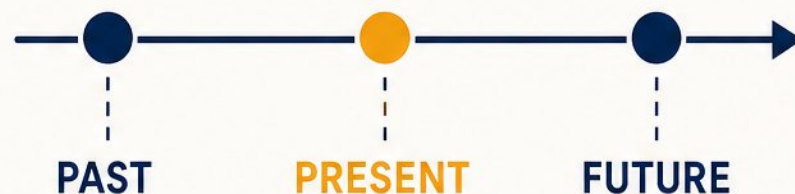


Understanding English Verb Tenses

- - Verb tenses show when actions happen: past, present, future
- - English combines 3 time frames with 4 aspects for 12 tenses
- - Aspect expresses viewpoint: simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous
- - Use time markers like yesterday, now, and since to guide choices
- - Master tenses for clear, accurate workplace communication



Why Tenses Feel Difficult



- Knowing rules is not the same as using them correctly in real communication



- First language habits can interfere with English tense choices



- The 12-form chart helps organize structure but does not fully explain meaning



Tense, Time, Aspect, and Voice

- Tense marks grammar; time marks the real world
- Aspect shows the speaker's viewpoint: simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous
- Auxiliaries and verb forms encode meaning
- Present and past are grammatical; future uses modals and other forms



The 12 Main Tense Forms at a Glance



- 3 time frames (past, present, future) × 4 aspects (simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous)



- Present Perfect:** has/have + past participle (just, already, since)



- Past Simple:** past form (yesterday, last week, ago)



- Future Continuous:** will be + -ing (this time tomorrow)



- Signal words guide tense recognition in context

	Simple	Continuous	Perfect	Perfect Continuous
Past	Past Simple past form  <i>yesterday, last week, ago</i>	Past Continuous was/were + -ing  <i>at that time, while, when</i>	Past Perfect had + past participle  <i>before, after, by the time</i>	Past Perfect Continuous had been + -ing  <i>for, since, before</i>
Present	Present Simple base form  <i>usually, often, every day</i>	Present Continuous am/is/are + -ing  <i>now, at the moment, right now</i>	Present Perfect has/have + past participle  <i>just, already, since</i>	Present Perfect Continuous has/have been + -ing  <i>for, since, how long</i>
Future	Future Simple will + base form  <i>tomorrow, next week, in the future</i>	Future Continuous will be + -ing  <i>this time tomorrow, at this time</i>	Future Perfect will have + past participle  <i>by then, by next week, by the time</i>	Future Perfect Continuous will have been + -ing  <i>for, since, by the time</i>

Present Tenses in Use



- **Present simple:** routines, facts, schedules (always, every day)



- **Present continuous:** actions now, temporary situations (now, at the moment)



- **Present perfect:** experience, results, unfinished time (already, just, yet)



- **Present perfect continuous:** duration, recent activity (for, since)



Past Tenses in Use



Future Forms in Use



Choosing the Right Tense in Communication



- Context and time markers guide tense choice



- Simple forms for established roles; continuous for temporary frames



- Perfect connects past results to current relevance



- Shifts should reflect a real change in time frame



- Align tense with professional tone and register





Tense Choices in Professional Writing



- Past tense for completed work
- Present tense for current state
- Future tense for commitments
- Present perfect links past results to now
- Keep tense consistent unless time frame changes

PAST



I completed the report yesterday.

PRESENT



The project is on track.

FUTURE



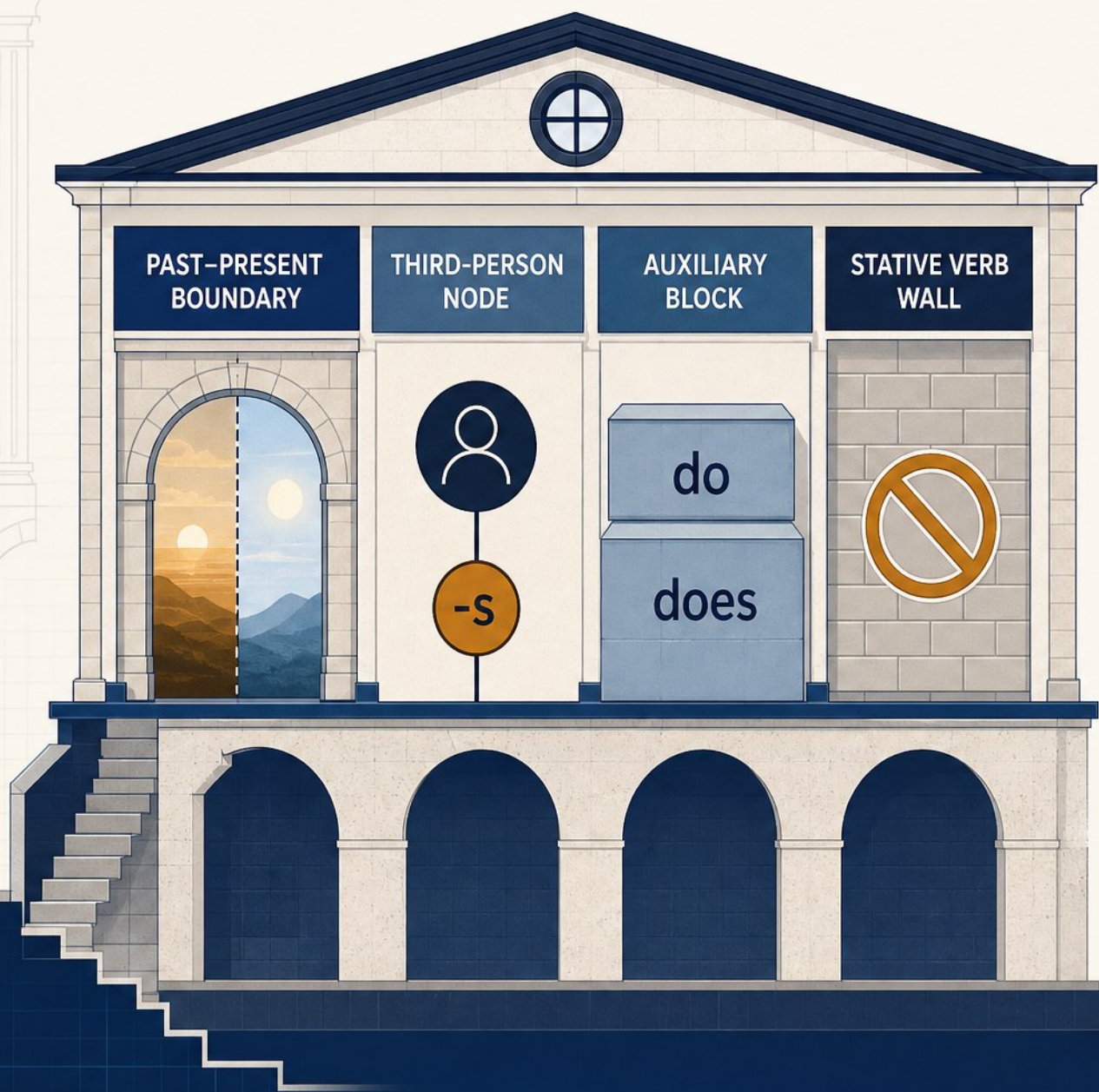
We will deliver the proposal next week.

PRESENT PERFECT



We have improved our processes.

Frequent Tense Errors and How to Fix Them



- Mixing up past simple and present perfect (“I’ve seen him yesterday” → “I saw him yesterday”)
- Forgetting the third-person “-s” and misusing do/does
- Using continuous forms with stative verbs (e.g., “I am knowing”)
- Shifting tense mid-sentence without a purposeful reason

Error Correction Strategies for Self-Study



Self-correction: Focus on common mistakes like present perfect vs. past simple, confusing "do" and "does," and forgetting "-s" in present simple.



Use time markers: Words like "yesterday" and "already" signal which tense to use.



Read aloud: This helps you hear and catch accidental tense shifts in your speech and writing.



Keep an error log: Record your frequent mistakes and revisit them to track your progress.



Practice and Application



- Diagnostic drills to identify tense forms and functions



- Writing tasks: emails, reports, and meeting summaries



- Speaking practice with planned timelines and narration



- Peer review and feedback prompts — correct common errors

DIAGNOSTIC DRILLS



WRITING TASKS



SPEAKING PRACTICE



....



....



PAST

PRESENT

FUTURE

Review of Main Tense Forms and Decision Rules



- **Simple:** routines, facts, finished actions, future plans
- **Continuous:** actions in progress at a specific time
- **Perfect:** completed actions with present relevance
- **Perfect continuous:** duration of an ongoing action
- **Ask:** Is it a habit, process, result, or duration?

	 Simple	 Continuous	 Perfect
 When we use it	routines, facts, finished actions, future plans	actions in progress at a specific time	completed actions with present relevance
 Signal words	usually, often, always, every day, tomorrow	now, at the moment, currently, these days	already, yet, just, so far, recently
 Example (workplace)	I check emails every morning.	I am working on the report now.	I have finished the report.

Next Steps for Continued Practice

- ✓ – Recommended resources:
Purdue OWL, Editage, Trinka.ai
- ✓ – Set workplace goals:
reports, emails, proposals
- ✓ – Daily 10-minute tense
review with signal words
- ✓ – Read aloud to catch
accidental tense shifts
- ✓ – Keep a personal error log
and revisit weekly



PersonWise.

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personwise.ai/t/52b74d1a/public