

A survey of tenses and aspect: active voice *

Tense / Aspect	+	-	?	Usage (Verwendung)
simple present	Tom eats an apple.	Tom doesn't eat an apple.	Does Tom eat an apple?	Etwas geschieht regelmäßig, oft, immer, manchmal oder nie oder ist eine allgemeingültige Aussage; auch für fahrplanabhängige Ereignisse in der Zukunft Signal words: always, never, usually, sometimes, every day,... He she it, das "s" muss mit.
present progressive	Tom is eating an apple.	Tom isn't eating an apple.	Is Tom eating an apple?	Etwas geschieht gerade im Moment oder ist noch nicht abgeschlossen. Etwas ist in der Zukunft fest geplant oder vereinbart. Signal words: now, at the moment, today,...
simple past	Tom ate an apple.	Tom didn't eat an apple.	Did Tom eat an apple?	Ereignisse und Handlungen, die in der Vergangenheit geschahen und abgeschlossen sind. Signal words: yesterday, last year, two days ago, in 1995, ...
past progressive	Tom was eating an apple	Tom wasn't eating an apple.	Was Tom eating an apple?	Etwas geschah in der Vergangenheit und war noch nicht abgeschlossen, als etwas anderes (simple past) passierte.
present perfect simple	Tom has eaten an apple	Tom hasn't eaten an apple.	Has Tom eaten an apple?	Etwas, das in der Vergangenheit begann und noch nicht oder gerade erst abgeschlossen oder für die Gegenwart von Bedeutung ist. Das Ergebnis, nicht die Handlung an sich wird betont. He she it, das "s" muss mit. Signal words: since, for, ever, never, not...yet, just, already, Look!,...
present perfect progressive	Tom has been eating an apple.	Tom hasn't been eating an apple.	Has Tom been eating an apple?	Etwas, das in der Vergangenheit begann und noch nicht abgeschlossen ist. Die Handlung ist betont, nicht das Ergebnis. He she it, das "s" muss mit. Signal words: since, for, how long, all day/week/year
past perfect simple	Tom had eaten an apple	Tom hadn't eaten an apple.	Had Tom eaten an apple?	Vorvergangenheit: etwas geschah in der Vergangenheit vor etwas anderem.
will-future	Tom will eat an apple.	Tom won't eat an apple.	Will Tom eat an apple?	Vorhersage, Vermutung oder spontaner Entschluss Signal words: I think, I hope, next year,...
going-to-future	Tom is going to eat an apple.	Tom isn't going to eat an apple.	Is Tom going to eat an apple?	Plan, Absicht, Vorhaben; Vorhersage von offensichtlichen Ereignissen (z.B. bei drohender Gefahr).

*Tense: present (perfect), past (perfect) or future Aspect: simple / progressive Voice: active (jemand tut etwas selbst) or passive (etwas wird getan)

The verb "to be" and the passive voice*				
Tense / Aspect	+	-	?	Usage
simple present	I am You are He/she/it is we are you are they are	I'm not You aren't He/she/it isn't we aren't you aren't they aren't	Am I? Are you? Is he/she/it? Are we? Are you? Are they?	Etwas geschieht regelmäßig, oft, immer, manchmal oder nie oder ist eine allgemeingültige Aussage. Signal words: always, never, usually, sometimes, every day,... Watch out: He she it, das "s" muss mit.
present progressive	Tom is being stupid.	Tom isn't being stupid.	Is Tom being stupid?	<i>to be</i> wird fast nie in der progressive form verwendet. Selten: Um momentanes Verhalten zu beschreiben: (= Tom is doing stupid things.)
simple past	I was You were He/she/it was we were you were they were	I wasn't You weren't He/she/it wasn't we weren't you weren't they weren't	Was I ? Were you? Was he/she/it? Were we? Were you? Were they?	Ereignisse und Handlungen, die in der Vergangenheit geschahen und abgeschlossen sind. Signal words: yesterday, last year, two days ago, in 1995, ...
present perfect simple	Tom has been crazy.	Tom hasn't been crazy.	Has Tom been crazy?	Etwas, das in der Vergangenheit begann und noch nicht abgeschlossen ist oder für die Gegenwart von Bedeutung ist. Signal words: ever, never, not...yet, just, already, Look!,...)
past perfect simple	Tom had been crazy.	Tom hadn't been crazy.	Had Tom been crazy?	Vorvergangenheit: etwas geschah in der Vergangenheit vor etwas anderem.
will-future	Tom will be crazy	Tom won't be crazy	Will Tom be crazy?	Vorhersage, Vermutung oder spontaner Entschluss Signal words: I think, I hope, next year,...
going-to-future	Tom is going to be a doctor.	Tom isn't going to be a doctor.	Is Tom going to be a doctor?	Plan, Absicht, Vorhaben; Vorhersage von offensichtlichen Ereignissen (z.B. bei drohender Gefahr).

* Durch Hinzufügen des Past Participle (Partizip Perfekt) (bei regelmäßigen Verben +-ed, bei unregelmäßigen dritte Form in der Tabelle) erhält man die passiven Formen (passive voice), z.B. He is **kissed**. = Er wird geküsst., Tom will be **seen**. = Tom wird gesehen werden.