

## Introduction to the elite English skills target series

These exercises are designed to allow students to practice **mixed tenses** in a natural way, just as we do in English. The tenses for each level match what is learned in Hong Kong's elite schools.

Worksheets that practice individual tenses are not useful for improving children's skills. Passages that relate to children's daily life are interesting and show how English is used in normal life. The answers are in passage form so you may use them as reading exercises also. A handy hints tense guide is provided.

Completing these exercises on a regular basis will improve:

- ★ Tense skills
- ★ Writing skills
- ★ Reading skills
- ★ Speaking skills
- ★ Thinking skills



### Instructions for parents:

1. Print off the tense guide sheets (You may laminate it for your child to keep and look at).
2. Print off the blank exercises and ask your child to attempt them.
3. For very young children, the passages can be attempted together (parent and child).
4. Invite your child to answer the writing question (optional). Older children can write the answer.
5. Mark the book against the answers. You may print off the answer pages and read through them as a passage so it makes sense (or save paper by referring to your computer).
6. Give lots of encouragement and praise.
7. Provide guidance. Notice if your child is having problems with particular tenses.
8. Reprint the worksheet for another attempt if necessary.

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## Handy Hints - Tense Guide

| Subject-verb Agreement                       |      |            |                           |                          |
|--|------|------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Make sure your subject agrees with your verb |      |            |                           |                          |
| Tom  | is   | my friend. | Mary <b>have</b> a dog. ✗ | Mary <b>has</b> a dog. ✓ |
| Subject                                      | Verb |            | We <b>is</b> Chinese. ✗   | We <b>are</b> Chinese. ✓ |

| Present Continuous   |   |             |
|--|---|-------------|
| How to form this tense   |   |             |
| I  | He/She/It   | We/They/You |
| am + -ing  | is + -ing   | are + -ing  |
| Spelling rules   |   |             |
| Double the consonant for CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant words: get → tt → getting) | Remove the e for verbs ending in 'e' (love → have → having)               |             |
| Use  | Example   |             |
| Talk about things we are doing now.  | Peter is watching TV at the moment.<br>The teachers are having a meeting. |             |
| Negative form  | Question  |             |
| Peter isn't watching TV at the moment.<br>The teachers aren't having a meeting.    | Is Peter watching TV at the moment?<br>Are the teachers having a meeting? |             |

| Present Simple - be + have  |  |             |
|---|--|-------------|
| How to form this tense  |  |             |
| I   | He/She/It  | We/They/You |
| am/has  | is/has   | are/have    |
| Use   | Example  |             |
| Talk about facts.   | Jason is my friend.  |             |
| Talk about things we have/own.<br>Talk about what people/animals look like.                                 | David has a baby brother.<br>Birds have wings.                                 |             |
| Negative form   | Question form  |             |
| Jason isn't my friend.<br>David doesn't have a baby brother.<br>Birds don't have wings. (true for penguins) | Is Jason my friend?<br>Does David have a baby brother?<br>Do birds have wings? |             |

## Present Simple - regular verbs

### How to form this tense

|             |  |             |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| I           | He/She/It - ADD 's' or 'es'                | We/They/You |
| go/eat/wash | go <u>es</u> /eat <u>s</u> /wash <u>es</u> | go/eat/w    |

### Spelling rules for He/She/It forms

|                       |  |   |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| add 's'<br>eat → eats | add 'es' to words ending with<br>sh: wash → washes | add 'es' to words ending with<br>o: do → does |
|-----------------------|--|---|

### Use

Talk about habits.

### Example

David goes to school by car.

Negative form - add *don't/doesn't* (no 's') on the main verb

David doesn't go to school by car.

Question form - add *do/does* (no 's') on the main verb

Does David go to school by car?

## Imperatives

### How to form this tense

Basic form of the verb (no endings)

### Use

Ask/tell people to do something

Negative form - add *don't*

Don't walk on the grass.

### Example

Listen, please.

Question form

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## Verb-ing forms

### How to form this tense

|                             |                                 |                             |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| I                           | He/She/It                       | We/They/You                 |
| love/like/hate/enjoy + -ing | loves/likes/hates/enjoys + -ing | love/like/hate/enjoy + -ing |

### Use

Talk about things you like/dislike

Negative form - add *don't/doesn't* (no 's' on main verb)

Mary doesn't like swimming.  
John and Peter don't enjoy playing football.

### Example

Mary likes swimming.  
John and Peter enjoy playing football.

Question form - add *do/does* (no 's' on main verb)

Does Mary like swimming?  
Do John and Peter enjoy playing football?

## Past Simple - regular verbs

How to form this tense

Add the correct ending to the verb.

Spelling rules

For verbs ending in 'e' add 'd'.  
dance → danced

For verbs not ending in 'e' add 'ed'.  
Double the consonant for CVC words.  
pick → picked, hop → hopped

Use

Example

Talk about actions in the past. Often used with time expressions like 'yesterday'.

David jumped over the fence.  
The rabbit hopped up and down.

Negative  
Add *didn't* - NO ENDING ON THE VERB

Question form  
Add *did* - NO ENDING ON THE VERB

David didn't jump over the fence.  
The rabbit didn't hop up and down.

Did David jump over the fence?  
Did the rabbit hop up and down?

## Past Simple - irregular verbs

How to form this tense

Change the form of the verb completely. e.g. see → saw, eat → ate

Use

Example

Talk about actions in the past. Often used with time expressions like 'yesterday'.

He ate pizza for dinner last night.  
Sara met James yesterday.

Negative form  
Add *didn't* - NO ENDING ON THE VERB

Question form  
Add *did* - NO ENDING ON THE VERB

He didn't eat pizza for dinner last night.  
Sara didn't meet James yesterday.

Did he eat pizza for dinner last night?  
Did Sara meet James yesterday?

## Simple Future

How to form this tense

will + the basic form of the tense

Use

Example

Talk about actions that have not happened yet.  
Use with words like 'tomorrow'.

Polly will go to England next week.

Negative form - add will not or won't

Question form

Polly won't go to England next week.

Will Polly go to England next week?

| <b>to-infinitives</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| How to use this verb form  |  |
| Use with other verbs and add <u>to</u> + the base form of the verb (to is NOT a preposition here)      |  |
| Use  | Example  |
| When two words are used together to show a plan or a purpose   | David wants to eat noodles tonight.<br>Mary went to the shop to buy a dress.       |
| Negative - add <i>doesn't / don't / didn't</i>   | Question - add <i>does / do / did</i>  |
| David <i>doesn't</i> want to eat noodles tonight.<br>Mary <i>didn't</i> go to the shop to buy a dress. | Does David want to eat noodles tonight?<br>Did Mary go to the shop to buy a dress? |

| <b>Bare infinitives</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| How to use this verb form   |   |
| Use with other verbs and add the base form (no 'to')                              |   |
| Use   | Example   |
| When two verbs are used together<br>After do/does/don't/doesn't/did/didn't        | Anna's mum lets her watch TV.<br>Peter made Mary cry.         |
| Negative - add <i>doesn't / don't / didn't</i>                                    | Question - add <i>does / do / did</i>                         |
| Anna's mum <i>doesn't</i> let her watch TV.<br>Peter <i>didn't</i> make Mary cry. | Does Anna's mum let her watch TV?<br>Did Peter make Mary cry? |

SAMPLE

Exercise 1 - answers

Fill in the blanks in the following passage using the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

**Superhero Stories!**

James loves reading/to read (read). He often goes (go) to the library with his mum. They both enjoy (enjoy) choosing interesting books to take home. James doesn't/does not like (not/like) all kinds of books, though. He likes ones about superheroes because they are (be) exciting.



At school, there is (be) a book corner that like a little library. Each week, the children choose one book to take home. One day, when it was (be) time to visit the book corner, James looked (look) through the books carefully. He tried (try) to find one about a superhero but there were not (not/be) any. His teacher noticed (notice) that James was taking a long time. "What are you looking (look for)?" she said. "Can I help (help) you?"

James told (tell) the teacher what he wanted.

"I am (be) sorry but don't think (not/think) we have any books about superheroes. Try (try) to find some for you and then next time you can borrow one."

**Thinking Skills**

What kind of books do you like to read?



Superhero