

Tenses

Verb tense communicates when events occur relative to the time a statement is made. It indicates whether these events

represent.¹ As the diagram illustrates, the simple tenses are closed and communicate an action of a specific duration, while perfect and continuous tenses convey an open-ended time frame (and thus are

The most frequently used tenses in academic writing are past simple, present simple and present perfect. Future simple is also

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Present simple tense

Use this tense to:

- x state facts.

The Puaka-James Hight Central Library is the highest building on campus.

- x provide current information.

UC conducts lectures between eight am and six pm.

- x describe the content of literary works like novels, plays, and films (known as the literary present).

6 K D N H V S H D U H a n o u s l y D e C a n e s W 3 7 R E H R U ; O n t h e W e b R e s e a r c h :

- x interpret research findings in your own or previously published research.³

The results suggest a strong correlation between social media addiction and anxiety.

- x refer to theory (since theory claims to be true in general, rather than within a specific time frame).

Marxist theory prioritise s class analyses over discursive interpretations.

- x introduce figures, tables and graphs.

Figure 1 shows the average concentration of nitrates in the rivers that were sampled.

Present perfect tense (has or have + past participle)

Use this tense to:

- x refer to events/states of being that began in the past and continue into the present.

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Exercise 1

Circle a., b. or c. to indicate the correct verb tense(s) for each sentence.

1. For most undergraduate degrees at UC, students _____ to pass courses worth 360 points.
 - a. need
 - b. will need
 - c. either
2. 20 of the 32 interviewees _____ that WKH\ IHOW RQO\ PRGHUDWHO\ IOXHQW L
 - a. have reported
 - b. reported
 - c. either
3. After approval from the Human Ethics Committee is received, participant selection _____.
 - a. will commence
 - b. commences
 - c. either
4. To date, no peer-reviewed research _____ the link between vaccination and autism.
 - a. has confirmed
 - ta. b. confirmed
 - c. either
5. Harry Potter _____ a wizard.
 - a.

Answers

1. a. (need). Present simple for statements of fact.
2. b. (reported). Past simple for results of research.
3. c. (will commence or commences). Future simple if describing a specific process, present simple if describing a fact, that is, something that always happens.
4. a. (has confirmed). Present perfect for things that began in the past and continue into the present.
5. b. (is). Present simple/ ³ O L W H U D U r S t u h a w o s W ' .
6. c. (had been or was). Past perfect for events prior to another mentioned event in the past, but past simple is also acceptable since the sequence of events does not need to be emphasised.
7. b. (published).