

ENGLISH 3AC · SEMESTER 1

Present simple or continuous? English 3AC

Compare present simple and present continuous in English 3AC. Describe routines and actions happening now, with illustrated examples and answers.

Key points

- Use present simple for routines: I read every day.
- Use am, is or are + -ing for an action happening now.
- Use does + base verb: Does he read?

Learning goals

- Describe a habit with the present simple.
- Describe an action happening now.
- Use the correct auxiliary in a question.

When do you use the present simple?

Use the present simple for routines, repeated actions and general facts. I walk to school every day describes a routine. My brother plays chess on Saturdays describes a repeated activity. With he, she or it, an affirmative verb usually takes -s or -es: reads, goes, watches.

Use do or does for questions and negatives with most verbs: Do you walk to school? He doesn't walk to school. After does or doesn't, use the base verb. Does he walks? has two marks for the same present-simple form and is incorrect. The verb be has its own forms: Are you ready?



Contrast a usual activity with an action happening now: He usually cycles. He is writing now.

How do you form the present continuous?

Use am, is or are followed by a verb ending in -ing: I am reading; he is writing; they are playing. In a negative, add not after be: They aren't playing. In a question, move be before the subject: Are they playing? Do not forget be.

For most verbs, add -ing. Drop the final silent e in write: writing. In a short stressed verb such as run, double the final consonant: running. Learn these common forms through short sentences. This lesson uses actions happening now; other uses can be studied later.

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ROUTINE OR NOW?

Choose the tense from the situation.

1 Every day
He reads at the library.



2 At the moment
He is reading at home.



3 A question
Does he read? / Is he reading?

Read the examples. Explain the pattern. Make your own sentence.

Choose the tense from the situation.

How do you choose between the two tenses?

Read the whole situation. Every day and usually often describe habits; now and at the moment often point to current actions. They help, but meaning decides the tense. Compare I usually cycle to school with Today I am walking because my bicycle needs a repair. Common state verbs such as know and like normally use the simple form in these beginner contexts: I like English, not I am liking English.

A worked example

A usual day and a change today

Yassine usually studies at the library after school. Today, he is studying at home because the library is closed. His brother is helping him now.

- Usually studies describes a repeated habit.
- Is studying describes today's current activity.

- Is helping contains be and an -ing form.

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BUILD BOTH FORMS

Do not repeat -s after does; do not forget be before -ing.

1 Present simple
He plays. He doesn't play.



2 Present continuous
He is playing. He isn't playing.



3 Common repairs
Does he play? / He is writing.

Read the examples. Explain the pattern. Make your own sentence.

Do not repeat -s after does; do not forget be before -ing.

How should I use this English 3AC lesson?

- Try the exercises before reading the answers.
- Explain a correction in your own words.
- Return to the examples when two structures look similar.

Exercises: try before reading the answers

1. A habit

Complete: He usually ____ (walk) to school.

2. Now

Complete: Listen! The boys ____ (sing).

3. A simple question

Correct: Does she reads every day?

4. A continuous negative

Make negative: Sami is running.

5. Choose the tense

Complete: I usually cycle, but today I _____ (walk).

6. Write your own contrast

Write a sentence about a usual activity and a different activity now.

Answers and explanations

1. A habit

Walks. The subject he needs the present-simple -s.

2. Now

Are singing. Use are with boys and the -ing form.

3. A simple question

Does she read every day? Use read after does.

4. A continuous negative

Sami isn't running. Put not after is.

5. Choose the tense

Am walking. Today describes the current change in this situation.

6. Write your own contrast

Possible answer: I usually read after lunch, but now I am drawing a map. The first clause is a habit and the second describes now.

Frequently asked questions

What is the difference between present simple and present continuous?

The present simple describes routines or facts. The present continuous, am/is/are + -ing, describes an action happening now in this lesson.

Do I write does he plays or does he play?

Write Does he play? Does already marks the third-person present form.

Can I leave out am, is or are?

No. He writing is incomplete. Write He is writing.

Revision resource: follow the units, instructions and pace set by your teacher.

[Read the full lesson and practise on MATHFJIB.](#)