

GRAMMAR GUIDE

Present simple, past simple, present continuous and past continuous

1a Look at the verbs in these sentences and name the tenses.

- At the moment I'm **studying** in my home town.
- Last year my brother **went** away to study.
- He **was having** a great time.
- His friends **are** always **having** parties and **making** noise.
- You always **make** more new friends when you **live** away from home.
- He **sees** that he **needs** to study more.

1b Which tense do we use when we want to talk about

- present routines and habits?
- actions that are happening now?
- temporary actions in the present?
- changing situations in the present?
- finished actions or situations in the past?
- things that are always or generally true?
- activities in progress at a moment in the past?
- present states?
- actions that happen very often and are annoying and irritating?

2 Choose the correct alternative.

- Thanks to you, I understand/am understanding now.
- The moon goes/is going round the earth.
- Listen! Somebody comes/is coming.
- Temperatures get/are getting higher each year.
- I love/am loving watching films. We always go/are always going to the cinema at the weekend.
- My brother usually walks/is usually walking to university, but this week he goes/is going by bus.
- Not again! My sister always takes/is always taking my clothes.
- Do you wear/Are you wearing a uniform at your school?
- I don't agree/ am not agreeing that it's better to study at home.
- That course sounds/is sounding really interesting.

3 Explain the difference between these pairs of sentences.

- The students stood up when the tutor came in.
 - The students were standing up when the tutor came in.
- At quarter past ten we finished our tutorial.
 - At quarter past ten we were finishing our tutorial.
- They were having lunch when we arrived.
 - They had lunch when we arrived.
- She was making a film about a group of students

4 Complete the questions with the correct form of the verbs given.

- What _____ you _____ (do) on your last holiday?
- What _____ you _____ (do) at this time yesterday?
- What _____ you usually _____ (do) after school?
- _____ you _____ (like) doing sport?
- What _____ you _____ (do) at the moment?
- How _____ you _____ (come) to school?
- What _____ you _____ (do) at ten o'clock last night?
- What time _____ you _____ (go) to bed last night?

5 SPEAKING Use the questions in 4 to interview your partner.

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Present perfect simple and present perfect continuous

6a Match sentences 1–4 with the explanation of their uses a–d.

- I've lived here for ages.
 - I've visited lots of different cities.
 - I've just made a decision.
 - My brother has gone away to university.
- An action that happened at an unspecified moment in the past.
 - An action which started in the past and continues in the present.
 - A past action which has a result in the present.
 - An action finished very recently.

6b Look at these sentences. Which use the present perfect simple and which use the present perfect continuous? How do we form these two tenses?

- I've **been trying** to decide but I can't.
- I've **made** my decision.
- I've **been thinking** about this question for ages.
- I've **written** to four different universities.

6c Which tense, the present perfect simple or present perfect continuous, gives more importance to

- the completion and result of an action?
- the process and duration of an action?
- how many times an action happens?
- the fact that an action is temporary, incomplete or has finished very recently?