

Business English 21: Futures 1 (present simple & present continuous)



1. Read the dialogue below and answer the following questions with your class.

John: Hello Melissa, it's John here. How are you?

Melissa: Hi John, I'm fine thanks. How are you?

John: I'm great. I'm just calling you to ask you if you are available to come to my office on Thursday at 11am. I want to discuss a few things and get some updates.

Melissa: I'm afraid I can't make it. I have an all-day conference on Thursday.

John: Oh I see! I heard about this conference. Is it the 'Green Future' conference?

Melissa: Yes, exactly!

John: Great, I'm sure it's going to be very interesting. When are you flying to France?

Melissa: I am flying to France on Wednesday afternoon. I am spending Wednesday evening there so I can prepare for the conference.

John: Great. Are you giving a presentation at the conference?

Melissa: Yes, I am. I am talking about the future of our company and reducing our company's pollution by 50% in the next 10 years.

John: That sounds very interesting. What time is your presentation?

Melissa: My presentation starts at 10:15 am.

John: Good luck!

Melissa: Thanks John!



1. Why is John calling Melissa? *To ask if she is available to go to his office on Thursday at 11 am to discuss some things.*
2. Why can't Melissa meet John next Thursday? *She has an all-day conference on Thursday.*
3. Where is the 'Green Future' conference taking place? *The 'Green Future' conference is taking place in France.*
4. When is Melissa flying to France? *Melissa is flying to France on Wednesday.*
5. Is Melissa going to give a presentation at the conference? *Yes, she is.*
6. What is Melissa going to talk about at the conference? *She is going to talk about the future of the company and reducing their company's pollution by 50% in the next 10 years.*
7. What time does Melissa's presentation start? *Melissa's presentation starts at 10:15am.*

Present Simple (future)

We use the Present Simple to talk about future events that have been scheduled. For example for meetings, appointments, timetables, airline/bus/train schedules etc.

For example:

My presentation starts at 10:15am.

The meeting is in the boardroom. It begins at 10am.

Jake's plane arrives at 8:35pm.

Note: The present simple is not used to talk about people's plans and their actions. It is only used to talk about appointments and timetables and when they take place in the future.



2. Use Melissa's timetable to answer questions on the next page.



WEEKLY PLANNER

<p>MONDAY</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 2pm dentist appointment</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>TUESDAY</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Meet Peter at the train station at 3:15pm</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>WEDNESDAY</p> <p><input type="radio"/> flight to France departure time: 5:30am</p> <p>_____</p> <p><input type="radio"/> meeting with Janet 11:15am</p>	<p>THURSDAY</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Presentation in France</p> <p>_____</p> <p><input type="radio"/> work dinner 6:30 pm</p>
<p>FRIDAY</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Flight to Munich arrival 10:40am</p> <p>_____</p> <p><input type="radio"/> doctor appointment 4pm</p>	<p>SATURDAY</p> <p><input type="radio"/> restaurant reservation 8:45pm</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>SUNDAY</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Jack's birthday party 10am</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>NOTE</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

1. When is Melissa's dentist appointment?

Her dentist appointment is on Monday at 2pm.

2. When does Peter's train arrive?

.....Peter's train arrives at 3:15pm.....

3. When does Melissa's flight to France leave?

.....Melissa's flight to France leaves at 5:30am.

4. When is Melissa's meeting with Janet?

.....Melissa is meeting with Janet on Wednesday at 11.15 am.

5. When is the presentation in France?

.....The presentation in France is on Thursday.

6. What time is the work dinner?

.....The work dinner is at 6:30 pm.

7. When does Melissa's flight arrive in Munich?

..... Melissa's flight arrives in Munich at 10:40 am.

8. What time is Melissa's doctor appointment?

.....Melissa's doctor appointment is at 4pm.

9. When is the restaurant reserved for ?

.....The restaurant is reserved for 8:45 pm.

10. What time does Jack's birthday party start?

.....Jack's birthday party starts at 10 am.

Present Continuous (Future)

We only use the Present Continuous as a future to talk about things we have planned to do in the future *before* the moment of speaking.

People usually understand that the Present Continuous sentence is being used in the future from context of the conversation. However, we often use future words like *tomorrow, next year, in March etc.* to make sure the context is clear.

For example:

Melissa *is flying* to France on Wednesday.

We *are going* to lunch at 12pm.



3. Use the verbs below to complete the following sentences in Present Continuous as a future.

see	not work	visit	have
stay	go	eat	go

1. Peter *is going* to Dublin next month. He got a job there.
2. We*are*.....*seeing/visiting*..... the warehouse later this afternoon. We want to see how things are.
3. Where*are*..... you*going*..... for lunch this afternoon? We*are eating*..... at the canteen if you want to join us.
4.*Are*..... you*seeing/visiting*..... Thomas tomorrow? He forgot his mobile at work.
5. We*staying*..... at the Hilton hotel next week.
6. Marine just had a baby. She*isn't working*..... all of next month.
7. We*are having*..... a staff meeting next Monday at 8:30am.



4. Use the prompts below to ask Melissa about her business trip next week.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Where/go? | <i>c</i> | <i>Where are you going?</i> | a. By plane. |
| 2. When/leave? | <i>f</i> | <i>When are you leaving?</i> | b. Yes, I am. |
| 3. How/go? | <i>a</i> | <i>How are you going?</i> | c. Paris. |
| 4. How long/go for? | <i>d</i> | <i>How long are you going for?</i> | d. For three days. |
| 5. go/alone? | <i>b</i> | <i>Are you going alone?</i> | e. At the Prince hotel. |
| 5. Where/stay? | <i>e</i> | <i>Where are you staying?</i> | f. On Wednesday. |



5. Work in pairs: Use the prompts below to talk about future arrangements.

For example: Student A: *What are you doing tomorrow morning?*

Student B: *I am having a meeting with Jeff at 9 am tomorrow morning.*

or

Tomorrow morning at 9 am I am having a meeting with Jeff.

**Note: The time phrases can go at the start or the end of the sentence.*

Time Phrases:

tomorrow (morning)	the day after tomorrow	in four days/months
next week/month/year	in 2024	later
soon	on Monday/Tuesday etc.	in October/May etc.

Verbs:

to wake up	to get up	to meet
to learn	to eat	to go
to take	to visit	to have
to take a train/bus/taxi etc	to help	to work
to have breakfast/lunch etc	to send	to give
to watch	to do	to see
to catch	to travel	to leave
to stay	to make	to finish



6. Complete the following dialogue in Present Simple (future) or Present Continuous (future).

Melissa: Good morning Janet, how are you ?

Janet: Good morning, I'm fine thanks. How about you?

Melissa: I'm stressed!! I have so much to do at the moment. I **am presenting**..... (present) at the 'Green Future' conference and I don't feel prepared!

Janet: Oh really! When **is**..... (be) the conference?

Melissa: It **is**..... (be) on Thursday.

Janet: What time **does**..... your presentation **start**..... (start)?

Melissa: My presentation **starts**..... (start) at 10:15am.

Janet: **Are**..... you **doing**..... (do) anything tomorrow?

Melissa: No, I **'m not**.....

Janet: Ok, I **have**..... (have) an appointment at 2pm, we can meet at the café across the street to discuss your presentation if you would like.

Melissa: That sounds great. What time **does**..... the café **open**..... (open) ?

Janet: It **opens**..... (open) at 7am.

Melissa: Perfect.



7. Listen to the voice message and answer the following questions.

1. Why is Peter calling Melissa? *He is calling about a time change for her presentation at conference in France.*
2. When is the new time slot for her presentation? *The new time slot is Wednesday at 6pm.*
3. Why has Melissa's time slot changed? *Because there was a big IT problem at the headquarters in Munich.*
4. Why is Peter going to call the travel department? *To change her train ticket.*
5. Do you think Melissa is going to be happy about this change?

Transcript (ex. 7):

Hi Melissa,

This is Peter. I am calling about your conference in France. Your presentation slot has changed times. Your presentation is not on Thursday at 10:15 anymore. Now it's on Wednesday evening at 6pm. There was a big IT problem at the headquarters in Munich so some of the people presenting are arriving on Wednesday evening instead of the morning.

I am going to call the travel department now to change your train tickets and flights. Please call me when you hear this!

Bye