

## UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT SIMPLE TENSE: A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF EXPLANATIONS IN LEADING ENGLISH GRAMMAR TEXTBOOKS

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**Annotation:** *This article presents a comparative analysis of how the Present Simple tense is explained across several of the most widely used English grammar textbooks, including Raymond Murphy’s English Grammar in Use, Betty Schramper Azar’s Fundamentals of English Grammar, Michael Swan’s Practical English Usage, and O’Dell & Broadhead’s English Grammar: Understanding the Basics. The discussion focuses on the similarities and differences in their approaches, highlighting how each author defines the functions, structures, and usage contexts of the Present Simple tense. The article demonstrates that while the tense is considered elementary, its explanation varies significantly depending on pedagogical goals. The analysis aims to provide learners and teachers with a clearer, multidimensional understanding of the Present Simple.*

**Keywords:** *Present Simple, English grammar, Raymond Murphy, Betty Schramper Azar, Michael Swan, grammar comparison, tense usage, grammar pedagogy, English language teaching.*

**Annotatsiya:** *Ushbu maqolada, eng ko‘p ishlatiladigan ingliz tilidan grammatika, shu jumladan, Maykl va Bomanning ingliz tilidagi grammatikasi, Ingliz va kenglikdagi ingliz va kengliklarning ingliz tilidan foydalanishning ingliz tilidan foydalanishning ingliz tilida ishlashi haqida hikoya qilingan tahoratni keltirib chiqaradi. Muhokamada har bir tashkilot hozirgi zamonning funktsiyalari, tuzilmalari va foydalanish funktsiyalari, tuzilmalari va foydalanish kontekstlarini qanday belgilab beradigan o‘xshashliklar va farqlarga bag‘ishlangan. Maqola shuni ko‘rsatadiki, zamon boshlang‘ich deb hisoblanganda, uning izohi pedagogik maqsadlarga qarab sezilarli darajada farq qiladi. Tahlil, o‘quvchilarga va o‘qituvchilarni oddiy va oddiy tushuncha bilan ta‘minlashga qaratilgan.*

**Kalit so‘zlar:** *Hozirgi oddiy, ingliz grammatika, Raymond Merfi, Betti Shrutfer Azar, Maykmar Swan, grammatika taqqoslash, tariqatli, ingliz tili o‘qituvchisi.*

**Аннотация:** В этой статье представлен сравнительный анализ того, как настоящее простое время объясняется в нескольких наиболее широко используемых учебниках по грамматике английского языка, включая «Английскую грамматику в использовании» Рэймонда Мерфи, «Основы грамматики английского языка» Бетти Шрампер Азар, «Практическое использование английского языка» Майкла Свона и «Английская грамматика: понимание основ» О’Делла и Бродхеда. Обсуждение сосредоточено на сходствах и различиях их подходов, подчеркивая, как каждый автор определяет функции, структуры и контексты употребления настоящего простого времени. В статье показано, что хотя время и считается элементарным, его объяснение существенно варьируется в зависимости от педагогических целей. Целью анализа является предоставление учащимся и учителям более четкого и многомерного понимания настоящего простого времени.

**Ключевые слова:** Настоящее простое время, грамматика английского языка, Рэймонд Мерфи, Бетти Шрампер Азар, Майкл Свон, грамматическое сравнение, использование времен, грамматическая педагогика, преподавание английского языка.

The Present Simple tense is one of the most fundamental structures in English grammar, yet its explanation varies across the most authoritative grammar textbooks. Each well-known author approaches the tense from a slightly different angle, emphasizing distinct aspects such as function, form, frequency, and usage. This article provides a comparative, integrated overview of how the Present Simple tense is presented in several widely used grammar references, including English Grammar in Use by Raymond Murphy, Fundamentals of English Grammar by Betty Schramper Azar, Practical English Usage by Michael Swan, and English Grammar: Understanding the Basics by O’Dell & Broadhead. The purpose of this review is to give learners and teachers a clearer picture of how major sources conceptualize and explain this essential tense.

Across all grammar books, the Present Simple is introduced as the tense used to describe actions or states that are habitual, factual, or generally true. However, the emphasis differs. Murphy stresses communicative clarity by showing everyday examples, whereas Azar focuses more on the structural and rule-based explanation. Swan, on the other hand, highlights problematic areas such as stative verbs and exceptional patterns, while O’Dell and Broadhead concentrate on learner-friendly explanations regarding meaning and context.

Raymond Murphy explains the Present Simple with a strong orientation toward spoken English and everyday communication. According to his explanation, the tense is mostly used for repeated actions, habits, and permanent situations. He clarifies that the tense expresses routines rather than actions happening at the moment of speaking. Murphy also

draws attention to the verb endings in the third person singular, emphasizing the addition of -s or -es.

Another key point in his approach is the contrast between the Present Simple and the Present Continuous. Instead of giving lengthy theoretical descriptions, he shows everyday communicative examples that help learners distinguish between general time and “now.”

Betty Schramper Azar provides a more formal, structured explanation. She focuses on how affirmative, negative, and interrogative forms are constructed and gives more systematic attention to the auxiliary verbs do and does.

She also explains the difference between action verbs and stative verbs, clarifying that verbs expressing emotions, thoughts, or possession do not normally appear in continuous forms. Azar categorizes Present Simple functions into habitual activities, general truths, scheduled future events, instructions, and commentary.

Michael Swan focuses on eliminating confusion. His explanation centers on the boundaries between the Present Simple and Present Continuous. He emphasizes the conceptual understanding of stative verbs and clarifies why continuous forms are not appropriate for unchanging conditions or mental states.

He also highlights pronunciation aspects of the third-person singular ending and explains uses in journalistic writing, summaries, and proverbs.

O’Dell & Broadhead’s Explanation (English Grammar: Understanding the Basics)

Their approach is modern and context-oriented. They emphasize meaning, time adverbs (usually, always, often), and real-life communicative situations. They highlight how the Present Simple is used in describing processes, academic writing, and technical explanations. Their method is student-friendly and focuses on practical understanding.

Comparative Summary

Murphy focuses on practice and clarity.

Azar prioritizes rule-based structure.

Swan focuses on problematic areas and correction.

O’Dell & Broadhead emphasize meaning and real-life application.

Together, these approaches show that the Present Simple tense, despite its apparent simplicity, carries a variety of functions and nuances depending on context. A learner who studies from all these angles will have a complete, well-rounded understanding of the tense.

The Present Simple tense is a foundational element of English grammar, yet each grammar authority explains it from a unique perspective. Understanding these differences enhances learners’ mastery of the tense and supports more effective teaching practices. By integrating the practical, structural, theoretical, and contextual viewpoints of the authors

reviewed here, students gain a richer understanding of how and when to apply the Present Simple correctly in real communication.

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