

Explanations

Basic contrasts:
present simple
and present
continuous

- Present simple generally refers to:

Facts that are always true

*Water **boils** at 100 degrees Celsius.*

Habits

*British people **drink** a lot of tea.*

States

*I don't **like** gangster films.*

- Present continuous (progressive) generally refers to actions which are in progress at the moment. These can be temporary:

*I'm **staying** in a hotel until I find a flat.*

They can be actually in progress:

*The dog **is sleeping** on our bed!*

Or they can be generally in progress but not actually happening at the moment:

*I'm **learning** to drive.*

State verbs and
event (action or
dynamic) verbs

- State verbs describe a continuing state, so do not usually have a continuous form. Typical examples are:

believe, belong, consist, contain, doubt, fit, have, know, like, love, matter, mean, need, own, prefer, seem, suppose, suspect, understand, want, wish

- Some verbs have a stative meaning and a different active meaning. Typical examples are:

be, depend, feel, have, measure, see, taste, think, weigh

Compare these uses:

State

*Jack **is** noisy.*

*Deirdre **has** a Porsche.*

*I **think** I like you!*

*This fish **tastes** awful!*

*I **feel** that you are wrong.*

*This bag **weighs** a ton!*

*It **depends** what you mean.*

Event

*Jill's **being** noisy.*

*We're **having** an interesting conversation!*

*David's **thinking** about getting a new job.*

*I'm just **tasting** the soup.*

*I'm **feeling** terrible.*

*We're **weighing** the baby.*

*Bill, I'm **depending** on you to win this contract for us.*

The differences here apply to all verb forms, not just to present verb forms.

Other uses of
present
continuous

- Temporary situations
*Are you **enjoying** your stay here?*
- Repeated actions
*My car has broken down, so I **am walking** to work these days.*
- Complaints about annoying habits
*You **are always making snide remarks** about my cooking!*
Other possible adverbs are: *constantly, continually, forever*
- With verbs describing change and development
*The weather **is getting** worse!*
*More and more people **are giving up** smoking.*

Other uses of
present simple

- Making declarations
Verbs describing opinions and feelings tend to be state verbs.
*I **hope** you'll come to my party.*
*I **bet** you don't know the answer!*
*I hereby **declare** this hospital open!*
- Headlines
These are written in a 'telegram' style, and references to the past are usually simplified to present simple.
*Ship **sinks** in midnight collision.*
- Instructions and itineraries
Instructions and recipes can be written in present simple instead of in imperative forms. This style is more personal.
*First you **roll out** the pastry.*
Itineraries are descriptions of travel arrangements.
*On day three we **visit** Stratford-upon-Avon.*
- Summaries of events
Plots of stories, films etc, and summaries of historical events use present (and present perfect) verb forms.
*May 1945: The war in Europe **comes** to an end.*
*... At the end of the play both families **realise** that their hatred caused the deaths of the lovers ...*
- 'Historic present' in narrative and funny stories
In informal speech, it is possible to use what we call the 'historic present' to describe past events, especially to make the narration seem more immediate and dramatic.
*... So then the second man **asks** the first one why he **has** a banana in his ear and the first one **says** ...*

Practice

1 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) I haven't decided yet about whether to buy a new car or a second-hand one.
But *I think about it/I'm thinking about it*.
- b) All right, you try to fix the television! But *I hope/I'm hoping* you know what you're doing.
- c) Every year *I visit/I'm visiting* Britain to improve my English.
- d) It's time we turned on the central heating. *It gets/It's getting* colder every day.
- e) Of course, you're Mary, aren't you! *I recognise/I am recognising* you now.
- f) The film of 'War and Peace' is very long. *It lasts/It is lasting* over four hours.
- g) I can see from what you say that your mornings are very busy! But what *do you do/are you doing* in the afternoons?
- h) I'm going to buy a new swimming costume. My old one *doesn't fit/isn't fitting* any more.
- i) That must be the end of the first part of the performance. What *happens/is happening* now?
- j) What's the matter? Why *do you look/are you looking* at me like that?

2 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) I work in this office *all this year/all the time*.
- b) Emerson is *currently/for long* top of the driver's league.
- c) I am not making much money *these days/so far this year*.
- d) The food tastes even worse *now/presently*. You've put too much salt in.
- e) *Normally/previously* we get in touch with customers by post.
- f) Pete was ill but he is getting over his illness *soon/now*.
- g) I'm feeling rather run down *lately/at present*, doctor.
- h) I always stay on duty *since/until* six o'clock.
- i) I'm *often/forever* picking your hairs out of the bath!
- j) Fortunately the baby *now/recently* sleeps all night.

3 Put each verb in brackets into the present simple or present continuous.

- a) I *hear* (hear) that you have been promoted. Congratulations!
- b) British people (drink) more and more wine, apparently.
- c) I hope Sarah will be here soon. I (depend) on her.
- d) Please be quiet, David. You (forever/interrupt).
- e) Hey, you! What (you/think) you're doing?
- f) Could you come here please? I (want) to talk to you now.
- g) Jane is away on holiday so Linda (handle) her work.
- h) To be honest, I (doubt) whether Jim will be here next week.
- i) You've only just started the job, haven't you? How (you/get on)?
- j) Pay no attention to Graham. He (just/be) sarcastic.

4 Put each verb in brackets into the present simple or present continuous.

I work in a large office with about thirty other people, most of whom I (1) *know* (know) quite well. We (2) (spend) most of the day together, so we have all become friends. In fact, most of my colleagues are so interesting, that I (3) (think) of writing a book about them! (4) (take) Helen Watson, for example. Helen (5) (run) the accounts department. At the moment she (6) (go out) with Keith Ballantine, one of the sales representatives, and they (7) (seem) very happy together. But everyone – except Helen apparently – (8) (know) that Keith (9) (fancy) Susan Porter. But I (10) (happen) to know that Susan (11) (dislike) Keith. 'I can't stand people who never (12) (stop) apologising all the time!' she told me. 'And besides, I know he (13) (deceive) poor Helen. He (14) (see) Betty Wills from the overseas department.' And plenty of other interesting things (15) (currently/go on). For instance, every week we (16) (experience) more and more problems with theft – personal belongings and even money have been stolen. When you (17) (realise) that someone in your office is a thief, it (18) (upset) you at first. But I (19) (also/try) to catch whoever it is before the police are called in. I'm not going to tell you who I (20) (suspect). Well, not yet anyway!

5 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using one of the words in **bold**. Do not change the word in **bold**.

- a) Charles and his father are exactly alike in appearance.

looks/looking

Charles *looks just/exactly like* his father.

- b) Take all your possessions and walk slowly to the exit.

belongs/belonging

Take everything and walk slowly to the exit.

- c) I'm finding it really enjoyable to work here.

enjoy/enjoying

I here.

- d) I take work home regularly because of my new responsibility at work.

means/meaning

My new responsibility at work work home regularly.

- e) In my cycling group there's George, Tom, Harry and me.

consists/consisting

My George, Tom, Harry and me.

- f) In your opinion, who's going to win the Cup?

think/thinking

Who do win the Cup?

- g) I'm seeing how wide the door is.

measure/measuring

I the door.

- h) Neil always forgets his wife's birthday.

remembers/remembering

Neil his wife's birthday.

- i) Its ability to catch fish is the key to the polar bear's survival.

depends/depending

The polar bear's to catch fish.

- j) What's on your mind at the moment?

think/thinking

What at the moment?

6 Most of these sentences contain an error. Where there is an error, rewrite the sentence correctly.

- a) I'm depending on you, so don't make any mistakes! (no errors)
- b) Is this total including the new students?
Does this total include the new students?
- c) Excuse me, but do you wait for somebody?
- d) These potatoes are tasting a bit funny.
- e) How are you feeling today?
- f) I look forward to hearing from you.
- g) I have a feeling that something goes wrong.
- h) What's that you're eating?
- i) Are you hearing anything from Wendy these days?
- j) I think you're being rather mean about this.

Basic cor
will, goin
present
continuc

7 Complete the expressions using the words from the box.

coming	making	trying	asking	taking	shooting
talking	listening				

- a) I'm *trying* to concentrate.
- b) Are you off now, or can we talk?
- c) Go on, I'm
- d) I think we're at cross purposes.
- e) You're for trouble.
- f) It's along nicely.
- g) You don't seem to be much interest.
- h) You're a fuss about nothing.

Which expression means one of the following?

- 1 Are you in a hurry to leave?
- 2 We're talking about different things without realising it.
- 3 If you say or do this you will get into difficulties.

Future

Future

Explanations

Basic contrasts:
will, going to,
present
continuous

- Will is normally known as the predictive future, and describes known facts, or what we suppose is true.
I'll be late home this evening.
*The company **will** make a profit next year.*
This can also take the form of an assumption.
That'll be Jim at the door. (This means that I suppose it is Jim.)
- Will is also used to express an immediate decision.
I'll take this one.
- Be going to describes intentions or plans. At the moment of speaking the plans have already been made.
I'm going to wait here until Carol gets back.
Going to is also used to describe an event whose cause is present or evident.
Look at that tree! It's going to fall.
Compare the following with the examples in the first bullet point:
I'm going to be late this evening. I've got lots of paperwork to finish off.
The figures are good. I can see the company is going to make a profit this year.
Decisions expressed with going to refer to a more distant point in the future.
- Present continuous describes fixed arrangements, especially social and travel arrangements. A time reference is usually included. Note the strong similarity to the going to future. *I am having a party next week* and *I am going to have a party next week* are communicating the same message.
- This describes an event which will be happening at a future point.
Come round in the morning. I'll be painting in the kitchen.
- It can also describe events which are going to happen anyway, rather than events which we choose to make happen.
I won't bother to fix a time to see you, because I'll be calling into the office anyway several times next week.
- In some contexts future continuous also sounds more polite than will.
Will you be going to the shops later? If you go, could you get me some milk?
- It can also be used to refer to fixed arrangements and plans.
*The band **will be performing** live in Paris this summer.*
- This has both simple and continuous forms, and refers to time which we look back at from a future point.
In two year's time I'll have finished the book.
By the end of the month, I'll have been working for this firm for a year.

Future continuous

Future perfect

Other ways of referring to the future

- It can also be used to express an assumption on the part of the speaker.
*You **won't have heard** the news, of course.*
(This means that I assume you have not heard the news.)

- *Is/are to be*
This is used to describe formal arrangements.
*All students **are to assemble** in the hall at 9.00.*
See also Grammar 11 and 12 for uses expressing obligation.

- *Be about to, be on the point of, be due to, just/just about to*
Be about to and *be on the point of* both refer to the next moment.
*I think the play **is about to** start now.*
*Mary **is on the point of** resigning.*
Be due to refers to scheduled times.
*The play **is due to** start in five minutes.*
*Ann's flight **is due** at 6.20.*

Just can be used to describe something on the point of happening.
*Hurry up! The train **is just leaving/just about to leave**.*

- Present simple and present perfect
Present simple is used to refer to future time in future time clauses.
*When we **get** there, we'll have dinner.*
Present perfect can also be used instead of present simple when the completion of the event is emphasised.
*When we've **had** a rest, we'll go out.*
- Present simple is also used to describe fixed events which are not simply the wishes of the speaker.
*Tom **retires** in three years.*
Similarly, calendar references use the present simple.
*Christmas **is** on a Tuesday next year.*

Other future references

- *Hope*
This can be followed by either present or future verb forms.
*I hope it **doesn't** rain. I hope it **won't** rain.*
- Other verbs followed by *will*.
Most verbs of thinking can be followed by *will* if there is future reference. These include: *think, believe, expect, doubt*.
*I **expect** the train will be late. I **doubt** whether United will win.*
- *Shall*
The use of *shall* for first person in future reference is generally considered to be restricted to British English and possibly declining in use. See Grammar 11 and 12 for other uses of *shall* and *will*. For some speakers, *shall* is used in formal speech and in written language.

Practice

This section also includes time phrases used in expressing future time.

1 Put each verb in brackets into a suitable verb form.

- a) In twenty-four hours' time *I'll be relaxing* (I/relax) on my yacht.
- b) 'There's someone at the door.' 'That (be) the postman.'
- c) By the time you get back Harry (leave).
- d) It's only a short trip. I (be) back in an hour.
- e) What (you/do) this Saturday evening? Would you like to go out?
- f) By the end of the week we (decide) what to do.
- g) It (not/be) long before Doctor Smith is here.
- h) We'll go to the park when you (finish) your tea.
- i) It's very hot in here. I think I (faint).
- j) What (you/give) Ann for her birthday? Have you decided yet?

2 In most lines of this text there is an extra word. Write the extra word, or put a tick if the line is correct.

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| In August Gordon will then have been at his company for 25 years, | 1 <i>then</i> |
| and he's getting for a bonus of three weeks paid holiday. So we've | 2 |
| decided to hire a car and drive around Eastern Europe. We'll be | 3 |
| leaving towards the end of August, and our aim there is to visit as | 4 |
| many countries as we can. We're flying out to Budapest – soon we're | 5 |
| due to catch a plane on the 28th day – and then we'll be stopping over | 6 |
| at a friend's house, before starting our grand tour. We'll most probably | 7 |
| spend the best part of a week in Hungary. When we've just finished | 8 |
| there, we'll probably be go to Romania, but beyond that we haven't | 9 |
| planned too much arrangements. We will know a bit more by the end | 10 |
| of this week, when we're getting a whole load of brochures from the | 11 |
| tourist board. We'd like to get to as far as Russia, but realistically I | 12 |
| doubt whether we'll have time. I hope it won't be too expensive – | 13 |
| from till now on we'll really have to tighten our belts! I can't wait! | 14 |
| In just over two months' of time we'll be having the time of our lives! | 15 |

3 Choose the most appropriate continuation for each sentence.



- a) According to the latest forecast, the tunnel
 A will be finished next year. B will have been finished next year.
 C is finishing next year.
- b) Paula's flight is bound to be late although
 A it arrives at 6.00. B it's due at 6.00. C it's arriving at six.
- c) It's no use phoning Bob at the office, he
 A will be leaving. B is leaving. C will have left.
- d) Everyone says that this year City
 A are going to win the Cup. B are winning the Cup. C win the Cup.
- e) I don't feel like visiting my relatives this year so
 A I won't go. B I'm not going. C I don't go.
- f) You can borrow this calculator, I
 A am not going to need it. B won't have been needing it.
 C am not needing it.
- g) I'm sorry dinner isn't ready yet, but it
 A is going to be ready in a minute. B will have been ready in a minute.
 C will be ready in a minute.
- h) Can you send me the results as soon as you
 A hear anything? B are hearing anything? C will have heard anything?
- i) You can try asking Martin for help but
 A it won't do you any good. B it's not doing you any good.
 C it won't be doing you any good.
- j) Don't worry about the mistake you made, nobody
 A is noticing. B will notice. C will be noticing.

4 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

- a) I don't suppose you have heard the news.

won't

You *won't have heard* the news.

- b) The Prime Minister expects an easy victory for his party in the election.

believes

The Prime Minister the election easily.

- c) I've been in this company for almost three years.

will

By the end of the month in this company for three years.

- d) This book will take me two years to write.

have

In two years' this book.

- e) Scientists are on the point of making a vital breakthrough.

about

Scientists are a vital breakthrough.

- f) Maria is pregnant again.

have

Maria is baby.

- g) I'll be home late.

until

I late.

- h) No one knows what the result of the match is going to be.

who

No one knows the match.

- i) Don't worry; David won't be late.

here

Don't worry; David time.

- j) Mary and Alan's wedding is next weekend.

getting

Mary and Alan next weekend.

- 5 Look at the three options A, B and C for each question. Decide which two are correct.



- a) We've run out of fuel. B, C
 A What will we do now? B What do we do now?
 C What are we going to do now?
- b) You can't leave early,
 A we're having a meeting. B we're going to have a meeting.
 C we will have a meeting.
- c) Oh dear, I've broken the vase.
 A What will your mother say? B What is your mother going to say?
 C What is your mother saying?
- d) According to the weather forecast,
 A it'll rain tomorrow. B it's raining tomorrow.
 C it's going to rain tomorrow.
- e) I'd like to call round and see you.
 A What will you have done by the morning? B What'll you be doing in the morning?
 C What are you doing in the morning?
- f) I've got nothing to do tomorrow so
 A I'll get up late. B I am to get up late. C I'm going to get up late.
- g) It's my eighteenth birthday next month so
 A I'm on the point of having a party. B I'm having a party.
 C I'll be having a party.
- h) Why don't you come with us?
 A It'll be a great trip. B It's going to be a great trip. C It's a great trip.
- i) When you get to the airport
 A someone is going to be waiting for you.
 B someone is due to wait for you. C someone will be waiting for you.
- j) Shut up, will you!
 A I'm getting really angry. B I'm going to get really angry in a minute.
 C I'm getting really angry in a minute.

6 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) I'll be back *after a few minutes/in a few minutes*.
- b) I'm sure that everything will be all right *at the end/in the end*.
- c) Please call me *the moment/exactly when* you hear any news.
- d) I should be back *by the time/at the time* the film begins.
- e) I'm sure Fiona will be here *before long/after a while*.
- f) I can't leave on Tuesday. I won't be ready *until then/by then*.
- g) By *twenty four hours/this time tomorrow* I'll be in Bangkok.
- h) Diana will be retiring *soon/already*.
- i) There will be no official announcements *forthwith/from now on*.
- j) Bye for now. I'll see you *in two weeks' time/two weeks later*.

7 Complete the common expressions using the words from the box.

let give be go ~~see~~ come have go be see

- a) I'll*see*..... what I can do.
- b) I'll a look and get back to you.
- c) I'll it some thought.
- d) I'll you know by tomorrow.
- e) I'll just and get it.
- f) I'll halves with you.
- g) I'll to it.
- h) I'll back in a minute.
- i) I'll about five minutes.
- j) I'll and show you.

Which expression means one of the following?

- 1) I will try and do this for you.
- 2) I'll share it with you.
- 3) I'll fix it/arrange it.

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 5: Consolidation
Grammar 8: Conditionals
Grammar 11 and 12: Modals

Explanations

Basic contrasts:
past simple and
past continuous

- Past simple generally refers to:

Completed actions

I got up, switched off the radio, and sat down again.

Habits

Every day I went to the park.

States

In those days, I didn't like reading.

- Past continuous (progressive) generally refers to:

Actions in progress (often interrupted by events)

I was drinking my coffee at the time.

While I was opening the letter, the phone rang.

Background description in narrative

I entered the office and looked around. Most people were working at their desks, but Jane was staring out of the window and pretending to write something at the same time.

Changing states

The car was getting worse all the time. One of the headlights was gradually falling off, and the engine was making more and more funny noises.

Repeated actions – criticism

With a frequency adverb, this use is similar to the use of present continuous to express annoyance.

When Jane was at school, she was always losing things.

- Past continuous is not used to describe general habitual actions, without the sense of criticism mentioned above. Past simple is used for this meaning.

When I lived in London, I walked through the park every day.

Past perfect
simple and
continuous

- We use the past perfect when we are already talking about the past, and we want to go back to an earlier past time ('double past').

By the time I got to the station, the train had left.

Compare this with:

The train left five minutes before I got to the station.

When we talk about a sequence of past events in the order that they happened, we more commonly use the past simple, especially with quick, short actions.

- Past perfect continuous (progressive)

The same contrasts between past simple and past continuous (see previous section) can be made in past perfect verb forms for events further back in the past.

Used

Unfu
event

Polite

Contr
prese
verb 1

*I **had been living** in a bed-sitter up to then.*

*While I **had been talking** on the phone, Jimmy **had escaped**.*

*The whole place was deserted, but it was obvious that someone **had been living** there. They'd **been cooking** in the kitchen for a start, and they hadn't bothered to clear up the mess.*

- Past perfect is also common in reported speech. See Grammar 16.
- Past perfect is not used simply to describe an event in the distant past.

Used to and would

■ Used to

This often contrasts with the present. The contrast may be stated or understood.

*I **used to go swimming** a lot (but I don't now).*

The negative form is either:

*I **didn't use to** or I **used not to** (rare for some speakers).*

The form *I didn't used to* may also be found. This is usually considered incorrect, unless we consider *used to* as an unchanging semi-modal form. There is no present time reference possible.

■ Would

This is used to describe repeated actions, not states. It describes a habitual activity which was typical of a person.

*Every week he'd **buy** his mother a bunch of flowers.*

Used to would also be possible here. Compare:

*I **used to like** cowboy films.*

Would is not possible here.

Would is more common in written language and often occurs in reminiscences.

Unfulfilled past events

- These describe events intended to take place, but which did not happen.

*I **was going to phone** you, but I forgot.*

*I **was thinking of going** to Italy this year, but I haven't decided.*

*I **was about to do** it, but I started doing something else.*

*Jack **was to have taken part**, but he fell ill.*

- The contrasting past event is often understood, but not stated.

*How are you? I **was going to phone** you ... (but I didn't).*

Polite forms

These are common with *wonder*.

*I **was wondering** if you wanted to come to the cinema.*

See Grammar 11 and 12 for comment on this.

Contrasts with present perfect verb forms

See Grammar 4 for contrasts between past simple and present perfect verb forms. Past verb forms are also used to express unreal time. See Grammar 8 and 9.

Practice

1 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) When you passed the town hall clock, did you notice/were you noticing what time it was?
- b) Last night my neighbours were shouting/would shout for hours and I couldn't get to sleep.
- c) When you lived in London, did you use to travel/were you travelling by bus?
- d) Everyone was having a good time, although not many people danced/were dancing.
- e) Jill was really hungry because she didn't eat/hadn't eaten all day.
- f) Before we went to the theatre, we called in/had called in at George's café for a pizza.
- g) It took a while for me to notice, but then I did. Everyone stared/was staring at me. What had I done wrong?
- h) Nobody bothered to tell me that the school decided/had decided to have a special holiday on Friday.
- i) I was trying/tried to get in touch with you all day yesterday. Where were you?
- j) A: Excuse me, but this seat is mine.
B: I'm sorry, I didn't realise/hadn't realised that you were sitting here.

2 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) Once/Afterwards I'd read the manual, I found I could use the computer easily.
- b) It was more than a month before/until I realised what had happened.
- c) I managed to talk to Carol just as/while she was leaving.
- d) It wasn't until/up to 1983 that Nigel could afford to take holidays abroad.
- e) George always let me know by the time/whenever he was going to be late.
- f) I was having a bath at the time/that time, so I didn't hear the doorbell.
- g) We bought our tickets and five minutes after/later the train arrived.
- h) According to Grandpa, people used to dress formally those days/in his day.
- i) Everyone was talking but stopped at that time/the moment Mr Smith arrived.
- j) The letter still hadn't arrived by/until the end of the week.

3 Decide if the verb form underlined is correct or not. If it is correct, write a tick. If not, correct it.

Text 1: The train (1) ground to a halt at a small station miles from London, and it (2) became apparent that the engine (3) had broken down. Everyone (4) was getting their cases down from the luggage racks, and we (5) were waiting on the platform in the freezing wind for hours until the next train (6) was turning up.

1	✓	3		5	
2		4		6	

Text 2: The mysterious disappearance of Professor Dawson (1) was on Inspector Gorse's mind. Six months before the Professor's disappearance, he (2) was receiving a letter from Jean Dawson, the Professor's wife. In the letter, Jean (3) accused her husband of plotting to murder her. Gorse (4) considered what his next step should be when the phone rang. It was Sergeant Adams from the Thames Valley police force. A fisherman (5) discovered a body in the River Thames, and it (6) fitted the description of the Professor.

1		3		5	
2		4		6	

4 Put each verb in brackets into a suitable past verb form.

This time last year I (1) was cycling (cycle) in the rain along a country road in France with a friend of mine. We (2) (decide) to go on a cycling holiday in Normandy. Neither of us (3) (be) to France before, but we (4) (know) some French from our time at school and we (5) (manage) to brush up on the basics. Now we (6) (wonder) if we (7) (make) the right decision. We (8) (plan) our route carefully in advance, but we (9) (forget) one important thing, the weather. It (10) (rain) solidly since our arrival and that night we (11) (end up) sleeping in the waiting room at a railway station. Then the next morning as we (12) (ride) down a steep hill my bike (13) (skid) on the wet road and I (14) (fall off). I (15) (realise) immediately that I (16) (break) my arm, and after a visit to the local hospital I (17) (catch) the next train to Calais for the ferry home. Unfortunately my parents (18) (not/expect) me home for a fortnight, and (19) (go) away on holiday. So I (20) (spend) a miserable couple of weeks alone, reading 'Teach Yourself French'.

5 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

- a) I intended to call you yesterday, but I forgot.
going
 I *was going to* call you yesterday, but I forgot.
- b) Sylvia asked if I wanted more pudding, but I said I couldn't eat any more.
had
 When Sylvia offered enough.
- c) Owing to illness, Sally was unable to sing the solo, as arranged.
have
 Sally was but she fell ill.
- d) Diana wasn't always as rude as that.
be
 Diana rude.
- e) We've changed our minds about going to Rome, as originally intended.
intending
 We we've changed our minds.
- f) When I lived in London cycling to work was part of my daily routine.
used
 When I lived in London I day.
- g) I might possibly go to the theatre tonight.
wondering
 I going to the theatre tonight.
- h) I had to go past your house so I decided to drop in.
passing
 I so I decided to drop in.
- i) About 100 people were waiting for the late bus.
arrived
 By about 100 people waiting.
- j) What were you doing at the moment of the explosion?
occurred
 When what were you doing?

6 In each sentence decide whether one, or both, of the alternative verb forms given are appropriate. Write O for one or B for both.

- a) In those days, I always *used to get up/got up* early in the morning. ^B.....
- b) When I got to the cinema Jack *had been waiting/was waiting* for me.
- c) We *would always have/were always having* breakfast in bed on Sundays.
- d) Mary *was always falling/always fell* ill before important examinations.
- e) My sister *used to own/would own* a motorcycle and sidecar.
- f) Pay no attention to Dave's remarks. He *wasn't meaning/didn't mean* it.
- g) I felt awful after lunch. I *ate/had eaten* too much.
- h) Brenda *left/had left* before I had time to talk to her.
- i) The explanation was simple. In 1781 HMS Sovereign, on her way back from India, *had sighted/sighted* an empty boat drifting off the African coast.
- j) Pauline has changed a lot. She *didn't always use to look/wasn't always looking* like that.

7 Complete the text by writing one word in each space.

When I was a young man I spent a year in France, studying French at the University of Grenoble. Every Friday I (1) *would* eat at the Alps café. I didn't (2) to spend much money, as I (3) not afford it, but it was a little tradition of mine to eat there. Anyway, I'm going to tell you a true story which happened on one occasion when I (4) eating there. I remember I was having a pasta dish at (5) time. A beautiful girl came up to me and said, 'I was (6) if you wanted to walk with me in the park?' I had never seen her (7) , so I was rather taken aback. I was (8) to go with her when I noticed a tough-looking man was watching our every movement. (9) my discomfort, the girl whispered to me, in English, 'Park – five minutes!', and then disappeared. Well, my bill (10) ages to arrive, and by the time I (11) to the park, there was no sign of the girl. I asked an old lady (12) was sitting there if she (13) seen a young girl waiting around. I described the girl to her. The old lady said that the girl (14) had to rush to the railway station, and that I (15) to follow her there urgently. She had also left me a note. It said, 'I will explain everything. Meet me on platform 6.'

8 Put each verb in brackets into a suitable past verb form.

- a) I realised that someone *was stealing* (steal) my wallet when I *felt* (feel) their hand in my jacket pocket.
- b) When I (phone) Helen last night she (wash) her hair.
- c) Peter (offer) me another drink but I decided I (had) enough.
- d) Nobody (watch), so the little boy (take) the packet of sweets from the shelf and (put) it in his pocket.
- e) I (not/realise) that I (leave) my umbrella on the bus until it (start) to rain.
- f) At school I (dislike) the maths teacher because he (always/pick) on me.
- g) Wherever Marion (find) a job, there was someone who (know) that she (go) to prison.
- h) Several years later I (find out) that during all the time I (write) to my pen friend, my mother (open) and reading the replies!
- i) I (not/understand) what (go on). Several people (shout) at me, and one passer-by (wave) a newspaper in front of my face.
- j) I (know) I (do) well in my exams even before I (receive) the official results.

Present
simple

Present
continuous

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 4: Present perfect
Grammar 5: Consolidation 1
Grammar 8: Conditionals
Grammar 9: Unreal time
Grammar 11 and 12: Modals
Grammar 16: Reported speech

Present perfect

Explanations

Present perfect
simple

- Present perfect simple refers to:

Recent events, without a definite time given. The recentness may be indicated by *just*.

We've missed the turning. I've just seen a ghost!

Indefinite events, which happened at an unknown time in the past. No definite time is given.

Jim has had three car accidents. (up to the present)

Indefinite events which may have an obvious result in the present.

I've twisted my ankle. (that's why I'm limping)

With state verbs, a state which lasts up to the present.

I've lived here for the past ten years.

A habitual action in a period of time up to the present.

I've been jogging every morning for the last month.

- Contrast with past simple

Past simple is used with time expressions which refer to definite times. The time may be stated or understood. Compare:

I've bought a new car. (indefinite)

I bought the car after all. (implied definite: the car we talked about)

Choice between past simple and present perfect for recent events may depend on the attitude of the speaker. This in turn may depend on whether the speaker feels distant in time or place from the event.

I've left my wallet in the car. I'm going back to get it.

Here the speaker may be about to return, and feels that the event is connected with the present.

I left my wallet in the car. I'm going back to get it.

The speaker may feel separated in time from the event, or be further away.

- Present perfect continuous (progressive) can refer to a range of meanings, depending on the time expression used and the context.

A state which lasts up to the present moment

I've been waiting for you for three hours!

An incomplete activity

I've been cleaning the house but I still haven't finished.

To emphasise duration

I've been writing letters all morning.

A recently finished activity

I've been running. That's why I look hot.

A repeated activity

I've been taking French lessons this year.

Present perfect
continuous

■ Contrasts with present perfect simple

There may be little contrast when some state verbs are used.

*How long have you **lived** here?*

*How long have you **been living** here?*

Some verbs (especially *sit, lie, wait* and *stay*) prefer the continuous form.

There may be a contrast between completion and incompleteness, especially if the number of items completed is mentioned.

Completed: emphasis on achievement

*I've **ironed** five shirts this morning.*

Incomplete, or recently completed: emphasis on duration

*I've **been ironing** my shirts this morning.*

Time expressions
with present
perfect

Meaning with present perfect verb forms is associated with certain time expressions.

Contrast with past simple may depend on the choice of time expression.

Past simple: referring to a specific finished time.

yesterday, last week, on Sunday

Present perfect: with 'indefinite' time expressions meaning 'up to now'.

since 1968, already

Many time expressions are not associated with a specific verb form, since they refer both to finished time or time up to the present, depending on the speaker's perspective.

*I haven't seen Helen **recently**.*

*I saw Jim **recently**.*

Others include:

for, never, before, all my life, for a long time, today, all day, every day

These may be used with either past simple or present perfect.

Practice

1 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) I can't believe it, Inspector. You mean that Smith *stole/has stolen/has been stealing* money from the till all this time!
- b) You three boys look very guilty! What *did you do/have you done/have you been doing* since I *left/have left* the room?
- c) Why on earth *didn't you tell/haven't you told* me about that loose floorboard? I *tripped/have tripped* over it just now and hurt myself.
- d) It's a long time since I *saw/have seen/have been seeing* your brother Paul. What *did he do/has he done/has he been doing* lately?
- e) I can't believe that you *ate/have eaten/have been eating* three pizzas already! I *only brought/have only brought* them in fifteen minutes ago!
- f) Don't forget that you *didn't see/haven't seen* Mrs Dawson. She *has waited/has been waiting* outside since 10.30.
- g) What *did you think/have you thought* of Brighton? *Did you stay/Have you stayed* there long?
- h) I feel really tired. I *weeded/have weeded/have been weeding* the garden for the last three hours and I *didn't rest/haven't rested* for a single moment.
- i) I'm having problems with David. He *has called/has been calling* me up in the middle of the night and *told/telling* me his troubles.
- j) How long *did you have/have you had/have you been having* driving lessons? And *did you take/have you taken/have you been taking* your test yet?

2 Decide how many different endings (1–10) you can find for sentences (a–j). The sentences you make must be appropriate and meaningful.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| a) I haven't been feeling very well ... <u>5, 8</u> | 1 time and time again. |
| b) I went to the dentist's | 2 all my life. |
| c) I've lived here | 3 so far. |
| d) Don't worry. I haven't been waiting | 4 for the time being. |
| e) I've written two pages | 5 for the past hour or two. |
| f) I waited outside your house | 6 yet. |
| g) I've warned you about this | 7 till half past eight. |
| h) I haven't made a decision | 8 for a while. |
| i) The repair worked | 9 the other day. |
| j) I've decided to believe you | 10 long. |

3 Put each verb in brackets into the most appropriate perfect or past verb form.



- a) So far we *haven't noticed* (not/notice) anything unusual, but we
..... (not/pay) very close attention.
- b) I'm sorry I (not/come) to class lately.
- c) I (work) late in the evenings for the past
fortnight.
- d) I wonder if Mary (reach) home yet? She
..... (leave) too late to catch the bus.
- e) Here is the news. The Home Office (announce)
that the two prisoners who (escape) from
Dartmoor prison earlier this morning (give
themselves up) to local police.
- f) (you/make up) your minds? What
..... (you/decide) to do?
- g) Harry (leave) home rather suddenly and we
..... (not/hear) from him since.
- h) Recent research (show) that Columbus
..... (not/discover) America, but that Vikings
..... (land) there five hundred years before him.
- i) I think that people (become) tired of the poor
quality of television programmes, though they
(improve) lately.
- j) (something/happen) to the phone lines? I
..... (try) to get through to Glasgow for the past
hour.
- k) Bill (get) that new job, but he
..... (complain) about it ever since.

4 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

- a) This has been my home for thirty years.

lived

I *have lived here* for thirty years.

- b) Eating Chinese food is new to me.

never

I before.

- c) Tony hasn't been to Paris before.

first

It's to Paris.

- d) We haven't been swimming for ages.

since

It's swimming.

- e) Mary started learning French five years ago.

has

Mary five years.

- f) I am on the tenth page of this letter I am writing.

ten

So far I of this letter.

- g) It's over twenty years since they got married.

for

They have than twenty years.

- h) The last time I saw Dick was in 1995.

seen

I haven't 1995.

- i) There is a definite improvement in your work.

has

Lately improved.

- j) This is my second visit to Hungary.

visited

This is the Hungary.

5 Underline the correct phrase in each sentence.

- a) The price of petrol has risen/has been rising by 15% over the past year.
- b) No wonder you are overweight! *You have eaten*/You have been eating chocolates all day long!
- c) *I've read*/I've been reading a really good book this morning.
- d) Doesn't this room look better? *I've put*/I've been putting some posters up on the walls.
- e) Don't disappoint me! *I've counted*/I've been counting on you.
- f) Don't forget your pills today. *Have you taken them*/Have you been taking them?
- g) Who *has worn*/has been wearing my scarf?
- h) I think there's something wrong with your motorbike. *It's made*/It's been making some very funny noises.
- i) Jack *has asked*/has been asking for a pay-rise three times this year.
- j) *I've been phoning*/I've phoned Ann all evening, but there's no reply.

6 Put each verb in brackets into either the past simple, present perfect simple or present perfect continuous.

- I (1) moved (move) to London three weeks ago to take up a new post at my company's London office. Ever since then, I (2) (wonder) if I (3) (make) the right decision.
- I (4) (see) a lot of negative things about living in the capital, and I can't say London (5) (make) a very favourable impression on me. It's so polluted and expensive, and the people are so distant. You see, I (6) (grow up) in a fairly small town called Devizes and I (7) (spend) all of my life there.
- I (8) (always/want) to live in a big city and so when my company (9) (offer) me a job in London, I (10) (jump) at the chance.

I think I'm not alone in my aversion to the big city. According to a programme I (11) (just/hear) on the radio, more and more people (12) (stop) working in London recently, and a lot of large companies (13) (choose) to move away from the centre. Oh well, it's too late to change my mind now, because the job is up and running, and I (14) (already/sell) my house in Devizes. But I must admit, over the past few days, I (15) (secretly/hope) that the company would relocate me back to my old town.

7 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.



- a) It's a long time since/when I last saw you.
- b) I've seen Bill quite often lately/from time to time.
- c) Have you spoken to the director beforehand/already?
- d) I've lived in the same house for years/for ever.
- e) I've read the paper now/still.
- f) Diana has bought a computer two years ago/since then.
- g) Nothing much has been happening by now/so far.
- h) I've finished reading her new book at last/this evening.
- i) Sue bought a CD player last week and she's been listening to music ever since/for a while.
- j) Sorry, but I haven't got that work finished already/yet.

8 Match the expressions (a-j) with the explanations of when they might be said (1-10).

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Have you heard the one about ... ? ... ⁴ | 1 Saying you don't follow what someone is saying. |
| b) I haven't seen you for ages! | 2 Having doubts about a big decision. |
| c) I've had enough of this! | 3 Having a brilliant idea. |
| d) Sorry, you've lost me! | 4 Introducing a joke. |
| e) I've had a brainwave! | 5 Declining more food. |
| f) It's been one of those days! | 6 Spreading gossip. |
| g) I've had enough, thanks. | 7 Seeing an old face from the past. |
| h) I haven't had a chance yet. | 8 Having a frustrating time, when everything is going wrong. |
| i) I've been having second thoughts. | 9 Wanting to stop doing something because it's annoying you. |
| j) Oh, haven't you heard? | 10 Apologising for not doing something you said you'd do. |

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 3: Past tenses
Grammar 5: Consolidation 1