. Detective Milton is waiting for you.
10. The islands on which Venice is based are sinking, 9 inches in this century alone; at the same time the world's sea level is rising as the polar ice caps melt.

PRESENT CONTINUOUS vs PRESENT SIMPLE

Uses	Present Continuous	Present Simple
Describes an action in progress around the time of speaking	<i>Dad and I are watching the news on the telly.</i>	_____
Describes regular or repeated actions	_____	<i>I watch the news every day.</i>
With <i>always, constantly, forever</i> shows the speaker's annoyance	<i>He is constantly watching TV and movies.</i>	_____
Describes temporary situations	<i>He is living in Richmond with his Grandfather.</i>	_____
Describes permanent situations	_____	<i>He lives in Los Angeles with his wife Sheri.</i>
Describes permanent states and states at the moment of speaking	_____	<i>John hates crowds. Do you want bacon and eggs?</i>



Note: Some **state verbs** that refer to physical feeling (*feel, hurt, ache*) can be used in the **Present Simple** or **Present Continuous** without much difference of meaning.

*I **feel** a bit embarrassed. I **am feeling** lucky.*

*I can't understand why my chest **hurts**. I think Benny's foot **is hurting** her.*

Exercise 4. Put the verbs in brackets in the Present Simple or Present Continuous.

1. He (always / complain) about money and it really gets on my nerves.
2. The politician (make) an attempt to create a new party.
3. Music (unite) people of quite different cultural backgrounds.
4. "We (put) a lot of effort into this album," said the musician.
5. Maria (always / stay) at a hotel when she comes to London.
6. The two Ministers (sign) an agreement on trade and economic cooperation at the moment.
7. The English Channel (separate) Britain from France and the mainland of Europe.
8. This festival constantly (succeed) in bringing together people from around the world.
9. John (suffer) from pneumonia and has been taken to hospital.
10. Every Saturday Bob (do) a little hiking to stretch his legs.

Some of the **state verbs** can be used in the **Present Continuous**, but the verb changes its meaning. Study the common differences.

Verbs	Present Simple	Present Continuous
be	The children are very naughty. (a permanent characteristic)	The babies are being very naughty. (= are behaving)
have	They have a big house in the country. (= own)	No wonder they are having such a difficult time. (= are going through)
think	He thinks no one will ever believe him. (= has an opinion)	He is thinking of opening a small shop. (= is considering)
consider	He considers me to be unreliable. (= has an opinion)	I don't know how seriously he is considering the offer. (= is thinking about)
taste	The cake tastes lovely. (= has the taste)	Dad is tasting the birthday cake. (= is putting into his mouth to see what it is like)
smell	The chestnuts smell real good. (= have the smell)	The girl is smelling violet flowers. (= is sniffing)
weigh	The cake weighs a minimum 450g. (= it is)	Sarah is weighing the ingredients for the pudding. (= action of weighing)
love	I love life. It's full of beautiful things. (in general)	I 'm loving life right now. (= am enjoying; specific)

Exercise 5. Put the verbs in brackets in the Present Simple or Present Continuous.

- Why everything that is good for you (taste) awful?
 - I (taste) the milk because I'm afraid it has gone off.
- She doesn't want to know how much she (weigh).
 - The shop-assistant (weigh) the apples on the scales at the moment.
- They (consider) themselves hard-working, dedicated and badly-paid.
 - The Howards (consider) moving to the countryside.
- Helen's daughter (have) problems in her marriage.
 - Our city (have) a lot of customs that are mysteries to tourists and locals alike.
- "Oh yes, I know", said Alice, and added, "Good-night", and went downstairs, thinking, "I (be) silly".
 - Mr Carter (be) a very successful businessman.
- My boss (think) I'm working on a new project.
 - I know Douglas (think) of going to France.
- The air (smell) sweet. Spring is certainly here.
 - I like the commercial where the dog (smell) "bacon".
- I'm happy to hear you (love) the trip.
 - I (love) trips away for the weekend.

PRESENT PERFECT

<p>I. Действие произошло в неопределённый момент прошлого и связано с настоящим. Время совершения действия:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> не указано указано неопределённо: <i>just, recently, already, still, yet, so far, never ... before, ever, never, etc.</i> период времени, который ещё не истёк: <i>today, this week, this month, this year, etc.*</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Боюсь, я оставил бумажник дома. Бренда <u>только что сдала</u> экзамены. Он <u>никогда раньше не пробовал</u> устриц. Он <u>писал</u> какие-нибудь тесты <u>на этой неделе?</u> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I'm afraid I've left my wallet at home.</i> <i>Brenda has just passed her exams. He has never tasted oysters <u>before</u>.</i> <i>Has he written any tests <u>this week?</u></i>
<p>II. Действие или состояние началось в прошлом и продолжается до настоящего момента <i>For + a period of time (for / over the last / past few years, for a few weeks, etc.)</i> <i>Since + a point of time (2001, May, etc.) or a clause in the Past Simple</i></p>	<p>Я знаю её <u>много лет</u>. У неё (она имеет) всё та же машина <u>с 2001 года</u>. Они дружат с тех пор, как <u>приехали в Индию</u>.</p>	<p><i>I have known her <u>for many years</u>. She has had the same car <u>since 2001</u>. They have been friends <u>since they came to India</u>.</i></p>

* However, if this period is viewed as past the **Past Simple** is normally used.

Compare: Betty **has met** him three times today. (today is still continuing)
 Betty **met** him three times today. (today is viewed as past)



Note: Do not use the **Present Perfect** in questions starting with "when".
 e.g. *When did you go to Prague?* (NOT: *When have you gone...?*)

Exercise 6. Paraphrase the sentences according to the model.

Model 1: I haven't seen you for two years. → *It's two years since I (last) saw you.*

- I haven't travelled in this part of Europe for ages.
- Charlie hasn't ridden a motorcycle for years.
- Jack hasn't read any novels for a long time.
- We haven't spent a holiday together for three years.
- They haven't spoken to each other for more than eight months.
- British Rail has not closed a railway line for over forty years.

Model 2: He has never driven a Mercedes. → *It's the first time he's ever driven a Mercedes.*

- You have never bothered about my feelings.
- They have never spoken to us about this business before.
- They have never visited India and seen the Taj Mahal before.
- I have never heard about the Great Train Robbery of 1885.
- What's wrong with Fred? He has never lost his appetite before.
- Rachel has never missed a chance to make more money.

Model 3: She has never heard such a silly joke. → *It's the silliest joke she's ever heard.*

- She has never bought such an expensive pair of shoes.
- Ron has never met such a beautiful woman as Laura.
- I have never worn such a comfortable waterproof jacket.
- Philip has never read such an interesting letter.
- They have never before stayed at such a lovely holiday centre.
- The customer has never seen such a wonderful department store.

PRESENT PERFECT vs PAST SIMPLE

Present Perfect	Past Simple
Describes an action at an indefinite time in the past and shows the connection between past and present <i>Tom has caught a cold. He is sneezing and coughing.</i> <i>I have just seen him.</i> <i>Jack has been to France several times <u>since</u> he joined the sailing club.</i>	Describes an action at the exact time in the past and has no connection with present <i>Tom caught a cold <u>three weeks ago</u> and had to stay in bed for a couple of days.</i> <i>I saw him <u>yesterday</u>.</i> <i>Jack went to France <u>last year</u>.</i>

Exercise 7. Fill in the gaps with the Present Perfect or the Past Simple.

- I don't think we _____ (meet) each other more than 10 or 12 times since we _____ (be) eighteen years old.
- Ever since I _____ (buy) my digital camera I _____ (become) one of those people who never leave home without it.
- Americans _____ (be) able to shop without leaving their homes since the world's first mail-order business, Montgomery Ward, _____ (open) in 1872.
- They _____ (see) one danger after another ever since they _____ (leave) their home.
- Kathy _____ (put on) some weight since she _____ (come) to the USA.
- It _____ (be) a family business ever since it _____ (be) established by my grandfather.
- None of us _____ (have) a moment's peace since Joe's baby _____ (be) born a year ago.
- Ever since the company _____ (be) set up in 1928, the name Emons _____ (stand) for excellent services.
- He _____ (become) a bit more careful driver since he _____ (have) an accident in April.
- This little Chinese painting _____ (hang) in our living room ever since I _____ (be) a little girl.

Exercise 8.

Open the brackets using the correct form of the verb.

- Since her coronation, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip, now the Duke of Edinburgh, (make) a great number of overseas tours.
- In 1989 the average prison population for England and Wales (stand) at 48 600.
- Ninety thousand people in Yorkshire already (sign) the petition.
- When Clovis, the first King of the Franks, (die) his kingdom (be) divided equally between his four sons.
- India (gain) independence from the British Empire in 1947.
- I want to grow and develop as a person in areas that I (not explore) yet.
- Last year she (take) her daughter to Thailand to spend a week in the sun.
- What kind of stupid ideas (get) into your head now?
- Since its independence, Pakistan (experience) both periods of significant military and economic growth and periods of instability.
- Henry VIII (break) with Rome and (make) himself the head of the Church of England.

PRESENT PERFECT vs PRESENT SIMPLE

The **Present Perfect** is used to say how long the situation has continued up to now.

The **Present Simple** is never used in this meaning.

e.g.: I **have** always **liked** English people.

BUT: I **like** English people.

Exercise 9. Put the verbs in brackets in the Present Perfect or Present Simple.

1. Sean Connery (be) a major star for over forty years.
2. My wife and I (live) in Fenny Drayton for a number of years.
3. The world's largest blue diamond (exist) for more than a billion years.
4. Princess Kiko (be) married to Prince Akishino of the royal family of Japan. They (be) married for sixteen years and (have) three children.
5. Since 1947 the O'Neil family (own) this fine Georgian building.
6. Carol's next-door neighbour (own) a bit of land, some sheep and some pigs, too. I suppose I've got quite dependent on Roger.
7. We (know) each other all our lives.
8. How long you (be) interested in politics?
9. Harrison Ford (be) a movie star, and in his career he (earn) more money than any other actor. He (be) best known for his action heroes.
10. Since the time of the American Revolution journalists (be) among the most influential citizens in the USA.

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

<p>Длительное действие, которое началось в прошлом и продолжается вплоть до настоящего момента</p>	<p>— Сколько времени идёт дождь? — Он идёт уже два часа. Я звоню по этому номеру всё утро, но он всё время занят.</p>	<p>— <i>How long has it been raining?</i> — <i>It has been raining for two hours already.</i> <i>I have been ringing that number all morning but it's always engaged.</i></p>
<p>Длительное действие, которое продолжалось какое-то время и имеет <u>видимый результат</u> в момент речи</p>	<p>— Ну и <u>беспорядок</u>! — Я искал своё водительское удостоверение.</p>	<p>— <i>What <u>a mess</u>!</i> — <i>I've been looking for my driving licence.</i></p>

TIME EXPRESSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS USED FOR ACTIONS WHICH STARTED IN THE PAST AND CONTINUE UP TO THE PRESENT (AND PERHAPS INTO THE FUTURE)

For + a period of time
Since + a point in time / clause
All day / week, etc.
How long...?

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS VS PRESENT PERFECT

Present Perfect Continuous	Present Perfect
Recent Activity <i>I've been watching a lot of soap operas (lately).</i> <i>The guests have been arriving since 5 o'clock (probably unfinished activity).</i> Have you been sunbathing ? You're like a tomato!	Activity at an Indefinite Time in the Past <i>I've watched a lot of soap operas (at an indefinite time before now).</i> <i>Ted and Edna have just arrived (completed action).</i> <i>You look great! You've lost at least ten kilos.</i>

Present Perfect Continuous	Present Perfect
No Difference In Meaning With such verbs as <i>live, sit, stand, study, wait, work etc.</i> <i>Most families in Swindon have been living there for one year/ for some generations.</i>	<i>Most families in Swindon have lived there for one year/ for some generations.</i>
_____	With <u>state</u> verbs <i>be, like, own, belong, etc.</i> <i>The castle has always belonged to our family.</i>



Note:

1. The Present Perfect Continuous is not common in negative sentences.

The Present Perfect is usually used instead.

He hasn't played football since childhood. (NOT: He hasn't been playing...)

2. The Present Perfect Continuous emphasises the length and duration of the activity while the Present Perfect emphasises the quantity.

Compare:

I've been reading ever since morning.

We've been doing this work for two weeks.

I've read two books by Dan Brown recently.

We've done a lot of work lately.

Exercise 10.

Choose the correct form. In some cases either form is correct.

1. How long have you lived / have you been living in Vancouver?
2. The profits of the company have been declining / have declined by 15 per cent.
3. She has been taking / has taken sleeping pills every night for the past two years.
4. They have been sparing / have spared no effort to reach agreement.
5. Michael has been writing / has written several articles on economics.
6. Doris has been buying / has bought her daughter designer clothes and shoes since she was a baby.
7. The tourists have covered / have been covering five miles today.
8. It has rained / has been raining since early morning.
9. I have been studying / have studied in Britain for a year, but it's the first time I have been inside a British home.
10. The government has not so far done anything / has not so far been doing anything about smoking.