

Present tenses

present simple; present continuous; state verbs

1

A Context listening

1 You are going to hear a woman interviewing a student for a survey about what people do in their free time. Before you listen, look at the pictures. Which activities do you think the student does in his free time?



2 **1** Listen and check if you were right.

3 **1** Listen again and decide if the following statements are true or false. If a statement is false, write the correction.

- 1 Peter is waiting for his friends.
- 2 He isn't studying much this month.
- 3 His parents own a shop.
- 4 He practises the guitar most mornings.
- 5 He frequently uses the Internet.
- 6 His cousin is living in America at the moment.
- 7 Peter doesn't support any football teams.

4 Look at your answers to Exercise 3 and answer these questions.

- 1 Which sentences are about a situation that is permanent or a fact?
- 2 Which sentences are about everyday habits?
- 3 Which sentence is about an action happening at the moment of speaking?
- 4 Which sentences are about a temporary situation?

B Grammar

1 Present simple

+	verb/verb + (e)s	<i>He plays tennis.</i>
-	do/does not + verb	<i>She doesn't play tennis.</i>
?	do/does ... + verb?	<i>Do you play tennis?</i>

We use the present simple

- ♦ to talk about regular habits or repeated actions:

I get up really early and practise for an hour or so most days.

I use the Internet just about every day.

Words that describe how often or when are often used (e.g. *always, generally, normally, usually, often, sometimes, rarely, never, every day, every evening*).

- ♦ to talk about permanent situations:

My parents own a restaurant.

▲ We use the present perfect, not the present simple, to say how long something has continued:

I have worked there since I was 15. (not I work there since I was 15 : see Unit 3)

- ♦ to talk about facts or generally accepted truths:

Students don't generally have much money.

If you heat water to 100°C, it boils. (see Unit 17)

The following words are often used: *generally, mainly, normally, usually, traditionally.*

- ♦ to give instructions and directions:

You go down to the traffic lights, then you turn left.

To start the programme, first you click on the icon on the desktop.

- ♦ to tell stories and talk about films, books and plays:

In the film, the tea lady falls in love with the Prime Minister.

2 Present continuous

+	am/is/are + verb + -ing	<i>He's living in Thailand.</i>
-	am/is/are not + verb + -ing	<i>I'm not living in Thailand.</i>
?	am/is/are ... + verb + -ing?	<i>Are they living in Thailand?</i>

We use the present continuous

- ♦ to talk about temporary situations:

I'm studying really hard for my exams.

My cousin is living in Thailand at the moment. (= he doesn't normally live there)

Words like *at the moment, currently, now, this week/month/year* are often used.

- ♦ to talk about actions happening at the moment of speaking:

I'm waiting for my friends.

- ◆ to talk about trends or changing situations:
*The Internet **is making** it easier for people to stay in touch with each other.*
*The price of petrol **is rising** dramatically.*
- ◆ to talk about things that happen more often than expected, often to show envy or to criticise with words like *always, constantly, continually, forever*:
*My mum's **always saying** I don't help enough! (complaint)*
*He's **always visiting** exciting places! (envy)*

3 State verbs

The present continuous is not normally used with state verbs because the meaning of the verb itself is a general truth rather than something temporary. These verbs describe thoughts, feelings, senses, possession and description.

Here are some examples of state verbs.

- ◆ thoughts: *agree, assume, believe, disagree, forget, hope, know, regret, remember, suppose, think, understand*
*I **assume** you're too busy to play computer games.*
- ◆ feelings: *adore, despise, dislike, enjoy, feel, hate, like, love, mind, prefer, want*
***Do you mind** if I ask you a few questions?*
*I **love** music.*
- ◆ senses: *feel, hear, see, smell, taste*
*This pudding **smells** delicious.*
▲ To talk about something happening now we use *can*:
*I **can smell** something burning.*
- ◆ possession: *have, own, belong*
*My parents **own** a restaurant.*
- ◆ description: *appear, contain, look, look like, mean, resemble, seem, smell, sound, taste, weigh*
*You **look like** your mother. (= a permanent situation, not a temporary one)*

▲ Some state verbs can be used in the continuous form when the meaning is temporary.

Compare:

What **are** you **thinking** about? (now)

I **think** you should tell her exactly what happened. (my opinion, so not temporary)

I'm **tasting** the sauce to see if it needs any more salt.

The sauce **tastes** delicious.

She's **having** a great time. (is having = is experiencing, not possession)

Students **don't** generally **have** much money. (have = possession)

C Grammar exercises

1 Choose the best endings for sentences 1–8.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Fiona is watching television | a because her favourite film star is on. |
| | b when she has time. |
| 2 I'm having my lunch | a at one o'clock every day. |
| | b early today as I have an appointment. |
| 3 I do the shopping | a at the same time every week. |
| | b today for a friend who's ill. |
| 4 What are you doing | a to your sister when she behaves badly? |
| | b to your sister? Leave her alone! |
| 5 I wear casual clothes | a at the weekend. |
| | b because we're having a party at lunchtime. |
| 6 Teachers work hard | a to get the concert ready for next week. |
| | b but they get long holidays. |
| 7 The company's financial situation is improving | a now that it has a new Chief Executive. |
| | b when there is greater demand for its products. |
| 8 Serge is thinking of retiring early | a every time something bad happens at work. |
| | b because he isn't happy at work any more. |

2 Fill in the gaps with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

- I'm busy right now. I *'m filling in* (fill in) an application form for a new job.
- My tutor (see) me for a tutorial every Monday at two o'clock.
- John (not/study) very hard at the moment. I (not/think) he'll pass his exams.
- 'What (he/do)?' 'He (try) to fix the television aerial.'
- Animals (breathe in) oxygen and (give out) carbon dioxide.
- Be quiet! I (want) to hear the news.
- In my country we (drive) on the right-hand side of the road.
- My friend Joe's parents (travel) round the world this summer, and probably won't be back for a couple of months.
- The college (run) the same course every year.
- Numbers of wild butterflies (fall) as a result of changes in farming methods.

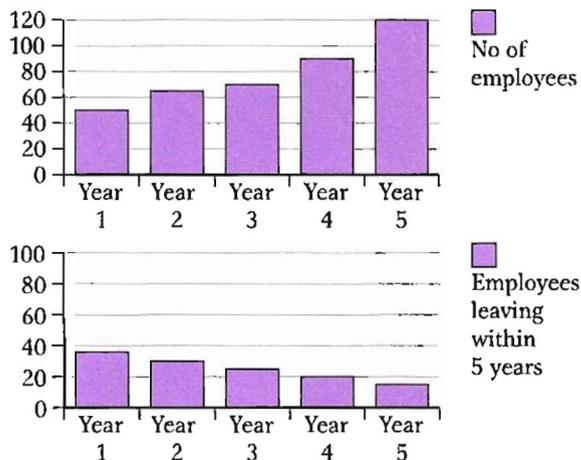
3 Fill in the gaps with the verbs in the box in the correct present tense.

agree catch up cause have go up know think use

We 1 use energy for three main things: electricity production, heating and transport. For the first two, we 2 options such as solar and wind power, or natural gas. But oil is still the world's number one source of energy, and for transport at least, there is currently no alternative. In China, domestic energy consumption 3 year by year and demand in similar regions 4 fast. We 5 how to use energy more efficiently now than in the past but the worldwide rise in demand 6 concern amongst experts. Some experts 7 that oil supplies will start to fall within the next twenty years. Most experts 8 that we need to find a new source of energy soon.

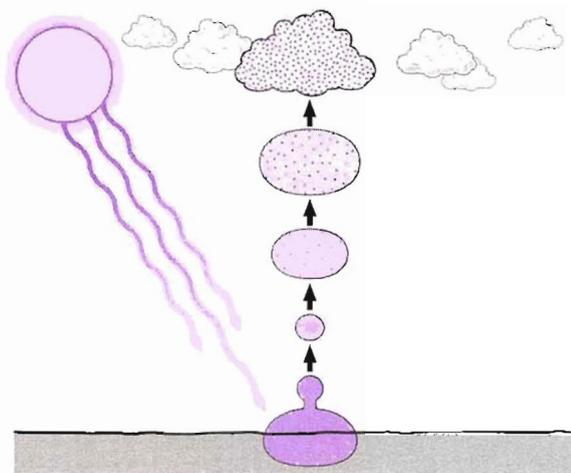
4 Look at the following extracts. There are six incorrect verbs. Find and correct them.

Extract A



From the graphs, we are seeing that the number of employees employed by this firm increases each year and the number of employees leaving after less than five years decreases.

Extract B



The sun heats the ground This is warming the air nearby and the warm air rises into the sky. As the air is rising, it becomes cooler and the water vapour inside it change into droplets of water. These join together to form a cloud.

- 1 can see
- 2
- 3

- 4
- 5
- 6