



# Present Simple v Present Continuous Use

# Present Tense Use

The present simple and the present continuous tenses are both used to talk about the present time.

# Present Tense Use

Both tenses express a very similar time but there are a few differences. Let's review the uses of both tenses and discuss the differences.

# Present Tense Use

The present simple tense can be represented like this on a timeline.



# Present Tense Use

The present simple tense has five main uses.

Present Simple Use	Example Sentences
Personal Information	My name is Hannah. I am 27 years old.
Facts and Truths	The world is round. The capital of England is London.
Habits	I play tennis every Saturday. I go to school every day.
Future Events	She has English class tomorrow. The restaurant opens at 7pm tonight.
Stative Verbs	Want, think, feel, love

# Present Tense Use

The present continuous tense can be represented like this on a timeline.



# Present Tense Use

The present continuous tense has five uses.

Present Simple Use	Example Sentences
Right Now	I am teaching you. You are reviewing the present continuous tense.
Process	I'm studying to become a teacher. I am learning English.
Before and After	At 7am I'm normally having a shower. I'm usually watching TV when my husband arrives home.
Future Events	My mum is visiting me on Sunday. We're having a party next weekend.
Change in State	The children are growing up so quickly. People are using emails instead of writing letters.

# Present Tense Use

But there are a few similarities in these uses,  
so we need to choose the tense carefully.



# Present Tense Use

We use the present simple tense to talk about habits and we use the present continuous tense to talk about a regular event that happens at a certain time (the before and after structure).

# Present Tense Use

Consider these two examples, what is the difference in meaning?

Present Simple	Present Continuous
At 7am I have a shower	At 7am I am usually having a shower

# Present Tense Use

Present Simple	Present Continuous
At 7am I have a shower	At 7am I am usually having a shower

The present simple tense tells us about a daily routine that happens almost 100% of the time, it's a habit.

# Present Tense Use

Present Simple	Present Continuous
At 7am I have a shower	At 7am I am usually having a shower

The present continuous tense is more flexible. Firstly, it means that it doesn't happen 100% of the time, it is less regular (e.g. 80% of the time).

# Present Tense Use

Present Simple	Present Continuous
At 7am I have a shower	At 7am I am usually having a shower

Additional words such as **usually, normally, often** and **typically** are used in the present continuous tense to reinforce this flexibility.

# Present Tense Use

Present Simple	Present Continuous
At 7am I have a shower	At 7am I am usually having a shower

Secondly, the time is flexible too in the present continuous tense. “At 7am” also means a little bit before and a little bit after (e.g. 6.55am or 7.10am).

# Present Tense Use

Both the present simple and the present continuous can be used to talk about future events, so what is the difference?

Present Simple	Present Continuous
She has English class tomorrow The restaurant opens at 7pm tonight	My mum is visiting me on Saturday We're having a party this weekend

# Present Tense Use

Present Simple	Present Continuous
She has English class tomorrow The restaurant opens at 7pm tonight	My mum is visiting me on Saturday We're having a party this weekend

We use the present simple to talk about future events that are scheduled with a set timetable or are pre-planned and organised.



# Present Tense Use

Present Simple	Present Continuous
She has English class tomorrow The restaurant opens at 7pm tonight	My mum is visiting me on Saturday We're having a party this weekend

We use the present continuous to talk about future events that have no specific schedule and that involve other people in the event.

# Present Tense Use

The final thing to be aware of is that stative verbs can only be used in the present simple tense.

## Present Tense Use

We cannot say “**I’m liking this chocolate**”  
because like is a stative verb.

Instead, we must use the present simple  
tense “**I like this chocolate**”.

