

Simple Present (*I do*)

A

Study this example situation:



Alex is a bus driver, but now he is in bed asleep. So:
He is not driving a bus. (He is asleep.)
but He drives a bus. (He is a bus driver.)
drive(s)/work(s)/do(es), etc., is the *simple present*.

I/we/you/they drive/work/do, etc.
he/she/it drives/works/does, etc.

B

We use the simple present to talk about things in general. We use it to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly or that something is true in general. It is not important whether the action is happening at the time of speaking:

- Nurses take care of patients in hospitals.
- I usually leave for work at 8:00 A.M.
- The earth goes around the sun.

Remember that we say *he/she/it -s*. Don't forget the *s*:

- I work . . . *but* He works . . . They teach . . . *but* My sister teaches . . .

For spelling (-s or -es), see Appendix 5.

C

We use *do/does* to make questions and negative sentences:

do I/we/you/they does he/she/it	work? come? do?	I/we/you/they don't he/she/it doesn't	work come do
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- I come from Canada. Where do you come from?
- "Would you like a cigarette?" "No, thanks. I don't smoke."
- What does this word mean? (*not* What means this word?)
- Rice doesn't grow in cold climates.

In the following examples *do* is also the main verb:

- "What do you do?" (= What's your job?) "I work in a department store."
- He's so lazy. He doesn't do anything to help me. (*not* He doesn't anything)

D

We use the simple present when we say how often we do things:

- I get up at 8:00 every morning. (*not* I'm getting)
- How often do you go to the dentist? (*not* How often are you going?)
- Julie doesn't drink coffee very often.
- In the summer John usually plays tennis once or twice a week.

Note the position of *always/never/usually*, etc. (before the main verb):

- Sue always looks happy. (*not* Sue looks always)
- I never drink coffee at night.
- What time do you usually get home after work?

For word order, see also Unit 107.

Exercises

2.1 Complete the sentences using one of the following:

cause(s) close(s) connect(s) drink(s) live(s) open(s) speak(s) take(s)

1. Ann speaks German very well.
2. I never _____ coffee.
3. The swimming pool _____ at 9:00 and _____ at 6:30 every day.
4. Bad driving _____ many accidents.
5. My parents _____ in a very small apartment.
6. The Olympic Games _____ place every four years.
7. The Panama Canal _____ the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

2.2 Put the verb into the correct form.

1. Jason doesn't drink (not / drink) coffee very often.
2. What time _____ (the banks / close)?
3. I have a car, but I _____ (not / use) it very often.
4. "What _____ (you / do)?" "I'm an electrical engineer."
5. It _____ (take) me an hour to get to work. How long _____ (it / take) you?
6. I _____ (play) the piano, but I _____ (not / play) very well.
7. I don't understand this sentence. What _____ (this word / mean)?

2.3 Use one of the following verbs to complete these sentences. Sometimes you need the negative.

believe eat flow go grow make rise tell translate

1. The earth goes around the sun.
2. Rice doesn't grow in Canada.
3. The sun _____ in the east.
4. Bees _____ honey.
5. Vegetarians _____ meat.
6. An atheist _____ in God.
7. An interpreter _____ from one language to another.
8. A liar is someone who _____ the truth.
9. The Amazon River _____ into the Atlantic Ocean.

2.4 Ask Liz questions about herself and her family.

1. You know that Liz plays tennis. You want to know how often. Ask her.
How often do you play tennis _____ ?
2. Perhaps Liz's sister plays tennis, too. You want to know. Ask Liz.
_____ your sister _____ ?
3. You know that Liz reads a newspaper every day. You want to know which one. Ask her.

4. You know that Liz's brother works. You want to know what he does. Ask Liz.

5. You know that Liz goes to the movies a lot. You want to know how often. Ask her.

6. You don't know where Liz's mother lives. Ask Liz.

7. You know that Liz works every day, but you want to know what time she starts work. Ask her.
