Unit 1

1.1 Present simple and present continuous Present simple

Affirmative

I/We / You / They play. He / She / It plays.

Negative

I/We / You / They don't play. He / She / It doesn't play.

Questions

Do I / we / you / they play? Does he / she / it play?

Short answers

Yes, I / we / you / they do. Yes, he / she / it does. No, I / we / you / they don't. No, he / she / it doesn't.

We use the present simple for:

- facts or general truths.
 My grandmother speaks five languages.
- routines or habits (often with adverbs of frequency).
 My sister always plays volleyball at the weekend.
- permanent states.
 We live in Sevenoaks.
- timetabled events in the future.
 The film starts at eight o'clock in the evening.

Note: We often use these common time expressions with the present simple: every day / week / month / summer, every other day, once a week, twice a month, at the weekend, in January, in the morning / afternoon / evening, at night, on Tuesdays, on Friday mornings, etc.

Adverbs of frequency

We use adverbs of frequency to say how often something happens. They come before the main verb but after the verb be.

Jeremy is often tired in the morning.

Mum always makes our birthday cakes.

Some common adverbs of frequency are (from the most to the least often):

always, usually, often, sometimes, rarely / hardly ever / seldom, never.

Present continuous

Affirmative

l am ('m) playing. He / She / It is ('s) playing. We / You / They are ('re) playing.

Negative

l am ('m) not playing. He / She / It is not (isn't) playing. We / You / They are not (aren't) playing

Questions

Am I playing?
Is he / she / it playing?
Are we / you / they playing?

Short answers

Yes, I am. Yes, he / she / it is. No, I'm not.

No, he / she / it isn't. No, we / you / they aren't.

Spelling: make → making swim → swimming

Yes, we / you / they are.

study → studying

We use the present continuous for:

 actions that are in progress at or around the time of speaking.
 We're watching a DVD about elephants.

- actions that are temporary.
 My cousin is staying with us this weekend.
- situations that are changing or developing in the present. Family members are living further away from each other.
- an annoying habit (often with always, continually, constantly and forever).
 My brother is forever complaining about his homework.
- plans and arrangements for the future.
 We're visiting my aunt this Saturday.

Note: We use these common time expressions with the present continuous: at the moment, now, for the time being, this morning / afternoon / evening / week / month / year, today, etc.

1.2 Stative verbs

Some verbs are not usually used in continuous tenses. They are called *stative* because they describe states and not actions. To talk about the present, we use these verbs in the present simple tense. These are the most common.

- verbs of emotion: hate, like, love, need, prefer, want.
 Jane loves her new house.
- verbs of senses: feel, hear, see, smell, sound, taste.
 This soup tastes delicious.
- verbs expressing a state of mind: believe, doubt, forget, imagine, know, remember, seem, suppose, think, understand.
 I think that's a great idea!
- verbs of possession: belong to, have, own, possess.
 This flat belongs to my aunt.
- other verbs: be, consist, contain, cost, include, mean.
 Those curtains cost a fortune.

Some verbs can be both stative and action verbs but with a different meaning. These are the most common.

- be
 John is very honest. (usual behaviour)
 Ken is being very rude. (at the moment; not his normal behaviour)
- expect
 I expect you enjoyed your holiday. (= think or believe)
 I'm expecting a letter from my grandma. (= wait for)

Grammar reference

have
 Lucy has a lovely house. (= own / possess)
 Susan's having a great time at her cousin's house!
 (= experience)
 Gerty's having lunch with her parents today. (= eating
 Note: We can use both have and have got for possession. The meaning is the same, but have got is

more informal. We can't use have got as an action ver

- look
 She looks like her mother. (= resemble)
 Are you looking for your keys? (= search)
- taste
 This soup tastes horrible! (= have a particular flavour)
 Why are you tasting the sauce? (= test the flavour)
- think
 I think you're mad! (= have an opinion)
 Jenny's thinking of going to France. (= consider)
- see
 'Paul is my mum's brother.' 'Oh, I see.' (= understand)
 'I'm seeing Wendy tomorrow evening.' (= meet)
- smell
 These flowers smell wonderful. (= have a particular sme Why are you smelling the milk? (= action of smelling)
- weigh
 Jill weighs 48 kg. (= have a particular weight)
 I'm weighing my suitcase to see how heavy it is.
 (= measure the weight)