

# Tenses: Simple Present and Simple Past

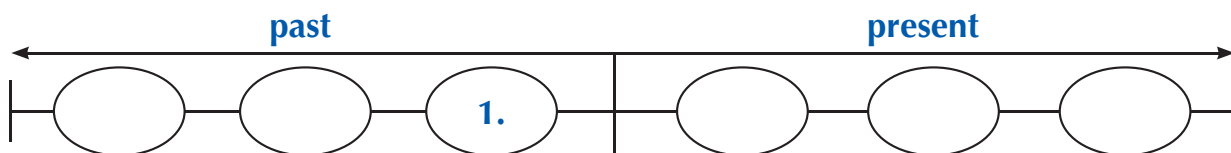
## Time and Tense



Read the sentences given below and do as directed. One has been done for you.

- If some action happened before now, on the timeline below, put the number of that sentence in the circle under **past**.
- If some action is happening at the present moment or happens every day, put the number of that sentence in the circle under **present**.

1. We ate pizza for dinner yesterday.
2. Father reads the newspaper.
3. We played football last Sunday.
4. The cat drank up all the milk yesterday.
5. Kavita practises the sitar every day.
6. The students study English every day.



Now read these sentences.

- Yesterday, **I walked** across the fields.
- **I walk** across the fields every day.

You will notice that the form of the verb **walk** changes in these sentences. The verb **walk** not only expresses an action, but it also tells us the time of action.

The **tense** of a verb tells us when the action happens.

We will learn about **present tense** and **past tense** now.

### Note

We use the **future tense** to talk about actions that will happen later.



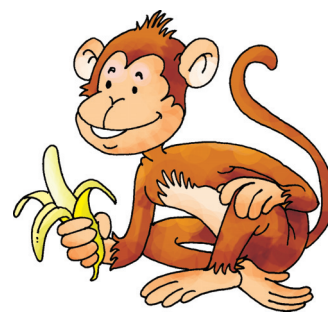
## Simple Present Tense

Read these sentences.

- He **comes** to school by bus. (regular action)
- She **likes** ice cream.
- Janaki **dances** gracefully. (regular action)

In these sentences, the verbs tell us whether an action happens regularly or talks about people in general. These verbs are said to be in the **simple present tense**.

- We use the simple present tense to show that an action happens **regularly** or **often**. We use words like **always**, **usually**, **sometimes**, **generally** or **every day** to speak about such actions. For example,
  - He **plays** football every evening.
  - I **take** my pet for a walk every day.
  - I often **help** my mother to make breakfast.
- We also use the simple present tense to talk about generally accepted truths or facts. For example,
  - The sun **rises** in the east.
  - Monkeys **love** bananas.
  - The earth **revolves** around the sun.



### Verb forms in the simple present tense

- We use the simple form of the verb with the pronouns **I**, **we**, **you** and **they**. Look at these examples.
  - I **sing** well.
  - We **work** in a bank.
  - They **run** very fast.
  - You **help** Tanish with his homework.
- We use the **-s** form of the verb with singular nouns, the pronouns **he**, **she** and **it**, or in case of a singular subject. For example,
  - She **sings** very well.
  - Beena **runs** every morning.
  - The tortoise **moves** very slowly.
- Verbs ending with **-ch**, **-sh**, **-x** and **-o** usually take an **-es** when used with singular nouns and the pronouns **he**, **she** and **it**. For example,
  - He **brushes** his teeth twice a day. (verb **brush**)
  - My father **reaches** his office early. (verb **reach**)
  - She **washes** the clothes in the evening. (verb **wash**)

- For verbs ending with **-y**, we drop the **-y** and add an **-i** and **-es** when we use them with the pronouns **he, she** and **it**, and singular nouns. For example,
  - A porter **carries** heavy loads. (verb **carry**)
  - My little brother **cries** a lot. (verb **cry**)
  - She always **tries** hard. (verb **try**)

### Note

For some verbs that end in **-y** but have a vowel before it, we just add an **-s**, when we use them with **he, she** and **it**. For example,

- The baby **enjoys** music.
- He **stays** with his aunt.

### A. Now, complete these sentences with the correct present tense form of the verb in brackets.

1. The elephant \_\_\_\_\_ (**use**) its trunk to pick up things.
2. The boat \_\_\_\_\_ (**ferry**) people to that island.
3. Cats \_\_\_\_\_ (**give**) birth to many kittens at a time.
4. The old scientist \_\_\_\_\_ (**make**) wonderful toys.
5. She \_\_\_\_\_ (**tidy**) up the room every day.
6. The dog \_\_\_\_\_ (**obey**) his master's orders.
7. He \_\_\_\_\_ (**do**) his homework regularly.
8. These pencils \_\_\_\_\_ (**belong**) to Simon.
9. She usually \_\_\_\_\_ (**finish**) her homework by five o'clock.
10. Whenever the dog \_\_\_\_\_ (**get**) a bone, he \_\_\_\_\_ (**bury**) it in the garden.



### B. Use each subject and verb to make a sentence in the simple present tense. One is done for you.

Subject	Verb
1. The dog	bark
2. My mother	go
3. Our neighbour	make
4. My aunt	visit
5. The guard	watch
6. Ankit	study

- The dog barks at strangers.



**C. Let us do a quick revision with the help of this table. The first one has been done for you.**

Pronoun	Simple form of verb	Verb form in present tense
1. I, we, you, they	sing, work	<b>sing, work</b>
2. he, she, it	sing, work	
3. he, she, it	make, arrive	
4. he, she, it	ferry, carry	
5. he, she, it	fix, push	
6. he, she, it	play, pray	

## Simple Past Tense



Read these sentences carefully. What is common to the highlighted verbs?  
(Hint: When did these actions happen?)

- I **walked** to school yesterday.
- They **played** football last week.
- My brother and sister **watched** a movie last night.



The verbs in these sentences tell us that the actions happened sometime before now, that is, in the past.

Verbs that tell us about actions that happened in the past are called are in the **simple past tense**.

### Verb forms in the simple past tense

Here are some of the ways in which we change verbs into the simple past tense.

- We usually add **-ed** to most verbs to change their form. For example,
  - She **opened** the door for the guests.
  - They **laughed** at his jokes.
  - The kitten **looked** around for its mother.
- For verbs that end in **-e**, we usually add **-d**. For example,
  - They **closed** the gates at 10 p.m. (verb **close**)
  - We **lived** in that house ten years ago. (verb **live**)
  - People **queued** outside the counters. (verb **queue**)

- For verbs with a single syllable, we have to double the last letter and add **-ed**. For example,
  - The thief **grabbed** her bag. (verb **grab**)
  - She **slammed** the door. (verb **slam**)
  - The teacher **pinned** the notice on the board. (verb **pin**)
- For verbs that end in **-y**, we change the **-y** to **-i** and add **-ed**. For example,
  - The porter **carried** the heavy load on his shoulders. (verb **carry**)
  - My little brother **cried** a lot. (verb **cry**)
  - She **tried** hard to get the job. (verb **try**)
- Some verbs do not follow any of the above rules.
  - My mother **bought** her grocery from this store. (verb **buy**)
  - The farmer **kept** the chicken in the coop. (verb **keep**)
  - I **went** with her to the fair. (verb **go**)

**Note**  
 Notice that these verbs have a single syllable. They end with a consonant preceded by a vowel—**grab, slam**.

Notice that these verbs change completely when they change into the past tense.

- A few verbs do not change their forms at all when used in the past tense. For example,
  - The fisherman **cast** his net in the sea.
  - This dress **cost** a thousand rupees.
  - I **put** the clothes in the cupboard.
  - He **hurt** his leg.

**Note**  
 The verbs that do not change into the simple past forms by adding **-d, -ed** or **-ied** are called **irregular verbs**.



**D. Place these verbs in the simple past tense in the correct columns.**

hopped	tied	jumped	rushed
hurried	walked	fanned	hissed
raced	wagged	skipped	tickled
agreed	ripped	chased	nodded

verb + -ed	verb + -d	verb + double last letter + ed	verb + -ied

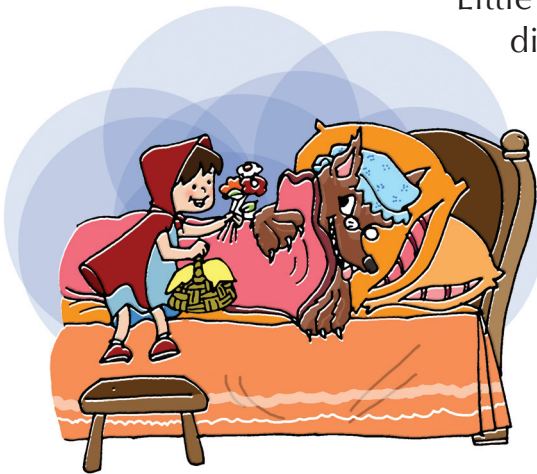
**E. Tick the correct form of the verb in these sentences.**

1. We (**selled/sold**) our car.
2. I (**heard/heared**) a noise.
3. The man (**lost/losed**) his way.
4. He (**met/meeted**) his uncle.
5. I (**writed/wrote**) a letter to my friend.
6. Ketan (**bought/buyed**) a new mobile phone.
7. The boys (**finded/found**) treasure in the cave.
8. Flowers (**growed/grew**) in the garden in spring.
9. The birds (**flyed/flew**) to long distances in winter.
10. The glass vase (**fell/falled**) off the table and (**broke/breaked**) into pieces.



**F. Rewrite the story after changing the highlighted verbs into the past tense.**

Little Red Riding Hood is the story of a brave girl. One day, Little Red Riding Hood's Mother **gives** her a lovely lemon pie to take to her grandmother. Her grandmother **lives** alone in a cottage in the middle of the forest. When Red Riding Hood **reaches** the cottage, she **finds** the door open. She **knocks** at the door and **cries**, 'Grandma, may I come in?' Her Grandma **says**, 'Come in, my dear.'



Little Red Riding Hood **thinks** her grandmother **sounds** different. When she **goes** inside, she **is** surprised. Her Grandma **looks** different too. She **knows** that the person in the bed **is** not her grandmother. The person in the bed **is** the Big Bad Wolf! Just then, Grandma **hears** Little Red Riding Hood's voice. She **shouts** loudly to warn Little Red Riding Hood. A woodcutter **hears** her cries and **rushes** to the cottage. He **kills** the wolf. Grandma **is** inside the cupboard. She **comes** out of the cupboard and **takes** her granddaughter in her arms. They **thank** the woodcutter and **offer** him some pie.



- The **tense** of a verb tells us when the action happens.
- The **simple present tense** is used for an action that is done regularly and for expressing facts.
- The **simple past tense** is used for an action that was done in the past.