Usually … but today …

Present simple and present continuous · A2–B1 · Adults and teens

1. Ask about three different days. Take turns. Ask two questions about each person: What does … usually do? What is … doing now? Explain one difference.



Tess · USUALLY
She works in a library.



Tess · TODAY
She’s painting her kitchen.



Jo · USUALLY
He makes coffee in a café.



Jo · TODAY
He’s cycling in the park.



Noor · USUALLY
She delivers parcels.



Noor · TODAY
She’s playing the guitar.

JOBS & ROUTINES
She **works.** She **doesn’t work.**
Does she **work**?
What **does** she usually **do**?

NOW / TODAY
She **is painting.** She **isn’t working.**
Is she **painting**?
What **is** she **doing** now?

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The usual Tuesday

Keep this page private. Your partner has today’s photo messages.

YOUR MISSION: Keep your page hidden. Ask B what all four people are doing now.
Tell B what each person usually does on Tuesdays at 10:00. Compare your answers.
Together, find the two people doing something different today. Explain each difference.

WHAT THEY USUALLY DO ON TUESDAYS AT 10:00



Ada · Software developer

Writes apps in an office.



Ben · Vet

Treats animals in a clinic.



Cleo · Florist

Arranges flowers in a shop.



Dan · Mechanic

Repairs cars in a garage.

Ask about now: What is Ada doing?
Tell B her routine: She usually writes apps.
Compare: … usually …, but today … . Is their day different?
Finish: Agree two names and explain both differences to your teacher.

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Today’s photo messages

Keep this page private. It is Tuesday at 10:00. Your partner knows the usual jobs.

YOUR MISSION: Keep your page hidden. Ask A what all four people usually do on Tuesdays at 10:00. Tell A what they are doing now, using the messages below. Together, find the two people doing something different today. Explain each difference.

WHAT THEY ARE DOING NOW: TODAY IS TUESDAY, 10:00



Ada · 10:00

I’m writing an app at my office desk.



Ben · 10:00

I’m running in the park.



Cleo · 10:00

I’m arranging flowers in the shop.



Dan · 10:00

I’m cooking lunch at home.

Ask about routines: What does Ada usually do?
Tell A about now: She’s writing an app.
Compare: … usually …, but today … . Is their day different?
Finish: Agree two names and explain both differences to your teacher.

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Your usual day. Your day today.

Take turns. Follow an interesting answer rather than racing through every question.

3. Choose a question. Give an example. Ask one more.

USUALLY

1. What do you usually do before work or your first lesson?

2. Where do you usually work or study? What do you do there?

3. What do you usually do after work or school?

4. Which job interests you? What does that person do?

5. How do you usually spend a free morning?

6. What does someone you know do for work?

NOW & THESE DAYS

7. What are you doing differently today?

8. What are you wearing that you don’t wear every day?

9. What is happening outside your window now?

10. Are you reading or watching anything interesting these days?

11. What skill are you practising at the moment?

12. Imagine a friend is enjoying a day off. What are they doing?

Keep the conversation going
Why? / How often? / Who with? / Tell me more. / Is that usual for you?
Say it again: After feedback, retell one answer more clearly. Include a routine and something happening now. Your partner asks a new question. You may invent an answer or pass.

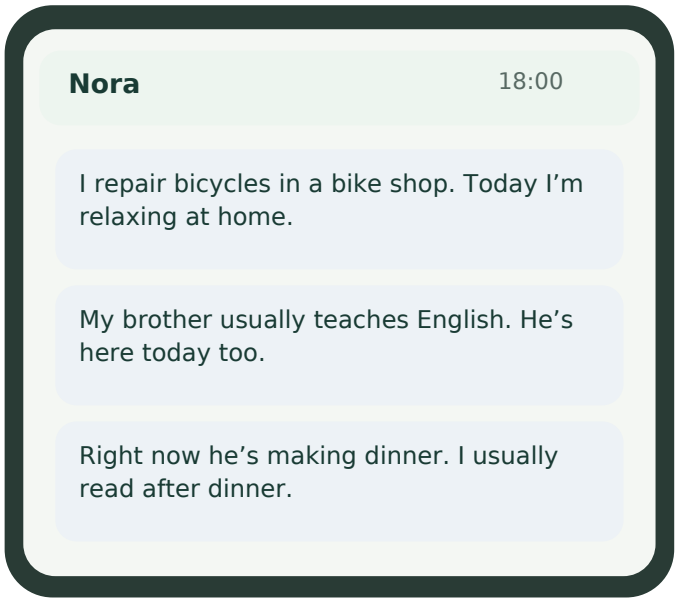
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A workshop with a day off

Read the notice and Nora’s message. Use the situation to choose the form.



Read the workshop sign and Nora’s messages.



4. Complete the missing words.

1. Nora usually _____ in a bike shop. (work)
2. She _____ at home now. (relax)
3. Right now, she _____ a bicycle. (not repair)
4. After dinner, she usually _____. (read)
5. At this moment, her brother _____ dinner. (make)
6. His usual job is in a school. He _____ English. (teach)
7. Ask about Nora’s usual job: Where _____? (she / work)
8. Ask about now: What _____? (her brother / make)

5. Fix the messages.

1. He work in a school. _____
2. She relaxing at home. _____

Your message: Write one routine and one different action happening today. Add one question for a friend. Bring a few keywords so you can tell the story next lesson without reading it.

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Give the pictures a purpose

Aim: describe routines and current actions, ask both question types and explain a contrast.

Share the right pages

Everyone: opening page 1 and speaking page 4. Partner A: page 2 only. Partner B: page 3 only. Optional homework: page 5. Keep pages 6–7 private. The three-page A/B bundles contain pages 1, 2 or 3, and 4. For one-to-one, take the other role. No recording is required.

A flexible 45–55-minute route

Look, ask and compare · 15–18 minutes
Model Tess's two questions. Check question order with the grammar boxes, then let partners ask and answer about Jo and Noor. Swap the questioner between people so both learners practise both forms. Teach deliver parcels, cycle and guitar if needed. Ask for a routine/today contrast. A day off does not change a job.

Ask, compare, report · 12–15 minutes
Give private pages. Check developer, vet, florist and mechanic as needed. Partners ask about all four people, agree the two changed days and explain both contrasts. Move directly to the fresh check and personal conversation; do not repeat the puzzle with invented changes.

Fresh check, feedback and wider speaking · 18–22 minutes
Use Ravi on page 7 with pages closed. Give one useful correction and a retry. Finish with at least ten minutes of selected questions and follow-ups from page 4. Do not rush through all twelve.

Help the conversation along

Gav route: elicit routines and today first; follow useful answers and return to the pictures when meaning needs checking.
Em route: work through the examples, rehearse a question of each type and allow keywords before the private exchange.
Support: begin with Ada and Ben; leave the question starters visible. Learners may invent personal answers or pass.
Stretch: cover the starters; give fuller answers and compare a temporary activity these days with a routine. Do not teach the continuous as only this exact second.
Short route, 15–20 minutes: Tess, two puzzle characters, one fresh comparison and two or three personal questions.

Opening models: page 1

Tess usually works in a library; today she is painting. Jo usually makes coffee in a café; today he is cycling. Noor usually delivers parcels; today she is playing the guitar. Jobs remain unchanged.
Question models: What does Jo usually do? What is he doing now? Does Noor deliver parcels? Is she playing the guitar? Accept accurate full or short answers. Swap the questioner so both learners practise both forms.

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Listen for meaning, then form

The routine facts are fictional and stated in the text. Learners do not infer jobs from appearance.

Private-page key and speaking outcome

Ben and Dan have changed days. Ben usually treats animals in a clinic, but now he is running in the park. Dan usually repairs cars in a garage, but now he is cooking lunch at home. Ada and Cleo are doing their usual kind of work. Accept programmer/developer and fixes/repairs.
Success: each learner asks a routine question and a now question; the pair identifies both changed days and explains both contrasts. Don’t accept two names without an explanation. The jobs remain unchanged.
Move on once partners can explain both contrasts. Personal questions and retelling have open answers; there is no second round of the same puzzle.

Homework key

4: 1 works; 2 is relaxing; 3 isn’t repairing / is not repairing; 4 reads; 5 is making; 6 teaches; 7 does she work; 8 is her brother making.
5: 1 He works in a school. 2 She is relaxing at home.
Your message: accept a clear routine/current contrast and an appropriate question. Ask about the meaning before correcting the form.

A fresh speaking check: close the learner pages

Tell the learner: Ravi is a bus driver. At nine on Mondays, he usually drives a bus. Today, at nine, he is at home making breakfast.
Ask: Tell me about his usual work and what he is doing now. Ask one question about his routine and one about today.

Possible answer: Ravi usually drives a bus on Mondays, but today he is making breakfast.
Possible questions: What does Ravi usually do on Mondays? / Is he driving now?
Accept other natural questions. Listen before modelling. Note: independent / with a prompt / not yet. Check the routine sentence, current-action sentence and both question forms. Give one useful correction, then retry with a different example.

Keep feedback useful

Listen for third-person -s, missing am/is/are and question order. Check the intended meaning, model briefly and give another attempt. Return to the same distinction in a later lesson; this short check does not establish lasting mastery or a CEFR level.

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