

Exercise 1: Controlled Practice - Form Accuracy

Focus: Mastering present simple form in all its variations

IELTS Application: Grammar accuracy for Writing and Speaking

Estimated Time: 10-12 minutes

Learning Objective

In this exercise, you'll practice forming present simple sentences correctly, with special attention to third-person singular forms, negatives, and questions—all essential for grammatical accuracy in IELTS responses.

Instructions

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the present simple. Pay close attention to subject-verb agreement, negative forms, and question structures.

Task

Complete these sentences with the correct present simple form of the verbs in brackets:

1. The pie chart _____ (show) that young people _____ (spend) more time online than older generations.
2. The government _____ (not/provide) adequate funding for public transportation.
3. Many experts _____ (believe) that climate change _____ (pose) a significant threat to coastal areas.
4. _____ (do) the university _____ (offer) scholarships to international students?
5. The manufacturing process _____ (consist) of three main stages and _____ (take) approximately two hours to complete.
6. She _____ (study) environmental science and _____ (want) to work in conservation.
7. _____ (do) pollution levels _____ (decrease) when public transportation _____ (improve)?
8. This factory _____ (not/release) harmful chemicals into the river.
9. The research _____ (indicate) that children who _____ (read) regularly _____ (perform) better academically.
10. How many people _____ (use) public transportation in your city?

Guidance Tips

Remember these key points about present simple form:

- Add -s or -es to verbs with third-person singular subjects (he/she/it/the chart/Maria)
- For questions, use do/does + subject + base verb
- For negatives, use don't/doesn't + base verb
- Be careful with irregular verbs like "have" (has in third person)
- Watch for spelling changes in third person (study → studies, go → goes)

Your Turn

Complete all the sentences with the correct present simple forms.

Model Answer

1. The pie chart **shows** that young people **spend** more time online than older generations.
2. The government **doesn't provide** adequate funding for public transportation.
3. Many experts **believe** that climate change **poses** a significant threat to coastal areas.
4. **Does** the university **offer** scholarships to international students?
5. The manufacturing process **consists** of three main stages and **takes** approximately two hours to complete.
6. She **studies** environmental science and **wants** to work in conservation.
7. **Do** pollution levels **decrease** when public transportation **improves**?
8. This factory **doesn't release** harmful chemicals into the river.
9. The research **indicates** that children who **read** regularly **perform** better academically.
10. How many people **use** public transportation in your city?

Tutor Feedback

Well done on completing these sentences! Let's look at some key points about form accuracy:

Third Person Singular Rule: Notice how sentences 1, 3, 5, 6, and 9 all require the -s/-es ending because they have third-person singular subjects. This is one of the most common error areas for IELTS candidates, especially in Speaking Part 3 when discussing abstract topics or describing visuals in Writing Task 1.

Question Formation: In questions 4, 7, and 10, you need to use the auxiliary "do/does" before the subject, followed by the base form of the main verb (without -s). Many candidates forget to drop the -s ending after "does" in questions, which immediately signals to examiners that you haven't mastered basic grammar structures.

Negative Structures: Sentences 2 and 8 demonstrate correct negative forms with "doesn't" + base verb. Remember that after "doesn't," the main verb returns to its base form (provide, not provides).

Subject-Verb Agreement: In sentence 9, we have multiple clauses with different subjects. "Research indicates" (singular subject), "children who read" (plural subject), and "perform" (plural subject). Managing complex sentences with correct subject-verb agreement shows Band 7+ grammatical control.

IELTS Writing Impact: In Writing Task 1, accurate present simple forms when describing data are essential for achieving Band 6+ in grammatical range and accuracy. Similarly, in Task 2, correct formation of present simple for expressing opinions and general truths directly impacts your grammar score.

IELTS Speaking Impact: In the Speaking test, especially Parts 2 and 3, accurate present simple forms when expressing opinions or describing general situations demonstrate grammatical control. Examiners are particularly attentive to third-person singular accuracy as it's a common error area.

Next Steps: If you struggled with any particular aspect (third person forms, questions, or negatives), focus on that area in your practice. Try creating your own sentences about IELTS topics using those particular structures.

Extension Challenge

Rewrite this paragraph correcting all the present simple errors: "The graph show that people in rural areas prefer private transport while urban resident relies more on public options. This trend vary between countries and depend on many factors. The government often struggle to provide adequate public transportation in remote regions because it cost too much money. This situation have both environmental and social impacts."

Exercise 2: Guided Production - Task 1 Graph Description

Focus: Using present simple to describe and analyze data

IELTS Application: Writing Task 1 (graphs, charts, tables)

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

Learning Objective

In this exercise, you'll practice using present simple effectively to describe and analyze visual data, a key skill for IELTS Writing Task 1.

Instructions

Study the description below, which contains guidance on where to use present simple. Then use the framework to write your own description of the chart data.

Task

The chart below shows the percentage of people using different types of transportation in three cities.

[Imagine a bar chart showing transportation usage percentages across three cities: London, Tokyo, and New York. Transportation types include: car, public transport, cycling, and walking]

Complete the following framework paragraph using present simple verbs appropriately:

Introduction: The bar chart _____ (illustrate) the percentage of people who _____ (use) various transportation methods in three major cities: London, Tokyo, and New York.

Overview: Overall, it _____ (be) clear that car usage _____ (vary) significantly between these cities, while public transportation _____ (appear) most popular in Tokyo. Additionally, walking _____ (represent) a notable transportation method in all three locations.

Key details - paragraph 1: According to the data, Tokyo _____ (have) the highest percentage of public transport usage at 60%, while New York _____ (show) 45% and London _____ (record) 40%. In contrast, private car usage _____ (reach) its peak in New York at 35%, _____ (follow) by London at 30%, while Tokyo _____ (register) only 20%.

Key details - paragraph 2: Regarding eco-friendly options, cycling _____ (account) for 10% of transportation in London, which _____ (exceed) both Tokyo (5%) and New York (2%). Walking _____ (constitute) 20% of movement in London, _____ (stand) slightly higher than in Tokyo (15%) and New York (18%). These figures _____ (suggest) that London _____ (promote) more sustainable transportation options than the other cities.

Guidance Tips

When describing charts in IELTS Writing Task 1:

- Use present simple for describing what the visual information shows
- Use present simple for making observations about the data
- Be consistent with your tense throughout the description
- Remember to use appropriate reporting verbs (shows, illustrates, indicates, reveals, etc.)
- Pay attention to subject-verb agreement, especially with singular subjects like "the percentage," "the majority," etc.

Your Turn

Complete the framework with appropriate present simple verbs.

Model Answer

Introduction: The bar chart **illustrates** the percentage of people who **use** various transportation methods in three major cities: London, Tokyo, and New York.

Overview: Overall, it **is** clear that car usage **varies** significantly between these cities, while public transportation **appears** most popular in Tokyo. Additionally, walking **represents** a notable transportation method in all three locations.

Key details - paragraph 1: According to the data, Tokyo **has** the highest percentage of public transport usage at 60%, while New York **shows** 45% and London **records** 40%. In contrast, private car usage **reaches** its peak in New York at 35%, **followed** by London at 30%, while Tokyo **registers** only 20%.

Key details - paragraph 2: Regarding eco-friendly options, cycling **accounts** for 10% of transportation in London, which **exceeds** both Tokyo (5%) and New York (2%). Walking **constitutes** 20% of movement in London, **standing** slightly higher than in Tokyo (15%) and New York (18%). These figures **suggest** that London **promotes** more sustainable transportation options than the other cities.

Tutor Feedback

Excellent work on your Task 1 description! Let's analyze why present simple is so effective here:

Reporting Function: Notice how present simple verbs like "illustrates," "shows," and "indicates" are perfect for explaining what the visual data represents. This is exactly what IELTS examiners look for in Task 1 introductions. Using present simple for this reporting function demonstrates your understanding of appropriate academic register.

Verb Variety: Your description uses a wide range of present simple verbs (has, reaches, exceeds, constitutes, etc.) rather than relying on repetitive options like "is" or "shows." This variety contributes to your "lexical resource" score by demonstrating a broad vocabulary while maintaining grammatical accuracy.

Comparison Language: Present simple works effectively with comparative structures ("exceeds both Tokyo and New York"). This combination allows for concise and clear comparisons between data points—essential for achieving higher bands in Task 1.

Analytical Function: In your conclusion, verbs like "suggest" and "promotes" demonstrate analytical thinking about what the data implies—a key requirement for Band 7+ in Task 1. Present simple is the perfect tense for expressing these analytical observations.

Common Errors to Avoid:

- Don't shift to present continuous (e.g., "The chart is showing...")
- Maintain subject-verb agreement, especially with collective nouns (e.g., "The percentage of people **shows**..." not "show")
- Use the correct form for data subjects (e.g., "The data indicate..." is technically correct, though "indicates" is commonly accepted)
- Avoid past tense when describing current data

IELTS Impact: Consistent and accurate use of present simple throughout a Task 1 response contributes significantly to the coherence and cohesion of your answer, as well as to your grammatical accuracy score. Examiners specifically note tense consistency as a marking criterion.

Extension Challenge

Find or create another chart showing different data (perhaps about education, environment, or technology). Write a complete 150-word Task 1 response using present simple effectively throughout. Try to use at least 8 different present simple verbs in your description.

Exercise 3: Writing Task 2 Application - Opinion Essays

Focus: Using present simple for expressing opinions and general truths

IELTS Application: Writing Task 2 opinion essays

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

Learning Objective

In this exercise, you'll practice using present simple to express opinions, state general truths, and present arguments effectively—key skills for IELTS Writing Task 2.

Instructions

Read the IELTS Writing Task 2 question and the essay outline below. Then, expand each bullet point into a complete sentence using present simple appropriately.

Task

IELTS Writing Task 2 Question: Some people believe that universities should focus more on academic subjects, while others think practical skills are more important for students' future careers. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Essay Outline: Complete each bullet point with a full sentence using present simple appropriately:

Introduction:

- Many people _____ (have) different opinions about university education focus
- The debate _____ (center) around academic versus practical approaches
- This essay _____ (discuss) both perspectives and _____ (provide) my view

Academic Focus Arguments:

- Academic subjects _____ (develop) critical thinking and analytical abilities
- Students who _____ (study) theoretical concepts _____ (gain) deeper understanding
- This approach _____ (prepare) graduates for research and innovation
- Universities traditionally _____ (exist) to advance knowledge, not just for job training

Practical Skills Arguments:

- Practical education _____ (equip) students with job-ready skills
- Employers often _____ (prefer) graduates with hands-on experience
- Technical knowledge quickly _____ (become) outdated in today's fast-changing world
- Many graduates _____ (struggle) to find jobs despite having academic degrees

My Opinion:

- Both approaches _____ (offer) valuable benefits to students
- The ideal education _____ (combine) theoretical and practical elements
- This balanced approach _____ (ensure) graduates _____ (possess) both depth of understanding and applicable skills
- Universities that _____ (integrate) both methods _____ (produce) more well-rounded graduates

Guidance Tips

When using present simple in opinion essays:

- Use present simple for general truths and facts
- Use present simple for stating opinions
- Maintain subject-verb agreement, especially with plural/singular subjects
- Connect ideas logically while maintaining tense consistency
- Avoid unnecessary shifts to other tenses when discussing general concepts

Your Turn

Complete the outline by expanding each bullet point into a full sentence using present simple appropriately.

Model Answer

Introduction:

- Many people **have** different opinions about what universities should focus on in their education programs.
- The debate **centers** around whether academic subjects or practical skills better serve students' needs.
- This essay **discusses** both perspectives and **provides** my view on this important educational issue.

Academic Focus Arguments:

- Academic subjects **develop** critical thinking and analytical abilities that serve students throughout their lives.
- Students who **study** theoretical concepts **gain** a deeper understanding of their field's foundations.
- This approach **prepares** graduates for careers in research and innovation where fundamental knowledge is essential.
- Universities traditionally **exist** to advance knowledge and foster intellectual growth, not just for job training.

Practical Skills Arguments:

- Practical education **equips** students with job-ready skills that employers value immediately.
- Employers often **prefer** graduates with hands-on experience over those with purely theoretical knowledge.
- Technical knowledge quickly **becomes** outdated in today's fast-changing world, while practical abilities remain relevant.
- Many graduates **struggle** to find jobs despite having academic degrees because they lack real-world skills.

My Opinion:

- Both approaches **offer** valuable benefits to students in different ways.
- The ideal education **combines** theoretical foundations with practical application in relevant contexts.
- This balanced approach **ensures** graduates **possess** both depth of understanding and applicable skills for their careers.
- Universities that **integrate** both methods effectively **produce** more well-rounded graduates who succeed in diverse settings.

Tutor Feedback

Excellent work developing these ideas with present simple! Let's analyze why this tense works so effectively in Task 2 essays:

Opinion Expression: Present simple is the natural tense for expressing opinions ("I believe," "I think," "many people consider"). Using it correctly signals to the examiner that you can express views clearly and directly—a key requirement for Task 2.

Generalizations and Truths: Notice how present simple effectively presents general statements about universities, education, and employment. This is exactly the tense you need for Task 2 when making broad observations or citing general trends.

Cause-Effect Relationships: Your sentences like "This approach prepares graduates..." and "The ideal education combines..." show how present simple clearly establishes cause-effect relationships—essential for developing logical arguments in Task 2.

Subject-Verb Agreement: Your model answer correctly handles various subjects: singular ("debate centers"), plural ("universities exist"), and abstract nouns ("knowledge becomes"). This grammatical control is exactly what examiners look for in higher band scores.

Paragraph Cohesion: Consistent present simple usage throughout related ideas creates cohesion across your paragraphs. This tense consistency contributes significantly to the "coherence and cohesion" criterion in IELTS marking.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Don't switch unnecessarily to present perfect or continuous when discussing general concepts
- Be careful with third-person singular subjects (it/education/knowledge/etc.)
- Watch for agreement with collective nouns like "government," "society," or "media"
- Maintain consistency when using present simple for both sides of an argument

IELTS Impact: Appropriate use of present simple for expressing opinions and general truths directly contributes to achieving Band 6+ in grammatical range and accuracy. Examiners specifically look for control of basic tenses in Task 2 responses.

Extension Challenge

Choose one of these Task 2 topics and write an introduction and one body paragraph using present simple effectively:

1. Some people believe governments should spend more money on environmental protection than on economic development. Discuss both views and give your opinion.
2. In some countries, young people are leaving rural areas to work in cities. What problems does this cause and what solutions can you suggest?

Exercise 4: Present Simple in Complex Sentences

Focus: Using present simple in more complex grammatical structures

IELTS Application: Higher-band writing and speaking responses

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

Learning Objective

In this exercise, you'll practice incorporating present simple into more sophisticated sentence structures, which is essential for achieving Band 7+ scores in IELTS Writing and Speaking.

Instructions

Complete each sentence stem below by adding a clause that uses present simple correctly. Focus on creating complex sentences that demonstrate advanced grammatical control.

Task

Complete these sentence stems with your own ideas, ensuring you use present simple correctly in complex structures:

1. **Relative clauses:**

- People who _____ usually _____
- The type of education that _____ often _____
- Cities where _____ generally _____

2. **Conditional structures:**

- If the government _____, citizens _____
- Unless universities _____, students _____
- When pollution _____, public health _____

3. **Cause and effect:**

- Because modern technology _____, many industries _____
- As global warming _____, sea levels _____
- Since many employers _____, graduates _____

4. **Contrast structures:**

- While some people _____, others _____
- Although education _____, it still _____
- Despite the fact that public transport _____, many people _____

5. **Concession and emphasis:**

- Not only _____, but it also _____
- What _____ is that _____
- The reason why _____ is that _____

Guidance Tips

When creating complex sentences with present simple:

- Ensure subject-verb agreement in both main and subordinate clauses
- Pay special attention to third-person singular forms
- Keep tense consistent throughout the sentence
- Use appropriate connecting words and phrases
- Focus on creating meaningful content relevant to common IELTS topics

Your Turn

Complete all the sentence stems with your own ideas, maintaining correct present simple usage throughout.

Model Answer

1. **Relative clauses:**

- People who **work** in creative industries usually **enjoy** more flexible schedules than traditional office workers.
- The type of education that **focuses** on practical skills often **produces** more employable graduates.
- Cities where public transportation **operates** efficiently generally **experience** less traffic congestion.

2. **Conditional structures:**

- If the government **invests** in renewable energy, citizens **benefit** from both cleaner air and new job opportunities.
- Unless universities **adapt** to changing employment markets, students **graduate** without relevant skills.
- When pollution **reaches** dangerous levels, public health **suffers** immediately and significantly.

3. **Cause and effect:**

- Because modern technology **evolves** so rapidly, many industries **require** continuous professional development.
- As global warming **continues** to worsen, sea levels **rise** at an alarming rate.
- Since many employers **value** soft skills highly, graduates **need** to develop strong communication abilities.

4. **Contrast structures:**

- While some people **prefer** urban living, others **choose** rural environments for their peace and space.
- Although education **costs** more than ever before, it still **provides** significant long-term benefits.
- Despite the fact that public transport **saves** money and reduces emissions, many people still **rely** on private cars.

5. **Concession and emphasis:**

- Not only **does** technology **improve** productivity, but it also **creates** new forms of entertainment.
- What **matters** most in language learning **is** consistent daily practice.
- The reason why traffic congestion **worsens** every year **is** that car ownership **continues** to increase.

Tutor Feedback

Excellent work creating complex sentences with present simple! Let's examine why these structures are so valuable for your IELTS performance:

Grammatical Range Impact: To achieve Band 7+ in IELTS, you need to demonstrate "a variety of complex structures." Your model answers show exactly this variety—relative clauses, conditionals, cause-effect structures, and concession patterns—all while maintaining perfect control of present simple. This combination directly enhances your Grammar score.

Cohesion Benefits: Notice how these complex structures create more sophisticated cohesion. Rather than simple sentences connected with "and" or "but," your model answers use

subordination and coordination with present simple to create seamless logical connections—a key feature of high-band writing.

Third-Person Challenge: Many of these complex structures contain multiple third-person subjects, which multiplies the challenge of maintaining correct form. Your responses demonstrate mastery of this challenge, showing examiners you can handle complex grammar without sacrificing accuracy.

Advanced Inversions: The "Not only does technology improve..." structure shows an advanced inversion pattern with present simple. This demonstrates sophisticated grammar control, as you need to use the auxiliary "does" and maintain subject-verb agreement simultaneously.

Academic Register: These complex structures with present simple create an appropriately formal and academic tone essential for Writing Task 2. The ability to express nuanced relationships between ideas (contrast, cause-effect, condition) is exactly what examiners look for in higher bands.

Speaking Application: In the Speaking test, candidates who can produce these types of complex structures with present simple sound more fluent and sophisticated. Even using just 2-3 of these patterns during your speaking test can significantly enhance your assessed level.

Common Pitfalls:

- Watch for tense consistency between clauses
- Be careful with subject-verb agreement in relative clauses
- Don't forget the -s/-es ending in subordinate clauses
- Pay attention to question word order in embedded questions

Extension Challenge

Write a full paragraph (5-7 sentences) about environmental challenges, technology, or education using at least three different complex sentence structures with present simple. Make sure to maintain perfect grammatical accuracy throughout.