



FUTURE SCIENCE



STEP BY STEP MASTERING 16 TENSES (THEORY AND EXERCISES)

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Book Chapter

Step by Step Mastering 16 Tenses
(Theory and Exercises)

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PREFACE

First of all, Thanks to Allah, the Almighty for the blessing and guidance to finish this book. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the authors for the idea and valuable knowledge throughout this book that entitled “**Step by Step Mastering 16 Tenses (Theory and Exercises)**”. To learn tenses is one of the most essential skills in english language. The tense tells us time such as present, past and future.

This book consists of 15 chapters: (1) tenses, (2) simple present tense, (3) simple past tense, (4) simple future tense, (5) simple present perfect tense, (6) present continuous tense, (7) past continuous tense, (8) past perfect tense, (9) future continuous tense (10) future perfect tense, (11) future perfect continuous tense, (12) past future tense, (13) past future continuous tense, (14) past future perfect continuous tense, (15) past future perfect continuous tense.

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Thank you all for your valuable contribution to this book.

Pematang Siantar, November 2024

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER 1 TENSES.....	1
Siti Shofiyatun	1
1.1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.2. WHY ARE TENSES IMPORTANT?	3
1.3. THE SCOPE IN THIS BOOK.....	7
1.4. BASIC CONCEPT OF TENSES.....	9
1.5. CONCLUSION.....	11
CHAPTER 2 SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE	15
Nurul Fadillah	15
2.1. INTRODUCTION	15
2.2. FUNCTIONS OF THE SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE.....	18
2.3. COMMON MISTAKES WHEN USING THE SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE	22
2.4. EXERCISES	24
2.4.1. EXERCISE ONE	24
2.4.2. EXERCISE TWO	25
2.4.3. EXERCISE THREE	26
2.5. CONCLUSION.....	27
CHAPTER 3 SIMPLE PAST TENSE	31
Cattleya Wahyu Pravitha	31
3.1. INTRODUCTION	31

3.2.	THE FORM OF SIMPLE PAST TENSE.....	33
3.3.	REGULAR AND IRREGULAR VERBS IN THE SIMPLE PAST TENSE.....	34
3.4.	TIME EXPRESSIONS: PAST TIME WORDS	38
3.5.	EXERCISES	40
3.5.1.	Exercise 1	40
3.5.2.	Exercise 2	41
3.5.3.	Exercise 3	41
3.5.4.	Exercise 4	41
CHAPTER 4	SIMPLE FUTURE TENSE	43
	Uswatunnisa.....	43
4.1.	INTRODUCTION	43
4.2.	THE CONCEPT OF SIMPLE FUTURE TENSE	44
4.3.	THE FORMULA OF SIMPLE FUTURE TENSE...	45
4.4	EXERCISES	50
4.4.1.	Exercise one: Multiple Choice Test.....	50
4.4.2.	Exercise two: Fill in the Blank Spaces	51
4.5.	CONCLUSION	52
CHAPTER 5	PRESENT PERFECT TENSE	55
	Tantry Ajeng Parnawati.....	55
5.1.	INTRODUCTION	55
5.2.	STRUCTURE OF PRESENT PERFECT TENSE ...	56
5.3.	USAGE OF PRESENT PERFECT TENSE	60
5.4.	COMMON MISTAKE OF PRESENT PERFECT TENSE.....	61
5.5.	CONCLUSION	62

CHAPTER 6	PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE.....	67
	Lu'luil Maknun.....	67
6.1.	INTRODUCTION	67
6.2.	DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRESENT SIMPLE AND PRESENT CONTINUOUS	69
6.3.	FORMING THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS	73
6.3.1.	AFFIRMATIVE, NEGATIVE, AND INTERROGATIVE FORMS.....	73
6.3.2.	CONTRACTIONS AND SHORT FORMS	74
6.3.3.	REGULAR AND IRREGULAR VERBS IN THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS	75
6.3.4.	AUXILIARY VERBS "TO BE" AND "TO BE DOING"	76
6.4.	TIME EXPRESSIONS WITH THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS	77
6.5.	EXERCISES	78
6.5.1.	EXERCISE ONE	78
6.5.2.	EXERCISE TWO	79
6.5.3.	EXERCISE THREE	81
6.5.4.	EXERCISE FOUR.....	81
6.6.	CONCLUSION.....	82
CHAPTER 7	PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE	85
	Indah Anjar Reski	85
7.1.	INTRODUCTION	85
7.2.	PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE	86
7.3.	FUNCTIONS OF PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE...	90
7.4.	EXERCISES	95

7.4.1.	EXERCISES ONE.....	95
7.4.2.	EXERCISE TWO	97
7.5.	CONCLUSION	98
CHAPTER 8	PAST PERFECT TENSE	101
	Resi Silvia.....	101
8.1.	HOW TO USE THE PAST PERFECT	101
8.2.	PAST PERFECT FORMS	104
8.3.	WH-QUESTIONS IN THE PAST PERFECT	107
8.4.	PAST PERFECT TENSES IN TIME CLAUSE	109
8.5.	CONCLUSION	111
CHAPTER 9	FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE	115
	Nafisatul Lutfi.....	115
9.1.	INTRODUCTION.....	115
9.2.	STRUCTURE OF FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE.....	117
9.3.	COMMON USES OF FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE.....	119
9.4.	EXERCISES	124
9.4.1.	EXERCISE 1: FORMING THE FUTURE CONTINUOUS	124
9.4.2.	EXERCISE 2: IDENTIFYING THE CORRECT USE.....	125
9.4.3.	EXERCISE 3: CREATING SENTENCES	125
9.4.4.	EXERCISE 4: COMPLETING THE DIALOGUE	126
9.5.	CONCLUSION	126
CHAPTER 10	FUTURE PERFECT TENSE	129
	Loso Judijanto.....	129

10.1.	INTRODUCTION	129
10.2.	WHEN TO USE FUTURE PERFECT TENSE.....	131
10.3.	COMMON TIME EXPRESSIONS USED WITH FUTURE PERFECT TENSE	134
10.4.	COMMON MISTAKES IN FUTURE PERFECT TENSE.....	136
10.5.	SOME TIPS TO USE FUTURE PERFECT TENSE EFFECTIVELY AND NATURALLY	138
10.6.	EXERCISES FOR FUTURE PERFECT TENSE ..	140
10.6.1.	EXERCISE ONE: FILL IN THE BLANKS.....	141
10.6.2.	EXERCISE TWO: Multiple Choice	141
10.6.3.	EXERCISE THREE SENTENCE COMPLETION	143
CHAPTER 11	FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE	149
	Siti Julaihah	149
11.1.	INTRODUCTION	149
11.2.	USAGE OF FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS COMPARED TO FUTURE CONTINUOUS AND PERFECT CONTINUOUS.	150
11.3.	EXAMPLE SENTENCES	156
11.4.	EXERCISES	158
11.4.1.	EXERCISE ONE	158
11.4.2.	EXERCISE TWO	158
11.4.3.	EXERCISE THREE	159
11.4.4.	EXERCISE FOUR.....	159
11.4.5.	EXERCISE FIVE	160
11.4.6.	EXERCISE SIX.....	161
11.4.7.	EXERCISE SEVEN	163

CHAPTER 12	PAST FUTURE TENSE	167
	Silmy Arizatul Humaira'	167
12.1.	INTRODUCTION.....	167
12.2.	PAST FUTURE TENSE	169
12.3.	FUNCTION OF PAST FUTURE TENSE	173
12.4.	IMPLEMENTATION	175
12.5.	EXERCISE AND PRACTICE	178
12.6.	CONCLUSION	179
CHAPTER 13	PAST FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE.....	183
	Nihla Afdaliah	183
13.1.	INTRODUCTION.....	183
13.2.	PAST FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE.....	185
13.3.	THE FUNCTION OF THE PAST FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE.....	186
13.3.1.	The Formula of The Past Future Continuous Tense	188
13.4.	EXERCISES.....	191
13.4.1.	EXERCISE ONE: FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH THE CORRECT FORM OF THE VERB!.....	191
13.4.2.	EXERCISE TWO: CHANGE THE SENTENCES BELOW INTO POSITIVE, NEGATIVE, OR INTERROGATIVE!.....	193
13.4.3.	EXERCISE THREE: FILL IN THE BLANKS IN THE SENTENCES BELOW USING THE CORRECT FORM, THEN SELECT THE SUBSEQUENT SENTENCE IN THE BOXES PROVIDED.	195
CHAPTER 14	PAST FUTURE TENSE	199
	Saidah	199

14.1.	INTRODUCTION	199
14.2.	FORMATION AND USAGE.....	200
14.3.	EXERCISES	203
14.3.1.	EXERCISE ONE: SENTENCE CONVERSION ...	203
14.3.2.	EXERCISE TWO: SENTENCE FORMATION	203
14.3.3.	EXERCISE THREE: FILL IN THE BLANKS	204
14.3.4.	EXERCISE FOUR: REWRITE THE SENTENCES.....	205
14.3.5.	EXERCISE FIVE: MULTIPLE CHOICE.....	205
14.3.6.	EXERCISE SIX : CORRECT THE MISTAKES...	206
14.3.7.	EXERCISE SEVEN: COMPLETE THE DIALOGUE.....	207
14.3.8.	EXERCISE EIGHT : MATCH THE HALVES	207
14.3.9.	EXERCISE NINE : TRANSFORMATION	208
14.3.10.	EXERCISE TEN: SHORT PARAGRAPH	209
14.4.	CONCLUSION.....	209
CHAPTER 15	PAST FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE.....	211
	Siti Sa'diah.....	211
15.1.	INTRODUCTION	211
15.2.	FORMATION.....	213
15.3.	FUNCTION	215
15.4.	EXERCISES	219
15.5.	CONCLUSION.....	222

CHAPTER 6

PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE

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6.1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to "Exploring the Present Continuous: Theory and Practice." In this book, we embark on a comprehensive journey through one of the fundamental aspects of English grammar: the present continuous tense. From its basic structure to its nuanced usage, this book aims to provide a thorough understanding of the present continuous tense both in theory and in practice. The present continuous tense, also known as the present progressive tense (Azar, 2002), is a grammatical tense used to describe actions or situations that are happening at the moment of speaking or are ongoing in the present period of time. It is formed by using the present tense of the verb "to be" (am, is, are) followed by the base form of the main verb plus the "-ing" suffix. For example:

1. "I am reading a book." (action happening at the moment of speaking)
2. "She is studying for her exam." (ongoing action in the present)
3. "They are playing football in the park." (ongoing action in the present)

The present continuous tense can also be used to describe future plans or arrangements when used with specific time indicators or adverbs, such as "tomorrow," "next week," or "this evening." For example:

1. "We are meeting for lunch tomorrow."
2. "She is flying to Paris next week."
3. "They are attending a concert this evening."

Overall, the present continuous tense helps convey a sense of immediacy and ongoingness in the present moment or future plans.

BASIC STRUCTURE AND FORMATION

The basic structure and formation of the present continuous tense involve the auxiliary verb "to be" conjugated in the present tense (am, is, are), followed by the base form of the main verb and the "-ing" suffix.

Here's the basic structure:

Subject	+ "to be" (am/is/are)	+ Verb base form	+ "Ing" suffix	+ (Optional: rest of the sentence)
----------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------	-----------------------	---

Figure 6.1. Basic Structure of Present Continuous

Here are examples of the present continuous tense in affirmative, negative, and interrogative forms:

Affirmative Form	Negative Form	Interrogative Form
I am eating	I am not eating	Am I eating?
She is studying	She is not studying	Is she studying?
They are playing football	They are not playing football	Are they playing football?

Figure 6.2. The Forms of Present Continuous

In the affirmative form, we use the correct form of the verb "to be" (am/is/are) according to the subject, followed by the base form of the main verb with the "-ing" suffix. In the negative form, we add "not" after the auxiliary verb "to be." In the

interrogative form, we invert the subject and the auxiliary verb "to be." It's worth noting that the present continuous tense is often used to describe actions happening at the moment of speaking or ongoing actions in the present, but it can also be used to talk about future plans or arrangements when combined with specific time indicators or adverbs.

6.2. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRESENT SIMPLE AND PRESENT CONTINUOUS

The present simple tense and the present continuous tense are both used to talk about actions or states in the present, but they have different uses and nuances. Here are the key differences between them (Vince, 2008):

Table 6.1. The Differences between Present Continuous and Present Simple

Example	Present Continuous	Present Simple
Action vs. Habit or General Truth	Used to describe actions happening at the moment of speaking or ongoing actions in the present. Example: "She is reading a book right now." (action happening at the moment) Example: "They are playing football in the park." (ongoing action)	Used to express habitual actions, general truths, or facts (Berry, 2021). Example: "She reads books every day." (habitual action) Example: "The sun rises in the east." (general truth)
Frequency	Used for actions	Typically used for

		happening temporarily or at this very moment.	actions that occur regularly, repeatedly, or as a routine (Berry, 2021). Example: Tom drinks heavily
State Action	vs.	Primarily used for actions or activities in progress. Example: "He is living in New York temporarily." (temporary action)	Often used for states, conditions, or permanent situations. Example: "He lives in New York." (state or permanent situation)
Future Plans		Also used for future arrangements, especially when they are definite and planned. Example: "We are meeting for lunch tomorrow."	Used for scheduled events or future plans, often with adverbs of time (Berry, 2021). Example: "The train leaves at 9 PM." (scheduled event)
Stative Verbs vs. Action Verbs		Usually used with action verbs (verbs expressing an action or process). Example: "She is answering the phone." (action)	Typically used with stative verbs (verbs expressing a state or condition) such as "know," "like," "believe." Example: "She knows the answer." (state)

Narrative Style	Also used in narratives for dynamic or vivid descriptions, typically to create a sense of immediacy or excitement. Example: "He is walking into the room when suddenly, everyone shouts 'Surprise!'"	Commonly used in narratives (e.g., storytelling, summaries) to describe events in a chronological sequence. Example: "He walks into the room and sees the surprise party."
------------------------	---	---

Understanding these differences helps learners use each tense appropriately to convey the intended meaning accurately.

USAGE GUIDELINES AND COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Understanding the usage guidelines and common misconceptions surrounding the present continuous tense can help learners avoid errors and communicate more effectively. Here are some key guidelines and misconceptions:

Usage Guideline:

1. Actions Happening Now:

Use the present continuous to describe actions that are happening at the moment of speaking.

Example: "I am writing a letter right now."

2. Ongoing Actions:

Use the present continuous to describe actions that are currently in progress, even if they are not happening at the exact moment of speaking. Example: "They are renovating their house this month."

3. Temporary Situations:

Use the present continuous to describe temporary situations or actions, especially those that are not considered habitual. Example: "She's staying with her friend until she finds a new apartment."

4. Future Plans and Arrangements:

Use the present continuous to talk about future arrangements or plans that have already been made. Example: "We are meeting for dinner tomorrow evening."

5. Dynamic Descriptions:

Use the present continuous to provide vivid and dynamic descriptions, particularly in narratives or storytelling. Example: "The wind is howling outside, and the rain is pouring down."

Common Misconceptions:

1. Overusing the Present Continuous:

Misconception: Some learners may overuse the present continuous tense when the present simple tense would be more appropriate, especially for habitual actions or general truths.

Example: "I am going to the gym every day." (Should be: "I go to the gym every day.")

2. Incorrect Usage for Permanent Situations:

Misconception: Confusing temporary actions with permanent situations and using the present continuous incorrectly for permanent states.

Example: "He is living in New York." (Should be: "He lives in New York.")

3. Inappropriate Use in Formal Writing:

Misconception: Using the present continuous in formal writing where the present simple tense is more suitable. Example: "The report is summarizing the findings." (Should be: "The report summarizes the findings.")

4. Misunderstanding Future Plans:

Misconception: Assuming that the present continuous can only describe actions happening in the present, overlooking its usage for future plans and arrangements. Example: "We are meeting for lunch tomorrow." (Correct usage for future plans)

5. Confusing Present Continuous with Past Continuous:

Misconception: Confusing the present continuous tense with the past continuous tense, especially in narrations or descriptions of past events. Example: "He is walking down the street when he sees his friend." (Should be: "He was walking down the street when he saw his friend."). By being aware of these guidelines and misconceptions, learners can use the present continuous tense accurately and effectively in various contexts.

6.3. FORMING THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

6.3.1. AFFIRMATIVE, NEGATIVE, AND INTERROGATIVE FORMS

	Affirmative Form	Negative Form	Interrogative Form
	Subject + "to be" (am/is/are) + Verb base form + "-ing" suffix	Subject + "to be" (am/is/are) + not + Verb base form + "-ing" suffix	"To be" (am/is/are) + Subject + Verb base form + "-ing" suffix + ?
Example	✓ I am eating. ✓ She is studying. ✓ They are playing football.	✓ I am not eating. ✓ She is not studying. ✓ They are not playing football.	✓ Am I eating? ✓ Is she studying? ✓ Are they playing football?

Figure 6.3. The Forms of Present Continuous

In summary, to form the present continuous tense:

1. In **the affirmative form**, start with the correct form of the verb "to be" (am/is/are) according to the subject, followed by the base form of the main verb with the "-ing" suffix.
2. In **the negative form**, add "not" after the verb "to be."

3. In **the interrogative form**, invert the subject and the verb "to be," placing the verb before the subject, and add a question mark at the end.

6.3.2. CONTRACTIONS AND SHORT FORMS

Contractions and short forms are commonly used in English to make speech and writing more fluent and natural. In the present continuous tense, contractions and short forms are formed by combining the subject pronoun with the appropriate form of the verb "to be" (am, is, are) and the "-ing" form of the main verb. Here are the contractions and short forms for the present continuous tense:

	Contractions	Short Forms (Commonly Used in Spoken English):
Affirmative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am → I'm ✓ You are → You're ✓ He is → He's ✓ She is → She's ✓ It is → It's ✓ We are → We're ✓ They are → They're 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I'm → I am ✓ You're → You are ✓ He's → He is ✓ She's → She is ✓ It's → It is ✓ We're → We are ✓ They're → They are
Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I am not → I'm not / I aren't (less common) ✓ You are not → You're not / You aren't ✓ He is not → He's not / He isn't ✓ She is not → She's not / She isn't ✓ It is not → It's not / It isn't ✓ We are not → We're not / We aren't ✓ They are not → They're not / They aren't 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I'm not → I am not ✓ You're not → You are not ✓ He's not → He is not ✓ She's not → She is not ✓ It's not → It is not ✓ We're not → We are not ✓ They're not → They are not

Figure 6.4. The Contractions and Short Forms of Present Continuous

These contractions and short forms are widely used in both spoken and informal written English to convey the present continuous tense in a more concise and natural way.

6.3.3. REGULAR AND IRREGULAR VERBS IN THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

In the present continuous tense, both regular and irregular verbs follow the same pattern for forming the tense. The main difference between regular and irregular verbs lies in how they form their past tense and past participle forms, not in their present continuous forms.

Here's how regular and irregular verbs are used in the present continuous tense:

Regular Verbs

Regular verbs follow a predictable pattern when forming their past tense and past participle forms. In the present continuous tense, regular verbs follow the standard pattern of adding "-ing" to the base form of the verb. Example with the regular verb "play":

1. Present Continuous: "I am playing tennis."
2. Present Continuous (negative): "She is not playing basketball."
3. Present Continuous (interrogative): "Are they playing soccer?"

Irregular Verbs:

Irregular verbs do not follow the regular pattern for forming their past tense and past participle forms. However, in the present continuous tense, they still follow the same pattern as regular verbs by adding "-ing" to the base form of the verb.

Example with the irregular verb "go":

1. Present Continuous: "He is going to the store."
2. Present Continuous (negative): "We are not going to the party."
3. Present Continuous (interrogative): "Are you going to the concert?"

In summary, both regular and irregular verbs form the present continuous tense by adding "-ing" to their base forms. The distinction between regular and irregular verbs primarily comes into play when forming the past tense and past participle forms.

6.3.4. AUXILIARY VERBS "TO BE" AND "TO BE DOING"

In English grammar, auxiliary verbs play a crucial role in forming various tenses and constructions. Two common auxiliary verbs used in forming the present continuous tense are "to be" and "to be doing." Here's how they are used:

	Formula	Example
To Be" as an Auxiliary Verb		
Affirmative Form	Subject + "to be" (am/is/are) + Verb base form + "-ing" suffix	She is playing tennis.
Negative Form	Subject + "to be" (am/is/are) + not + Verb base form + "-ing" suffix	They are not watching TV.
Interrogative Form	"To be" (am/is/are) + Subject + Verb base form + "-ing" suffix + ?	Are you studying for the exam?
To Be Doing" as an Auxiliary Verb		
Affirmative Form	Subject + "to be doing" + Verb base form	He is doing his homework.
Negative Form	Subject + "to be not doing" + Verb base form	They are not doing the dishes.
Interrogative Form	"To be" (am/is/are) + Subject + "doing" + Verb base form + ?	Is she doing her exercises?

Figure 6.5. The Contractions and Short Forms of Present Continuous

Usage:

- "To Be": Used to indicate ongoing actions or states in the present.
Example: "She is studying for her exam." (ongoing action)
- "To Be Doing": Used similarly to emphasize ongoing actions but may imply more immediate or continuous activity.
Example: "He is doing his homework right now." (emphasizing immediate action)

Both forms are correct and widely used, but "to be doing" can sometimes convey a sense of immediacy or continuous action more strongly than "to be" alone. However, the choice between them often depends on context, style, and personal preference.

6.4. TIME EXPRESSIONS WITH THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

1. Adverbs of frequency and duration

Adverbs of frequency and duration can be used in conjunction with the present continuous tense to provide additional information about the timing or frequency of actions. Here are examples of how adverbs of frequency and duration can be used with the present continuous tense:

2. Adverbs of Frequency:

Adverbs of frequency describe how often something happens. They can be used with the present continuous tense to indicate how regularly an action is occurring.

Examples:

1. "I am always studying for exams." (always)
2. "She is often going to the gym." (often)
3. "They are rarely watching television." (rarely)
4. "He is sometimes playing soccer." (sometimes)
5. "We are never eating fast food." (never)

3. Adverbs of Duration:

Adverbs of duration indicate the length of time an action lasts or is expected to last. They provide information about the duration of an ongoing action. Examples:

1. "She is currently studying for her exam." (currently)
2. "They are temporarily living with their grandparents." (temporarily)

3. "He is constantly checking his phone." (constantly)
4. "We are briefly discussing the issue." (briefly)
5. "The team is continuously improving their performance."
(continuously)

Combined Examples:

6. "I am usually walking to work, but today I am driving because it's raining." (usually)
7. "She is regularly practicing the piano to improve her skills."
(regularly)
8. "They are frequently visiting their relatives in the countryside."
(frequently)
9. "He is occasionally volunteering at the local shelter."
(occasionally)
10. "We are always striving to achieve our goals." (always)

By using adverbs of frequency and duration with the present continuous tense, speakers can provide more precise information about the timing, frequency, or duration of ongoing actions.

6.5. EXERCISES

6.5.1. EXERCISE ONE

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK EXERCISES TO REINFORCE UNDERSTANDING

Here are some fill-in-the-blank exercises designed to reinforce understanding of the present continuous tense. For each sentence, fill in the blank with the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Exercise 1: Affirmative Sentences

1. She _____ (read) a book right now.
2. They _____ (play) soccer in the park.
3. I _____ (cook) dinner at the moment.
4. He _____ (watch) a movie in the living room.
5. We _____ (study) for our exams this week.

Exercise 2: Negative Sentences

1. I _____ (not/work) today because it's a holiday.
2. She _____ (not/listen) to music at the moment.
3. They _____ (not/swim) in the pool right now.
4. He _____ (not/eat) lunch at his desk.
5. We _____ (not/plan) a trip this weekend.

Exercise 3: Interrogative Sentences

1. _____ you _____ (work) on the project now?
2. _____ she _____ (make) a cake for the party?
3. _____ they _____ (watch) the new TV series?
4. _____ he _____ (fix) his car in the garage?
5. _____ we _____ (wait) for the bus together?

Exercise 4: Mixed Sentences

1. She _____ (write) an email to her friend right now.
2. They _____ (not/play) basketball because it's raining.
3. _____ you _____ (study) for your test this evening?
4. He _____ (travel) to New York next week.
5. We _____ (not/attend) the meeting this afternoon.

6.5.2. EXERCISE TWO

DIALOGUE COMPLETION EXERCISES TO SIMULATE REAL-LIFE CONVERSATIONS

Complete the dialogues below using the present continuous tense. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb provided in parentheses.

Dialogue 1: At the Office

- A: Hi, Sarah. What _____ (you/do) right now?
B: Hi, John. I _____ (finish) the report for the meeting.
A: Great! _____ (you/need) any help?
B: No, thanks. Mark _____ (help) me with the charts.

Dialogue 2: At Home

A: Hey, Mom. What _____ (you/cook)?

B: I _____ (make) spaghetti for dinner. How about you?

A: I _____ (study) for my math test.

B: That's good. Your brother _____ (play) video games in his room.

Dialogue 3: At the Gym

A: _____ (you/use) the treadmill?

B: Yes, I _____ (run) for about 30 minutes.

A: Wow! I _____ (wait) for my turn. How much longer _____ (you/need)?

B: Just a few more minutes. Then I _____ (move) to the weights section.

Dialogue 4: At a Café

A: Hi, Alex. What _____ (you/read)?

B: Hi, Emma. I _____ (read) a new novel by my favorite author.

A: Sounds interesting! I _____ (write) an article for the school magazine.

B: That's cool. _____ (you/work) on any other projects?

Dialogue 5: At the Park

A: Look, it's starting to rain. What _____ (we/do)?

B: We _____ (pack) up our things and go home.

A: Good idea. The kids _____ (play) on the swings.

B: I'll call them. _____ (you/see) my umbrella?

6.5.3. EXERCISE THREE

COMPLETE THE TEXT WITH THE PRESENT SIMPLE OR PRESENT CONTINUOUS FORMS OF THE VERBS IN BRACKETS.

Every morning, Sarah (1) _____ (wake up) early and (2) _____ (make) a cup of coffee. She (3) _____ (enjoy) sitting by the window and (4) _____ (watch) the sunrise. On weekdays, she (5) _____ (leave) the house by 7:30 a.m. because she (6) _____ (work) as a teacher and (7) _____ (need) to be at school by 8:00 a.m. Today, however, is Saturday, so she (8) _____ (not/hurry). Right now, she (9) _____ (read) a novel and (10) _____ (relax) on the couch. Her cat, Muffin, (11) _____ (sleep) next to her. Sarah (12) _____ (love) weekends because she (13) _____ (have) more time to do the things she (14) _____ (enjoy).

6.5.4. EXERCISE FOUR

WRITING PROMPTS TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVE USE OF THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

Here are some writing prompts designed to encourage the creative use of the present continuous tense. Each prompt includes a scenario where actions are happening in the moment or over a temporary period, suitable for practicing this tense.

Prompt 1: A Day in the Life

Imagine you are describing a typical day in your life to a friend. Write a paragraph detailing what you are doing from the moment you wake up until you go to bed. Use the present continuous tense to describe your activities.

Example:

Right now, I am waking up to the sound of my alarm clock. I am stretching and getting out of bed. Then, I am brushing my teeth

and getting dressed for work. On my way to the office, I am listening to my favorite podcast. At work, I am checking emails and attending meetings. During lunch, I am chatting with my colleagues. In the evening, I am going to the gym and working out. Finally, I am having dinner and watching TV before going to bed.

Prompt 2: Vacation Adventures

Write a story about a vacation you are currently on. Describe the activities you and your friends or family are doing each day. Use the present continuous tense to bring the story to life.

Example:

We are currently on vacation in Hawaii, and it's amazing! Right now, we are lounging on the beach and soaking up the sun. My brother is snorkeling in the crystal-clear water, and my parents are taking a walk along the shore. In the afternoon, we are planning to go hiking up a volcano. Later, we are trying some delicious local food at a nearby restaurant. Every evening, we are watching the beautiful sunset over the ocean.

6.6. CONCLUSION

As we conclude our journey through "Exploring the Present Continuous: Theory and Practice," we hope you have gained a deeper appreciation for this versatile tense. Whether you're a student, a teacher, or simply a language enthusiast, mastering the present continuous opens doors to clearer communication and richer expression. Keep practicing, keep exploring, and keep embracing the beauty of language in all its forms.

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STEP BY STEP MASTERING 16 TENSES (THEORY AND EXERCISES)

- BAB 1** : Tenses
Siti Shofiyatun
- BAB 2** : **Simple Present Tense**
Nurul Fadillah
- BAB 3** : **Simple Past Tense**
Cattleya Wahyu Pravitha
- BAB 4** : **Simple Future Tense**
Uswatunnisa
- BAB 5** : **Present Perfect Tense**
Tantry Ajeng Parnawati
- BAB 6** : **Present Continuous Tense**
Lu'luil Maknun
- BAB 7** : **Past Continuous Tense**
Indah Anjar Reski
- BAB 8** : **Past Perfect Tense**
Resi Silvia
- BAB 9** : **Future Continuous Tense**
Nafisatul Lutfi
- BAB 10** : **Future Perfect Tense**
Loso Judijanto
- BAB 11** : **Future Perfect Continuous Tense**
Siti Julaihah
- BAB 12** : **Past Future Tense**
Silmy Arizatul Humaira'
- BAB 13** : **Past Future Continuous Tense**
Nihla Afdaliah
- BAB 14** : **Past Future Tense**
Saidah
- BAB 15** : **Past Future Perfect Continuous Tense**
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