

RULES

PRESENT SIMPLE

- fact, general truth, permanent situation
- habit, regular occurrence
- state (see Note 1)
- declaration
- newspaper headline
- live sports commentary
- instructions
- plot of a film, story or joke
- definite event in the future (timetable, schedule, date)

Love **changes** everything.
 Buses to York **depart** on the hour.
 This land **belongs** to my family.
 We **apologise** for any inconvenience.
 Fire **breaks out** in city centre!
 He **shoots**. He **scores**!
 You **fry** the onion in oil, then **add** the chicken.
 In the end Rose **is rescued**, but Jack **dies**.
 The law **comes** into effect on May 1st next year.

Time expressions: usually, always, every day, in the morning, once / twice a year, nowadays

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

- action happening at or around the time of speaking
- temporary situation
- changing / developing situation
- future arrangement
- annoying or amusing actions that happen very often (with *always, constantly, forever*)

I'm **warning** you – I won't accept any excuses.
 Sue **is staying** with her cousin in Rome.
 More families **are buying** a second car.
 The board **is meeting** in London next month.
 Tim **is always losing** his keys.

Time expressions: for the time being, currently, at present, now, this week / year, at the moment

Notes

1. **Stative verbs** Some verbs are not usually used in the continuous form because they describe states, not actions. (See Grammar Appendix, page 216.)
2. The Present Simple form of *be* + adjective is used to describe character.
 Greg **is** selfish. He would never put himself out to help anyone. (*he is always selfish*)
 The Present Continuous of *be* suggests that somebody is behaving a certain way at one time or about one thing.
 Shelly, you **are being** selfish. Let the others have a turn on the computer too! (*behaviour at a particular time*)

PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE *have / has + past participle*

- recent or past event which is relevant to the present without a definite time reference
- state, habit or action which started in the past and continues up to the present (with *for* and *since*)
- to show completion, achievement, or number of times something has occurred up to the present
- with *first time / best / ever / never*

The college **has introduced** a media studies course.
 Tom **has dreamed** of stardom **since** childhood.
 I've **cracked** the code!
 They **have been** to this exhibition three times so far.
 This is the **best** book I **have ever read**.

Time expressions: since, for, just, already, recently, lately, always, yet, so far, ever, never, up until now, ever since, for ages, for a while, for long

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS *have / has been + verb -ing*

- repeated or continuing activity, relevant to the present or about to change
- action which started in the past but has not yet been completed, or to emphasise the duration of an action, not the results

The cast **has been rehearsing** hard for the production.
 The council **has been debating** proposals for a new road for years.

Time expressions: since, for, all day / afternoon, how long, ever since, for a while, for long

Note

have been / have gone

Todd's **been to** that resort – why don't you ask him what it was like? (*has visited and returned*)
 "Where's Jen?" "Oh, she's **gone to** the library to study." (*went there but hasn't returned yet*)