

Simple Present – Present Progressive

Form

Simple Present

infinitive
(3rd person singular: infinitive + 's')

I speak
you speak
he / she / it speaks
we speak
they speak

Exceptions

Exceptions when adding 's' :

- For *can, may, might, must*, do not add *s*.

Example: he can, she may, it must

- After *o, ch, sh, x* or *s*, add *es*.

Example: do - he does, wash - she washes

- After a consonant, the final consonant *y* becomes *ie*. (but: not after a vowel)

Example: worry - he worries
but: play - he plays

Present Progressive

form of 'be' and verb + ing

I am speaking
you are speaking
he / she / it is speaking
we are speaking
they are speaking

Exceptions when adding 'ing' :

- Silent *e* is dropped. (but: does not apply for *-ee*)

Example: come - coming
but: agree - agreeing

- After a short, stressed vowel, the final consonant is doubled.

Example: sit - sitting

- After a vowel, the final consonant *l* is doubled in British English (but not in American English).

Example: travel - travelling (British English)
but: traveling (American English)

- Final *ie* becomes *y*.

Example: lie - lying

Use

In general or right now?

Do you want to express that something happens in general or that something is happening right now?

Simple Present

1) in general (regularly, often, never)

Colin plays football every Tuesday.

Present Progressive

1) right now

Look! Colin is playing football now.

present actions happening one after another **also for several actions happening at the same time**

First Colin plays football, then he watches TV. Colin is playing football and Anne is watching.

Signal words

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• always• every ...• often• normally• usually• sometimes• seldom• never• first• then | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• at the moment• at this moment• today• now• right now• Listen!• Look!• while |
|---|--|

Note: The following verbs are usually only used in Simple Present:
be, have, hear, know, like, love, see, smell, think, want

Timetable / Schedule or arrangement?

Do you want to express that something is arranged for the near future? Or do you refer to a time set by a timetable or schedule?

Simple Present

2) action set by a timetable or schedule

The film starts at 8 pm.

Present Progressive

2) arrangement for the near future

I am going to the cinema tonight.

Daily routine or just for a limited period of time?

Do you want to talk about a daily routine? Or do you want to emphasize that something is only going on for a limited (rather short) period of time?

Simple Present

daily routine

Present Progressive

3) only for a limited period of time (does not)

Bob works in a restaurant.

have to happen directly at the moment of speaking)

Jenny is working in a restaurant this week.

Certain Verbs

The following verbs are usually only used in Simple Present (not in the progressive form).

- **state:** be, cost, fit, mean, suit

Example: We are on holiday.

- **possession:** belong, have

Example: Sam has a cat.

- **senses:** feel, hear, see, smell, taste, touch

Example: He feels the cold.

- **feelings:** hate, hope, like, love, prefer, regret, want, wish

Example: Jane loves pizza.

- **brain work:** believe, know, think, understand

Example: I believe you.

- **Introductory clauses for direct speech:** answer, ask, reply, say

Example: "I am watching TV," he says.