

Word-classes in English for Veterinary Medicine

2. VERBS: PRESENT TENSES' USAGE

Simple Present	Present Continuous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ talking about general facts: Q: Where do you work? A: I work at the University of Teramo. ❖ talking about routines: Canine influenza spreads easily, often damages lungs [source: AVMA, Nov.1, 2010]. ❖ talking about scientific facts, general truths and events that do not change: Stainless steel contains chromium. Rabies is a preventable viral disease of mammals most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal [source: CDC, "Rabies"]. The sun rises at East. ❖ talking about timetables: Q: When does your plane leave? A: My plane leaves at 12:45 pm. ❖ talking about wants / needs / likes: Q: Do you want a receipt? A: Yes, thanks. ❖ facts known about the future such as scheduled events [→ see Handout 1, Unit 4]: June 2 is a national holiday in Italy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ talking to describe activities in progress right now, at the time of speaking: The network is not working – the IT department are trying to remove a virus. ❖ talking to describe activities in progress now, but not at this exact moment: I am reading a book about James Watson and Francis Crick – most noted for being co-discoverers of the structure of the DNA molecule in 1953. ❖ talking to describe trends and developments in progress over a longer period of time: The problem of global warming is getting worse. The population of Japan is getting older. ❖ present plans for the future [→ see Handout 1, Unit 4]: Q: When are you leaving? A: I am leaving Boston on Friday.

Simple Present	Present Continuous
<p>✦ is used with frequency adverbs or expressions of time such as:</p> <p>always / often / sometimes / hardly ever / never / from time to time / most of the time</p> <p>yearly / half yearly / quarterly / monthly / weekly / daily</p> <p>every year / once a month / twice a week / three times a day</p> <p>✦ 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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	<p>✦ is used with adverbs or expression of time such as:</p> <p>at the moment / at present / presently [\$] / currently / right now / nowadays / these days / this week</p>

/ to exist;

- o **the senses:** to hear / to see / to smell / to taste;
- o **miscellaneous:** to cost / to involve / to matter / to mean / to measure / to weigh.

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Please remember that:

The **simple present** 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 hemorrhagic 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** while the weather is so nice.

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

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| ○ 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:

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| ○ I am not feeling very well! | vs | I do not feel very well! |
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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).