

Simple Present Tense: How to Use It,

The simple present is a **verb tense** with two main uses. We use the simple present tense when an action is happening right now, or when it happens regularly (or unceasingly, which is why it's sometimes called present indefinite). Depending on the person, the simple present tense is formed by using the root form or by adding s or es to the end.

*I **feel** great!*

*Pauline **loves** pie.*

I'm sorry to hear that you're sick.

The other is to talk about habitual actions or occurrences.

*Pauline **practices** the piano every day.*

*Ms. Jackson **travels** during the summer.*

*Hamsters **run** all night.*

Typically, when we want to describe a temporary action that is currently in progress, we use the **present continuous**: *Pauline can't come to the phone right now because she **is brushing** her teeth.*

How to form the simple present

In the simple present, most regular verbs use the root form, except in the third-person singular (which ends in s).

First-person singular: *I write.*

Second-person singular: *You write.*

Third-person singular: *He/she/it writes.* (Note the s.)

First-person plural: *We write.*

Second-person plural: *You write.*

Third-person plural: *They write.*

For a few verbs, the third-person singular ends with *es* instead of *s*. Typically, these are verbs whose root form ends in *o*, *ch*, *sh*, *th*, *ss*, *gh*, or *z*.

First-person singular: *I go.*

Second-person singular: *You go.*

Third-person singular: *He/she/it goes.* (Note the *es*.)

First-person plural: *We go.*

Second-person plural: *You go.*

Third-person plural: *They go.*

For most regular verbs, you put the negation of the verb before the verb, e.g., “She **won’t** go” or “I **don’t** smell anything.”

The verb *to be* is irregular:

First-person singular: *I am.*

Second-person singular: *You are.*

Third-person singular: *He/she/it is.*

First-person plural: *We are.*

Second-person plural: *You are.*

Third-person plural: *They are.*

How to make the simple present negative

The formula for making a simple present **verb** negative is **do/does + not + [root form of verb]**. You can also use the contraction *don't* or *doesn't* instead of *do not* or *does not*.

*Pauline **does not want** to share the pie.*

*She **doesn't think** there is enough to go around.*

*Her friends **do not agree**.*

*I **don't want** pie anyway.*

To make the verb *to be* negative, the formula is **[to be] + not**.

*I **am not** a pie lover, but Pauline sure is.*

*You **aren't** ready for such delicious pie.*

How to ask a question

The formula for asking a question in the simple present is **do/does + [subject] + [root form of verb]**.

*Do you **know** how to bake a pie?*

*How much **does** Pauline **love** pie?*

Common verbs in the simple present

Infinitive	I, You, We, They	He, She, It
to ask	ask / do not ask	asks / does not ask
to work	work / do not work	works / does not work
to call	call / do not call	calls / does not call
to use	use / do not use	uses / does not use
to have	have / do not have	has / does not have

The verb *to be* in the simple present

Infinitive	I	You, We, They	He, She, It
to be	am / am not	are / are not	is / is not