Present tense

Hello and welcome back, in this lesson we will be exploring the present tense.

Looking back we can see that there are a number of different ways of referring to the present in English. It is important to remember that we are expressing more than simply the time of the action or event.

The present tenses in English are used:

- to talk about the present
- to talk about the future
- to talk about the past when we are telling a story in spoken English or when we are summarising a book, film, play etc.

The present tenses

There are four present tenses in English.

Use the present tense to talk about something that is going on now or that is true now and any time.

- Simple present to express habits and general truths.

- Present continuous to talk about an action happening now.

- Present perfect for repeated actions, actions where the time is not important, and actions that began in the past but are not finished yet.

- Present perfect continuous to talk about ongoing actions where both the process and the result are important.

There are **four** present tense forms in English:

Tense	Form
Present simple:	I work
Present continuous:	I am working
Present perfect:	I have worked
Present perfect continuous:	I have been working

Uses: To talk about the **present**:

He **works** at a restaurant.

He **has worked** there for three months now.

He **is working** at the restaurant.

He **has been working** there for three months now.

London **is** the capital of Britain.

To talk about the **future**:

The next train **leaves** this evening at 1700 hours.

I'll phone you when I **get** home.

He**'s meeting** Peter in town this afternoon.

I'll come home as soon as I **have finished** work.

You will be tired out after you **have been working** all night.

We can also use the present tenses to talk about the **past**.

Let's recap all the tenses:

time ⟶	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
↓ aspect			
SIMPLE	she worked	she works	she will work
CONTINUOUS	she was working	she is working	she will be working
PERFECT	she had worked	she has worked	she will have worked
PERFECT CONTINUOUS	she had been working	she has been working	she will have been working