

# THE PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

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## 1.1

### A REVIEW OF VERB TENSES

Before we discuss the present perfect tense, a short review of the verb tenses covered in Book 1 of this work will prove helpful to those students who were not with us, and will serve as a review for those students who were.

1. The SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE is used for (a) a generally known fact or condition: *There are 360 degrees in a circle; Water contains no nitrogen;* (b) a state of being: *They are in love; The giraffe is the tallest of existing animals;* and (c) a habitual activity or occurrence: *Many animals hibernate every winter; The sun always rises in the east; Leap year comes every four years.*
2. Though not discussed as such in Book 1, the simple present tense is sometimes used for future time: *The ship sails at dawn; The sun rises at 6:18 tomorrow morning; The bank opens at nine o'clock tomorrow morning.*
3. The PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE is used for (a) an event that is occurring at this moment (now): *We are beginning this book; You are looking at this page now;* (b) an event that is taking place temporarily: *The patient is taking penicillin; She is living in a hotel for the time being (temporarily);* and (c) an event in future time: *The astronauts are leaving for the moon tomorrow; The curtain at the theater is rising at 8:30 tomorrow night.*
4. *Be going to* + a base form is also used for a coming event: *We're going to learn a lot of new things in this course; He's going to take another course after this one.*
5. *Be going to* + *be* + a present participle is used to emphasize the duration of a future event: *We are going to be studying together for several months; The earth is going to be revolving around the sun for millions of more years.*
6. The SIMPLE PAST TENSE is used for an event at a definite point of time in the past: *Jesus died on the Cross almost two thousand years ago; Buddha lived from c. 563 to 483 B.C.; Columbus discovered America in 1492.*
7. The PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE is used (a) to emphasize an event at one point in past time: *Everyone was sleeping at the time of the earthquake; Everyone in the theater was crying at the end of the movie;* and (b) to emphasize the duration of an event in past time: *His grandfather was working hard from the beginning to the end of the day; They were celebrating their victory at the Olympics all night long.*
8. The past continuous tense is most frequently used in complex sentences where the past continuous time (in a main clause) is interrupted by a definite past action (in a subordinate clause): *They were talking about me when I interrupted their conversation; The sun was shining when the climbers reached the top of Mt. Everest.*
9. Besides simple futurity, the FUTURE TENSE is used to express (a) promise: *I will always love you; I will never break this promise;* (b) determination: *We will never give up our freedom; We will die for our religion;* (c) inevitability: *The twentieth century will come to an end; Spring will bring new life;* and (d) prediction: *It will rain tomorrow; Everyone in the class will speak English well.*