

# Present simple tense

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## Forms

Positive statement: *I play, He plays*

Negative statement: *I do not play (I don't play), He does not play (He doesn't play)*

Questions: *Do you play? Does he play?*

Negative questions: *Do you not play? (Don't you play?) Does he not play? (Doesn't he play?)*

Negative questions normally express a surprise.

*Doesn't he work?*

## Wh- questions

If the wh- pronoun introducing the question (who, which) is the subject of the question, we do not use the auxiliary verb 'do'. Compare the following sentences.

*Who knows you? (who is the subject)*

*Which cars belong to you? (which cars is the subject)*

But:

*Who do you know? (who is the object)*

*Which cars do you like? (which cars is the object)*

## The third person singular

We use -s ending (*plays*) and -es ending (*goes*) in the third person singular.

*Peter plays tennis.*

*My son goes to primary school.*

In questions we use does in the third person singular + the bare infinitive (= play, not plays).

*Does Peter play tennis?*

Spelling rules:

We add -es to the verb that ends in ss, sh, ch, x and o.

*miss - misses, fix - fixes, go - goes*

If the verb ends in a consonant and -y we change -y into -i and add -es.

*carry - carries, try - tries*

But *play - plays*, because it ends in a vowel and -y.

## The verb to be

The verb 'to be' has completely different forms.

Positive: *I am, you are, he/she/it is, we are, they are*

Short forms: *I'm, you're, he's, she's, it's, we're, they're*

*I am from India. He is ill. They are funny.*

Negative: *I am not, you are not, he/she/it is not, we are not, they are not*

Short forms: *I'm not, you aren't (you're not), he - she - it isn't (he's not, she's not, it's not), we aren't (we're not), they aren't (they're not)*

*I am not hungry. He is not English. They are not here.*

Questions: *Am I? Are you? Is he/she/it? Are we? Are they?*

Negative questions: *Am I not? Are you not? Is he - she - it not? Are we not? Are they not?*

Short forms: *Aren't you? Isn't he - she - it? Aren't we? Aren't they?*

*Am I your friend? Is he in London? Are they at school?*

*Am I not your friend? Is he not in London? Are they not at school? (Isn't he in London? Aren't they at school?)*

## Modal verbs

The auxiliary verb do, does is not used to make questions or negative forms.

*Can you sing? Must I come?*

*I cannot swim. He mustn't stay.*

## Use

1. We use the present simple tense for activities that happen again and again (everyday, sometimes, ever, never).

*I sometimes go to school by bike. You don't speak Greek. Do they get up early?*

*He often travels. She doesn't work. Does she ever help you?*

2. We use it for facts that are always true.

*Our planet moves round the sun. Lions eat meat.*

3. With a future time expression (tomorrow, next week) it is used for planned future actions (timetables).

*The train leaves at 8.15. They return tonight.*

## Present simple exercises:

[www.e-grammar.org/present-simple-exercises/](http://www.e-grammar.org/present-simple-exercises/)

**Our tip:** [www.e-grammar.org/pdf-books/](http://www.e-grammar.org/pdf-books/) All PDF exercises + grammar rules in one place.