

Present continuous

Form : S. + is/am/are + -ing (present participle)

Positive and negative

I	'm (am) 'm not	working
He She It	's (is) 's not	
We You They	're (are) 're not	

Information question

what	am	I	wearing?
		we you they	
	are	he she it	
	is		

Use

The Present Continuous is used to express:

1. an activity happening now at the moment of speaking.

- ❖ They're **playing** football in the garden.
- ❖ She can't answer the phone because she's **washing** her hair.

2. an activity happening around now. but perhaps not at the moment of speaking.

- ❖ She's **studying** maths at university.
- ❖ I'm **reading** a good book by Henry James.

3. a planned future arrangement.

❖ **I'm meeting** Miss Boyd at ten o'clock tomorrow.

Notes:

1. There are some verbs that are usually used in the Present Simple only (not with present continuous). They express **a state, not an activity**, such as:

❖ like, want, love, understand, prefer, know, realise, suppose, need, contain, fit, seem, suggest, belong, promise, consist, mean, believe, remember, see, hear, smell, taste.

a. Look and feel: are used with the present simple or present continuous to say

how somebody looks or feels now:

❖ You **look** well today or You are **looking** well today

❖ How do you **feel** now? or How are you **feeling** now?

but: In frequent adverbs only present simple is used

❖ I **usually** feel tired in the morning (*not I'm usually feeling)

b. Think: is used with the present simple or present continuous in different use:

➤ When **think** means 'believe' or 'have an opinion', we do not use the continuous:

❖ I **think** Mary is Canadian, but I'm not sure. (not I'm thinking)

❖ What do you **think** of my plan? (= What is your opinion?)

➤ When **think** means 'consider', the continuous is possible:

❖ **I'm thinking** about what happened. I often think about it.

❖ Nicky **is thinking** of giving up her job. (= she is considering it)

2. Adverbs used with present continuous are: **now, at the moment, at present.**

3. **Always:** can be used with present simple or continuous, as in:

a. **I always do** (present simple): I do it every time

❖ **I always go** to school by car.

b. **I am always doing** (present continuous): I do things very often, perhaps

too often, or more often than normal

❖ I have lost my phone again. **I'm always losing** things.

4. **Being:** we use (**S. + am/is/are + being**) to say how somebody is behaving or acting, compare:

❖ He is selfish **He is being** selfish

but: cannot be used with fact sentences

❖ it's hot today (*not it is being hot)

❖ Sarah is very tired (*not Sarah is being tired)

5. the verb **to be (is/am/are)** can be used as **main verb** in or **auxiliary**.

a. **Main verb** in present simple:

❖ Bill **is** a doctor

b. **auxiliary** in present continuous

❖ He **is going** to hospital by car.

Note: the verb **to be (is/am/are)** as a main verb in negative and question is treated as

an **auxiliary**, as in:

❖ Bill **is not** a doctor.

❖ Is Bill a doctor? ❖ What **are** you **doing** this evening?

Present Simple S. + V. (s)

Positive and negative

I We You They	live don't live	near here
He She It	lives doesn't live	

Information question

where	do	I we you they	live?
	does	he she it	

Use

The Present Simple is used to express: **repeated actions**

1. a habit or routine

- ❖ I **get up** at 7:30 am.
- ❖ Cinda **smokes** too much.

2. a fact

- ❖ Vegetarians **don't eat** meat.
- ❖ I **live** in Oxford.
- ❖ She **works** in a bank.
- ❖ The earth **goes** around the sun

Note:

1. Adverbs of frequency (such as: always, usually, often, never, sometimes, normally, seldom, rarely, every) usually use with present simple and come before verb:

- ❖ We **never go** out in the evening.
- ❖ He **usually goes** to work by taxi.
- ❖ She **sometimes has** a cup of coffee.

2. We don't often use **do** or **does** with **who** in questions: Who + V.(s) + Com.?

(The question is in the singular because the number is unknown)

- ❖ **Who lives in London?**
- ❖ **Who plays football at the weekend?**
- ❖ **Who works at Liverpool City Hospital?**

But: we use **don't** or **doesn't** in the negative of the question, as in:

- ❖ Who **doesn't** study English?
- ❖ Who **doesn't** do homework?

3. We use **do** as a main verb when the action (verb) is **unknown**, as in:

- ❖ What **does** Jack **do** on Saturdays? He **plays** tennis.
- ❖ What **do** you **do** every morning? I have my breakfast

Past simple

Form: S. + V.ed

Negative

The negative of the Past Simple is formed with **didn't**

- ❖ He **walked**
- ❖ He **didn't walk**

I We You They He /She/It	didn't (did not)	arrive yesterday
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Information question

The question in the Past Simple is formed with **did**.

- ❖ She **finished**
- ❖ When **did** she **finish**?

When did	I we you they he /she/it	arrive ?
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Use

1. The Past Simple expresses a past action that **is now finished** (an action that started and ended in the past).

- ❖ We **played** tennis last Sunday.
- ❖ I **worked** in London from 1994 to 1999.
- ❖ John **left** two minutes ago.

2. To talk about habits in the past

Usually, she **went** to the library about once a week.

He **used to smoke** a lot.

3. An action that follows each other in a story

❖ Mary **walked** into the room and **stopped**. She **listened** carefully. She **heard** a

noise coming from behind the curtain. She **threw** the curtain open, and then

she **saw** ...

Notes:

1. The time expressions that are used with the Past Simple.

I did it	last year. last month. five years ago. yesterday morning. in 1985.
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2. In the following sentences, **do** is the main verb (did....do / didn't do)

❖ What did you do at the weekend? (*not What did you at the weekend?)

❖ I didn't do anything (*not I didn't anything)

3. We do not use **did** in negatives and questions with **was/were**:

❖ **Was** the weather good when you **were** on holiday?

❖ They **weren't** able to come because they **were** so busy.

Past continuous

The action was in the middle of doing something at a certain time

Form: S. + was/were + V. -ing

Positive and negative

We		working
You	were	
They	weren't (were not)	
He	was	
She	wasn't (was not)	
It		
I		

Information question

what	were	we you they	doing?
	was	he she it I	

Use

We often use the Past Continuous in sentences with the Past Simple. The Past

Continuous is used in the following situations:

1. To express a past activity that has **duration** (long activity).

- ❖ I met her while I **was living** in Paris.
- ❖ You **were making** a lot of noise last night.
- ❖ What **were** you **doing**?

2. The activity began **before** (first) the action expressed by the Past Simple.

- ❖ She **was making** coffee when we arrived
- ❖ When I phoned Simon he **was having** dinner.

3. to express an **interrupted or an incomplete** past activity.

- ❖ When the phone **rang**, I **was having** a shower
- ❖ While we **were playing** tennis, it **started** to rain.

Present Perfect

Form: S. + have/has + -ed (past participle/ pp.)

Use

1. an action that began in the past and still continues (unfinished past).

- ❖ We've **lived** in the same house for 25 years.
- ❖ Peter **has worked** as a teacher since 2000.
- ❖ How long **have** you **worked** here? I've **worked** here since 2007.
- ❖ They've **been** married for 20 years.

2. The action finishes at the time of speaking:

- ❖ I **haven't seen** you for ages. (but I see you now)
- ❖ This room **hasn't been** cleaned for months. (but we are cleaning it now)

3. An experience that happened at some time in one's life. The action is in the past

and finished, but the effects of the action are still felt.

- ❖ I've **been to** the United States. (I still remember).
- ❖ She's **written** poetry and children's stories. (in her writing career)
- ❖ **Have** you ever **had** an operation? (at any time in your life up to now)

- ❖ How many times **has** he **been** married? (in his life)
- ❖ Where's your key? I don't know. I've **lost** it (I don't have it now)
- ❖ He told me his name, but I've **forgotten** it. (I can't remember it now)

Since and For

for + a period of time **since** + the start of a period

For	two years	since	1970
	a month		the end of the class
	a few minutes		August
	half an hour		8 o'clock
	ages		Christmas
	years		Monday
	a week		12 May
	A long time		we arrived (always past)

Time expressions with present perfect:

1. Already (before now) is used in positive statements to stress that something has happened sooner than expected. It comes immediately after has/have or at the end of sentence.

- ❖ Karen has **already** left Hong Kong.
- ❖ I have found my lost watch **already**.

2. Just (a very recent moment) shows that an action was completed a short time ago.

We can also use *just* as an alternative to *already*. It comes immediately after has/have.

- ❖ They have **just** finished the project.
- ❖ Mum has **just** come home.

Compare *just* and *already*:

- ❖ Michael **has already left**. (= It's possible he left a long time ago)
- ❖ Michael has just left. (= This means he left just a short time ago).

3. Yet/ so far (until now) is often used with negative statements and questions when the speaker is expecting something to happen soon. Yet usually goes at the end of the question or negative statement.

- ❖ **Have** you **done** your math homework **yet**?
- ❖ I **haven't had** lunch **yet**.
- ❖ Everything is going well. We **haven't had** any problem **so far**.

4. Never (at no time) is used when the answer is negative.

- ❖ My mother **has never flown** in a plane.
- ❖ I've **never seen** a dolphin.

5. Ever means 'at any time'. It is used in questions

- ❖ **Have** you **ever ridden** a motorcycle?

6. Other expressions: recently, lately, in the last few days:

- ❖ **Have** you **heard** anything from Brain **recently/lately**?

(recently/lately means 'at any time during the last week/month etc.)

- ❖ I've **met** a lot of people **in the last few years**.

❖ I'm hungry. I **haven't eaten** anything **since breakfast**. (from breakfast until now)

❖ It's good to see you again. We **haven't seen** each other **for a long time**.

Present Perfect Continuous

Form

S. + has/have + been + V. -ing

Positive and negative

I/We/You/They	'v (have) haven't	been	working
He/She/It	's (has) hasn't		

Information question

How long	have	I/we/you/they	been	working?
	has	he/she/it		

Use

1. We use the Present Perfect Continuous for an activity is still happening and continues for some time in the future:

❖ They've **been repairing** our street and it's been causing a lot of traffic problems

❖ Is it raining? No, but the ground is wet. It **has been raining**.

2. The action has just stopped, but the result is still felt:

❖ Why are your clothes so dirty? What **have you been doing?** (now his clothes are dirty)

❖ Paul is very tired. He **has been working** very hard (he is tired now)

3. The Present Perfect Continuous is a connection of **past simple** and **present**

continuous:

❖ He **began** learning English ten years ago and he **is still learning**
He **has been learning** English since 2010

❖ He **waited** for the doctor for 2 hours and he **is still waiting**
He **has been waiting** for the doctor for 2 hours/ since 8 o'clock.

Present Perfect and Past Simple

Present Perfect	Past Simple
1. Something has happened : S.+ has/have + pp.	1. Something happened : S. + V.ed
2. We use present perfect with time expressions for a period up to now, like lately, so far, yet ❖ Have you seen any good films lately?	2. We use past simple with time expressions for a period that ended earlier, like last, yesterday, ❖ Did you see that film last night?
3. It always tells us about the situation now , i.e., unfinished actions. ❖ Tom has lost his key (he doesn't have his key now) ❖ I've lived in Texas for six years. (I still live there.)	3. It tells us only about the past , i.e., completed actions. ❖ Tom lost his key (he lost his key at a certain time in the past) ❖ I lived in Texas for six years. (Now I live somewhere else.)
4. It is used with new or recent information. ❖ She has had a baby! It's a boy. That's great news. ❖ Did you know that somebody has invented a new type of washing machine?	4. It is used for things that are not new. ❖ Mozart was composer. He wrote more than 600 pieces of music. ❖ Who invented the telephone? ❖ How many plays did Shakespeare write ?

5. It is used when the action is expected to happen in the future. ❖ I've written several books. (I can still write some more.)	5. It is used when the action cannot happen in the future. ❖ Shakespeare wrote 30 plays. (He can't write anymore.)
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6. The Present Perfect refers to indefinite time <table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="4">I've done</td><td>for a long time.</td></tr> <tr> <td>it since July.</td></tr> <tr> <td>before.</td></tr> <tr> <td>recently.</td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">I've already done it.</td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">I haven't done it yet.</td></tr> </table>	I've done	for a long time.	it since July.	before.	recently.	I've already done it.		I haven't done it yet.		6. the Past Simple refers to definite time <table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="6">I did it</td><td>yesterday</td></tr> <tr> <td>last week</td></tr> <tr> <td>two days ago.</td></tr> <tr> <td>at 8 o'clock</td></tr> <tr> <td>in 1987.</td></tr> <tr> <td>when I was young</td></tr> </table>	I did it	yesterday	last week	two days ago.	at 8 o'clock	in 1987.	when I was young
I've done		for a long time.															
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Past perfect

Form S. + had + V. PP.

Positive and negative

I/We/You/They/ He/She/It	'd (had) hadn't (had not)	seen
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Information question

What	had	I/we/you/they/ he/she/it	seen
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Use

1. The past perfect is the past equivalence of present perfect:

❖ Present: Ann **has just left**. If you hurry you'll catch her.

Past: When I arrived yesterday Ann **had just left**.

❖ Present: I've **lost** my case.

Past: He **had lost** his case and had to borrow Tom's pyjamas.

2. The past perfect can be used for an action which began before the time of speaking in the past:

❖ When Sarah arrived at the party last week, Pual **had** already **gone** home.

❖ Bill was in uniform when I met him. He **had been** a soldier since he was seventeen, and planned to stay in the army till he was thirty.

❖ The old oak tree, which **had stood** in the churchyard for 300 years, suddenly crashed to the ground.

❖ He **had served** in the army for ten years; then he retired and married.

Past Perfect Continuous

Form :S. + had + been + V. -ing

Positive and negative

I/We/You/They/ He/She/It	'd (had) hadn't (had not)	been	working
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Information question

What	had	I/we/you/they/ he/she/it	been	working
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Use

1. When the action began **before the time of speaking** in the past, and continued up to that time, or stopped just before it.

❖ It was six and he was tired because he **had been working** since dawn.

❖ We'd **been playing** tennis for about half an hour when it started to rain heavily.

❖ Paul went to the doctor last Friday. He **hadn't been feeling** well for some time.

Present tenses for the future

Present tense can be used to indicate a planned future arrangement.

'I'm doing something (tomorrow)' = I have already decided and arranged to do it.

I'm doing something or I'm going to do something

I'm going to do something

Positive

I	am going to	travel by plane
We/You/They	are going to	buy a new car
He/She/It	is going to	make a quick phone call

Negative

I	am not going to	travel by plane because I am going
We/You/They	are not going to	to fly in a hot air balloon.
He/She/It	is not going to	

Use

1. We use **I'm going to do something** when we have already decided to do

something, or we intend to do it

❖ Your shoes are dirty. Yes, I know. **I'm going to** clean them (I have decided

to clean them)

❖ I hear Sarah has won some money. What **is** she **going to** do with it?

2. Predictions based in what we can see at the moment; the situation now makes it

clear

❖ Look at these clouds! It **is going to** rain.

❖ The man is walking towards the wall now, so he **is going to** walk into it.

❖ I feel terrible. I think **I'm going** to be sick.

Note:

1. We can use 'I was going to do something' when we intend to do it, but didn't do

it:

- We were going to travel by train, but then we decided to go by car instead.
- Peter was going to do the exam, but he changed his mind.

2. You can say that something was going to do (but didn't happen):

--I thought it was going to rain, but it didn't.

I'm doing something

Positive: I'm **leaving** tomorrow. I've got my plane ticket.

Negative: Steve **isn't playing** football next Saturday. He's hurt his leg

Question: what time **are** you **meeting** Ann this evening?

Use

We use **I'm doing something** when we have already **arranged** to do something, for

example arranged to meet somebody, arranged to go somewhere...

❖ **I'm not working** tomorrow, so we can go out somewhere

Note:

- Don't use **will** to talk about what you have arranged to do:
 - ❖ What **are** you **doing** this evening (not What will you do)
 - ❖ Alex **is getting** married next month (not will get)
- You can also use present continuous for an action just before you begin to do it.
This happens especially with verbs of movement (go/come/leave...)
I'm tired. I**m going to** bed now (not I go to bed now)
Jess, are you ready yet? Yes, I**m coming** (not I come)

Will/shall**Form:** will

S. + will + infinitive

Positive and negative

I/We/You/They/ He/She/It	'll (will) won't (will not)	travel by bus
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Information question

when	will	I/we/you/they/ he/she/it	help me?
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Uses

- Instant decisions (we 've just, not already, decided to do something)
 - ❖ Oh, I've left the door open. I**ll** go and shut it
 - ❖ Ok, I**ll** see you on Friday

2. Predictions based in what we think (not at the moment):

❖ It **will** rain in the evening.

3. We often use **will** in these situations:

A. Offering to do something

❖ That bag looks heavy. I'll help you with it. (not I help)

❖ Don't worry, I'll go and buy some food for you.

B. Agreeing to do something

❖ a: Can you give Tom this book?

❖ b: Sure, I'll give it to him when I see him this afternoon.

C. Promising to do something

❖ Thanks for lending me the money. I'll pay you back on Friday.

❖ I **won't** tell anyone what happened. I promise.

D. Asking somebody to do something (Will you ...?)

❖ **Will** you please turn the music down? I'm trying to concentrate.

4. We often use will ('ll) with:

Probably: I'll probably be home late tonight.

I'm sure: Don't worry about the exam. I'm sure you'll pass.

I think: Do you think Sarah **will** like the present we bought her?

I don't think: I don't think the exam **will** be very difficult

I wonder: I wonder what **will** happen.

Notes

1. We do not use **will** to talk about what has been decided or arranged before:

❖ I'm **going** on holiday next Saturday. (not I'll go)

Compare:

❖ I'm **meeting** Kate tomorrow morning. (decided before)

❖ a: I'll meet you at half past ten, OK?

b: Fine. See you then. (decided now)

We use **will** to announce a new decision.

❖ Sarah is talking to Helen:

Sarah: Let's have a party.

Helen: That's a great idea.

We'll invite lots of people.

(The party is a new idea.)

We use **(be) going to** when we have already decided to do something.

❖ Later that day, Helen meets Max:

Sarah and I have decided to have a party. We're going to invite lots of people.

(Helen had already decided to invite lots of people before she spoke to Max.)

2. We use **will** to say what we know or believe about the future

❖ Kate has her driving test next week. Chris and Joe are talking about it.

Chris: Do you think Kate **will** pass?

Joe: Yes, she's a good driver. She'll pass easily. (Joe believes that Kate will

pass the driving test. He is predicting the future.)

Compare:

❖ I think James **is going to** the party on Friday. (= I think he has already decided to go)

❖ I think James **will** go to the party on Friday. (= I think he will decide to go)

When we say something **is going to** happen, we believe this because of **the**

situation now. What is happening now shows that something is going to happen in the future. For example:

❖ Look at those black clouds. It's **going to** rain. (not it will rain)
(we can see that it is going to rain – the black clouds are in the sky now)

Compare:

❖ We're **going to** be late. The meeting starts in five minutes and it takes 15 minutes to get there.

(it is clear now that we don't have enough time to get there)

❖ Jane **will** be late for the meeting. She's always late.
(I believe this because I know what Jane is like)

3. Generally we use **will** to talk about the future, but sometimes we use **will** to talk about now:

❖ Don't phone Amy now. She'll be busy. (= she'll be busy now)

Form: shall

S. + shall + infinitive

Normally we use **shall** only with I and we. You can say: I shall or I will (I'll) we shall or we will (we'll)

1. We use **shall** mostly in the questions shall I ... ? / shall we ... ?

2. We use shall I ... ? / shall we ... ? to ask if it's OK to do something or to ask for a suggestion:

❖ Shall I open the window? (= do you want me to open it?)

❖ I've got no money. What **shall** I do? (= what do you suggest?)

❖ '**Shall** we go?' 'Just a minute. I'm not ready yet.'

❖ 'Where **shall** we have lunch?' 'Let's go to Marino's.'

Compare

shall I ... ? and will you ... ? :

- ❖ **Shall** I shut the door? (= do you want me to shut it?)
- ❖ **Will** you shut the door? (= I want you to shut it)

Note:

1. In spoken English we normally use **I'll** and **we'll**:

- ❖ We'll probably go to France.

2. The negative of shall is **shall not** or **shan't**:

- ❖ I **shan't** be here tomorrow. (or I won't be)

3. We do not normally use shall with he/she/it/you/they:

- ❖ She will be very angry. (not She shall be)

Modals: 1. Can/ Could

A. Can

Positive: We **can see** the lake from our hotel.

Negative: I'm afraid I **can't come** to the party on Friday.

Question: **Can** you **speak** any foreign languages?

Use

1. We use **can** to say that something is **possible** or allowed, or that somebody has the **ability** to do something.

- ❖ I **can** come and see you tomorrow if you like.

2. You can say that somebody **is able to do** something, but **can** is more usual:

- ❖ We **are able to** see the lake from our hotel.

B. Could

Positive: We had a lovely room in the hotel. We **could** see the lake.

Negative: My grandfather **couldn't** swim.

Question: **Could** your grandfather speak five languages?

Use

1. **Could** is the past form of **can**.

❖ Listen. I **can** hear something. (now)

I listened. I **could** hear something. (past)

2. We normally use **was/were able to** or **managed to** (**not** could) when somebody

succeeded in doing something in a specific situation:

❖ The fire spread quickly, but everybody **was able to escape**. (**not** could escape)

❖ I didn't know where Max was, but I **managed to find** him in the end. (**not** could find)

Compare:

❖ Jack was an excellent tennis player when he was younger. He **could beat** anybody.

(= he was good enough to beat anybody, he had the ability)

❖ Jack and Andy played a match yesterday. Andy played well, but Jack

managed to beat him.

(= he succeeded in beating him this time)

3. **Could** is not always past. We also use **could** for possible actions now or in the

future, especially to **make suggestions**. For example:

❖ a: What shall we do tonight?

b: We **could go** to the cinema.

❖ a: When you go to Paris next month, you **could** stay with Sarah.

b: Yes, I suppose I could.

4. We also use **could (not can)** to suppose that something is possible now or in the

future:

❖ The story **could** be true, but I don't think it is. (**not** can be true)

❖ I don't know what time Lisa is coming. She **could** get here at any time.

Compare: can and could

❖ The weather **can** change very quickly in the mountains. (In general)

The weather is nice now, but it **could** change later. (The weather now, not in general)

❖ The fantastic stories **can** be true, but I don't think that (in general)
Harry Potter' story **could** be true, but I don't think that (in specific)

5. We also use **could (not can)** for actions that are **not realistic**. For example:

I'm so tired; I **could sleep** for a week. (**Not** I can sleep for a week)

Compare: can and could

❖ I **can** stay with Sarah when I go to Paris. (realistic)

❖ Maybe I **could** stay with Sarah when I go to Paris. (Possible, but less sure)

❖ This is a wonderful place. I **could** stay here forever. (unrealistic)

6. We use **could have (done)** to talk about the past. Compare:

❖ I'm so tired, I **could** sleep for a week. (Now, unrealistic)

I was so tired; I **could have slept** for a week. (Past, unrealistic)

❖ The situation is bad, but it **could** be worse. (Now, possible now or in the future)

The situation was bad, but it **could have** been worse, but did not happen. (Past, it was possible)

7. The form **I couldn't do something** is used to mean **it would not be possible**:

❖ I **couldn't live** in a big city. I'd hate it. (= it wouldn't be possible for me)

❖ Everything is fine right now. Things **couldn't be** better.

For the past we use **couldn't have** ... (= would not have been possible):

❖ We had a really good holiday. It **couldn't have** been better.

Note that '**I couldn't do something**' has two meanings:

(1) **I couldn't** = it would not be possible now, I would not be able:

I **couldn't run** ten kilometers now. I'm not fit enough. (= I would not be able)

(2) **I couldn't** = I was not able (past)

I **couldn't run** yesterday because I'd hurt my leg. (= I was not able)

I cannot run now

2. Must and can't

Must (we believe something is certain) X **can't** (we believe something is not possible)

Use

1. We use **must** to say that we believe something is certain:

❖ You've been travelling all day. You **must** be tired.

(travelling is tiring and you've been travelling all day, so you must be tired)

2. **Must** expresses strong obligation. Generally, this obligation comes from 'inside' the speaker.

❖ I **must** get my hair cut. (I think this is necessary)

❖ We **must** try harder.

❖ **Must** I take exams? Yes, you **must**

3. Because **must** expresses the authority of the speaker, you should be careful of

using **You must...** . It sounds very bossy!

❖ You **must** help me. (I am giving you an order.)

Could you help me? (it is much better).

4. **You must** can express a strong suggestion.

❖ You **must** see the Monet exhibition. It's wonderful.

❖ You **must** give me a ring when you're next in town.

5. You use **must not** or **mustn't** to say that it is important that something is not done

(it expresses prohibition).

❖ You **must not** / **mustn't** be late.

❖ We **must not** / **mustn't** forget the tickets

2. may and might

you/she/they (etc.)	may might	be (true / in his of ice etc.) be -ing (doing / working / having etc.) know / work / want etc.
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1. We use **may** or **might** to say that something is possible. You can use **may** or **might**:

- ❖ It **may** be true. or It **might** be true. (= perhaps it is true)
- ❖ She **might** know. or She **may** know.

The negative forms are may not and might not:

- ❖ It **may not** be true. (= perhaps it isn't true)
- ❖ She **might not** know. (= perhaps she doesn't know)

2. We use **may** and **might** to talk about possible actions in the future:

- ❖ I haven't decided where to go on holiday. I **may** go to Ireland. (= perhaps I will go there)
- ❖ Take an umbrella with you. It **might** rain later. (= perhaps it will rain)
- ❖ The bus isn't always on time. We **might have to** wait a few minutes. (= perhaps we will have to wait)

The negative forms are **may not** and **might not** (mightn't):

Amy may not go out tonight. She isn't feeling well. (= perhaps she will not go out)

Compare:

I'm **going to** buy a car. (for sure)

I **may** buy a car. or I **might** buy a car. (possible)

3. A lot of people use **may** and **might** interchangeably, especially in speech, but

there is really a little difference between the two, Compare:

❖ He **may** lose his job (**May** is used to express what is possible, factual, or could be factual)

❖ If you hurry, you **might** get there on time (**Might** is used to express what is hypothetical, counterfactual, not real or remotely possible)

❖ If they paid me better, I **might** work harder. (not I may work)
(This situation '*If they paid me better*' is not real. They do not pay me well, so

I'm not going to work harder).

Note:

1. The difference between **may be** (2 words) and **maybe** (1 word):

❖ It **may be** true. (may + verb)

❖ 'Is it true?' '**Maybe**. I'm not sure.' (**maybe** = it's possible, perhaps)

2. For the past, we use **may have** ... or **might have**

you/she/they (etc.)	may (not) have might (not) have	been (true / in his of ice etc.) been -ing (doing / working / having etc.) known / worked / wanted / left etc.
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❖ a: I wonder why Kate didn't answer her phone.

b: She **may have** been asleep. (= perhaps she was asleep)

❖ a: I can't find my phone anywhere.

b: You **might have** left it at work. (= perhaps you left it at work)

3. Compare **may/might be -ing** and **will be -ing**:

- ❖ Don't phone at 8.30. I'll **be watching** the football on TV.
- ❖ Don't phone at 8.30. I **might be watching** the football on TV. (= perhaps I'll be watching it)
- ❖ I'm **going to** Ireland soon. (for sure)
- ❖ I **might be going** (or I may be going) to Ireland soon. (possible)

4. **might as well** = used to suggest doing something, often when there is nothing better to do:

- ❖ A. What time are you going out?
- B. Well, I'm ready, so I **might/may as well** go now.
- ❖ Buses are so expensive these days, you **might/may as well get** a taxi.
(= taxis are as good, no more expensive than buses).

Should

Should + Verb (base form of infinitive)

e.g. You **should go** now (**do not say**: You should *to* go now.)

Uses

1. To give advice, a recommendation or a suggestion. This is to say that it is the right thing to do or the correct thing.

- Does your tooth still hurt? You **should** make an appointment with the dentist.
- I think you **should** study for the test so that you don't fail.
- Your hair is too long. You **should** get a haircut.
- You really **should** go to the new restaurant on Main Street.

Thus, you can use should after **insist, demand, recommend, suggest, and propose**

- I insisted that he **should** apologise.

- Doctors recommend that everyone **should** eat plenty of fruit.
- What do you suggest we **should** do?
- Many people are demanding that something **should** be done about the problem.

Notes:

A. you can also leave out should in the sentences above. So you can say:

- It's essential that everyone be here on time. (= ... that everyone should be here ...)
- I insisted that he apologise. (= ... that he should apologise)
- What do you suggest we do?
- Many people are demanding that something be done about the problem.

B. We do not use to ... with suggest. You can say:

- What do you **suggest we should** do? or What do you **suggest we do**?
(not What do you suggest us to do?)
- Jane won the lottery.
- I **suggested** that she **should buy a car** with the money she won. or I **suggested** that she **buy a car**. (not I suggested her to buy)

. Expresses that a situation is likely in the present

- Mary **should** be at home by now. Give her a call. (= she isn't here yet, and this is not normal)
- He **should** have the letter by now. I sent it a couple of weeks ago.

3. Expresses that a situation is likely in the future (prediction or we expect something to happen)

- They **should** win the game because they are a much better team.
- I posted the cheque yesterday so it **should** arrive this week.
- It **should** be fine tomorrow.

4. Expresses an obligation that is not as strong as *Must* or *have to*.

Sometimes **Should** is used instead of **Must** to make rules, orders or instructions

sound more polite. This may appear more frequently on formal notices or on

information sheets.

- On hearing the fire alarm, hotel guests **should** leave their room immediately.
- Passengers **should** check in at least 2 hours before departure time.
- You **should** never lie to your doctor.
- You **should** pay more attention in class.
- You **should** be at work before 9.

All of the above example sentences can have **must** instead of **should** making the obligation stronger and less polite.

Compare: **should** and **must/ have to**

- You **should** apologise. (= it would be a good thing to do)
- You **must** apologise. / You **have to** apologise. (= you have no alternative)

5. Was expected in the past but didn't happen (should + have + past participle)

You should have done: expresses the idea that you didn't do it, but it would have been a good thing to do.

- You missed a great party last night. You **should** have come. Why didn't you?

(= you didn't come, but it would have been good to come)

- You **should have** given your boss the report yesterday when he asked for it.
- I **should have** studied more but I was too tired.

You shouldn't have done something = you did it, but it wasn't a good thing to do:

- I'm feeling sick. I **shouldn't** have eaten so much. (= I ate too much)
- She **shouldn't** have been listening to our conversation. It was private. (= she was listening)

Shouldn't

We use shouldn't to advise not to do something, usually because it is bad or wrong to do.

- ❖ You **shouldn't** throw your litter onto the street.
- ❖ We **shouldn't** leave without saying goodbye.
- ❖ He **shouldn't** play with those wires if he doesn't know what he is doing.
- ❖ Are you tired? You **shouldn't** work so much.
- ❖ You **shouldn't** talk like that to your grandmother.