

**VERB TENSE NOTES:** (conjugating with <http://teejr.com/conjugating-verbs-in-english-a-beginners-guide/>)

1) This tense is not the present (habitual, usually, never, etc.), but it is sometimes called PRESENT CONTINUOUS or present progressive. It is for what's happening (in progress) RIGHT NOW, the easiest for students because they know *is/am/are* and the pattern is relatively simple, the same as with adjectives/nouns (She is a doctor. They are busy.)

Statement	Negative	Question
We are cooking.	We aren't cooking.	Are we cooking?
He's listening	He isn't listening.	Is he listening?

2) FUTURE with “WILL” or the modals (*may, can, might* etc.) are not too hard to form, but many students want to use “be” or “to”: \*We will *be* go. \* I can *to* do that.

\*The asterisk indicates that it is not a grammatical standard English sentence.

***These tenses are particularly hard for students to understand and use:***

3) SIMPLE PRESENT (also called present habitual). The 3<sup>rd</sup> person -S is VERY hard to internalize. The whole does/doesn't thing takes a lot of thinking.

He cooks.	He doesn't cook.	Does he (ever, usually) cook?	<b>These use the base form V0.</b> “
You listen.	You don't listen.	Do you (ever, usually) listen?	

4) SIMPLE PAST is actually easier, except for irregular verbs. There are about 100, but far fewer that are used regularly. But they are used A LOT. (The confusion with *lie/lay*, IMHO, is about as important as the rules for *whom*—students can live successful, happy, productive lives without getting them “right” and soon these will be archaic. I hate to say it, but “with my sister and I” or “for you and I” is going the same way.) **These use the base form.**

We went.	We didn't go.	Did we go?	<b>These use the base form V0.</b> “
It rained.	It didn't rain.	Did it rain?	

5) PRESENT PERFECT is the worst, students' universal least-favorite, teachers' least-understood.

Easy to form: has/have + past participle (V3)

He's/has eaten.      He hasn't eaten (yet).      Has he eaten (yet)? (Though most Americans would say “He ate.” or “Did he eat yet?”)

We've/have finished.      We haven't finished (yet).      Have we finished (yet)?

One problem is that the contracted forms (most common) pronounce the 's or 've quietly and quickly. To a student, *He's stolen it.* may sound like *He stolen it.* And it's not just verbs that begin with S.

Another challenge is those common three-form verbs: *eat, ate, eaten; come, came, come; etc.*

MOST difficult is understanding and explaining the meaning and use. I this lesson is pretty good:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvzWOYXz-MY> Perhaps student & teacher could watch together.