Word-Classes in E4BT

2. VERBS: PRESENT TENSES' FORMS AND USAGE

Present Simple – FORMS

affirmative form	negative form[1]	interrogative form
I infect	I do not infect	Do I infect?
You infect	You do not infect	Do you infect?
He/She/It infect**s**	He/She/It does not infect	Does he/she/it infect?
We infect	We do not infect	Do we infect?
You infect	You do not infect	Do you infect?
They infect	They do not infect	Do they infect?

Present Continuous - FORMS

affirmative form[2]	negative form[3]	interrogative form
I am spreading	I am not spreading	Am I spreading?
You are spreading	You are not spreading	Are you spreading?
He/She/It is spreading	He/She/It is not spreading	Is he/she/it spreading?
We are spreading	We are not spreading	Are we spreading?
You are spreading	You are not spreading	Are you spreading?
They are spreading	They are not spreading	Are they spreading?

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[1] Auxiliary's contracted forms – namely **don't** and **doesn't** – are mainly used in spoken or informal English.

[2] Auxiliary's contracted forms – namely **'m**, **'re** and **'s** – are mainly used in spoken or informal English.

[3] Auxiliary's contracted forms – namely **'m not**, **aren't**, **isn't** – are mainly used in spoken or informal English.

USAGE

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Present Simple	Present Continuous
- **talking about general facts:** Marta **lives** with her family and **studies** Biotechnology at UniTe. That patient **comes** from Australia. Chickenpox **is** a common illness that mainly **affects** children and **causes** an itchy, spotty rash. - **talking about routines:** I generally **get** up early. Canine influenza **spreads** easily and often **damages** lungs. - **talking about scientific facts, general truths and events that do not change:** Water **freezes** at 0°C. Bronze **is** an alloy, consisting primarily of copper. Rabies **is** a preventable viral disease of mammals most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. An aurora /əˌrɔːrə/ (sometimes referred to as polar lights) **is** a natural light display in the Earth's sky, predominantly seen in the high latitude regions. - **talking about wants / needs / likes:** Q: **Do** I **need** a prescription for antibiotics? A: Yes, you **need**. - **talking about timetables:** The train for Naples **leaves** at 17:35. The surgery **opens** at 8:00 a.m. - **facts known about the future such as scheduled events:** June 2 **is** a national holiday in Italy.	- **talking to describe activities in progress right now, at the time of speaking:** The network **is not working** – the ICT [Information and Communication Technology] department **are trying** to remove a virus. The surgeon **is performing** an operation. - **talking to describe activities in progress now, but not at this exact moment:** I **am reading** a book about Gregor Mendel – known as the father of genetics. - **talking to describe trends and developments in progress over a longer period of time:** The problem of global warming **is getting** worse. People **are living** longer and longer thanks to medical advances**.** - **present plans for the future:** Q: When **are** you **leaving**? A: I **am leaving** Madrid on Friday.

Present Simple	Present Continuous
- **is used with frequency adverbs or expressions of time such as:** always / often / sometimes /hardly ever / never / from time to time / most of the time / … yearly / half yearly / quarterly / monthly / weekly / daily/ … every year / once a month / twice a week / three times a day / …	- **is used with adverbs or expression of time such as:** at the moment / at present / presently [$] / currently / right now / nowadays / these days / this week / …

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- **there are a number of verbs that describe states. A 'state' is a condition, not an action. Such kinds of verb are used mainly in the simple present and include:**

thinking: to agree / to believe / to doubt / to forget / to imagine / to know / to realise / to recognise / to regret / to remember / to suppose / to think / to understand;

liking and disliking: to admire / to appreciate / to dislike / to hate/ to like / to love / to want / to wish;

possession: to belong to / to contain / to have / to include / to own / to possess;

appearance: to appear / to look like / to resemble / to seem / to sound;

being: to be / to consist of / to depend on / to exist;

the senses: to hear / to see / to smell / to taste;

miscellaneous: to cost / to involve / to matter / to mean / to measure / to weigh.

Please remember that:

The **present simple** refers to an action/event which the speaker/writer sees as **a permanent situation** – such as in:

- **an unlimited period**: e.g. Where **do** you **come** from? // Where **are** you from?
- **something always true**: e.g. Water **boils** at 100°C. // The River Thames **flows** through London.
- **a general statement**: e.g. The journey **takes** about three hours. // Ebola, previously known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever, **is** a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus species.

The **present continuous** always refers to an action/event which the speaker/writer sees as **a temporary situation**:

- I usually **drive** to work, but I **am walking** since the weather is so nice.

Sometimes both are possible with different meanings. Please compare the following sentences:

- I **work** in a hospital.   vs   I **am working** in a hospital.
- Where **do** you **live**?   vs   Where **are** you **living**?

Sometimes the objective difference is very small:

- I **am not feeling** very well!   vs   I **do not feel** very well!

A few state verbs – such as *to be*, *to have* and *to think* – can have both an 'action' meaning (where a continuous form is possible) and a 'state' meaning (where it is not).

- Vaccines **are** a way to prevent certain serious or deadly infections.

- Vaccines **are being** effective.

- I **think** this course is difficult.   - I **am thinking** about the exam.

- I **have** a pet hamster.   - My colleague **is having** problems with the printer.