

Present Simple or Present Continuous?

1. The simple present tense

The simple present tense is used for two main types of action:

Habits	Actions which happen regularly (for example, every day or every week)
States	Things which do not often change (for example, opinions and conditions)

Some examples will help to make this clearer:

Type of action	Examples	Explanations
Habit	Young-Mi goes to class every day.	“Every day” is a habit.
	It rains a lot in Vancouver.	This means that it rains often.
State	Bianca lives in Florida.	This is a state, because it doesn't change.
	Jean-Paul has red hair.	Someone's hair colour doesn't usually change.

2. The present continuous tense

The present continuous tense is used for two main types of action:

A temporary action happening now	Something which is going on right now (but it will stop in the future)
A definite plan for the future	Something we intend to do, usually in the near future

Here are some examples:

Type of action	Examples	Explanations
Temporary action happening right now	John is winning the game.	Right now, John is winning, but the game isn't finished yet.
	It's raining outside.	It's raining right now (but it may stop soon).
Definite plan for the future	I'm playing soccer tomorrow.	This plan is already arranged and definite.
	Sarah's leaving for San Francisco on Friday.	She has probably already bought her ticket.