

Verbs: Present Simple

Conjugation

In order to be able to form the present simple, one should know the "present stem" of the verb. As the number of simple verbs in Persian is very little and the past and present stems of verbs are similar to each other, this won't be much of a problem.

Here is the general formula for present simple verbs: (from left to right):

می + present stem + relevant suffix

The stress is always on the "می" syllable. The suffixes are the same with past simple except for one of them. Below is an example of the conjugation of a verb in present simple. Note again that here we are dealing with the *present stem* of the verb.

Verb Infinitive: شدن Present Stem: شو

[I] become	می شوم
[you] become	می شوی
[he/she/it] becomes	می شود
[we] become	می شویم
[you (pl.)] become	می شوید
[they] become	می شوند

As you saw in the examples, unlike the past simple tense, the suffix "د" is used for the third person singular verb in present simple tense. Additionally, it is worth noting that a "virtual space" is used between the "می" prefix and the rest of the verb. This means that the last letter of "می" is written as if it is at the end of a word, but the next letter is written very close to it.

Usage

Pretty much like the English present simple, present simple in Persian talks about actions or states in the present time, things that always happen, things that will happen in future and general facts.

I go to school every day.	من هر روز به مدرسه می‌روم.
I am afraid of policemen.	از پلیس‌ها می‌ترسم.
Children are afraid of the dark.	بچه‌ها از تاریکی می‌ترسند.
Everybody knows that I will die.	همه می‌دانند که من می‌میرم.
God sees us.	خدا می‌بیندمان.
The enemies will kill him.	دشمنان می‌کشندش.
People laugh at me.	مردم به من می‌خندند.
The weather becomes hot in the summer.	در تابستان هوا گرم می‌شود.

To Have

There are two verbs in Persian that have different present simple conjugations: "to be" and "to have". Let's start with the easier one: "داشتن" ("to have").

Verb Infinitive: داشتن Present Stem: دار

[I] have	دارم
[you] have	داری
[he/she/it] has	دارد
[we] have	داریم
[you (pl.)] have	دارید
[they] have	دارند

The only difference between this verb and other verbs is that the prefix "می" is omitted here.

To Be

The second exception, "to be", is more complicated:

Verb Infinitive: بودن Present Stem: باش

[I] am	م
[you] are	ی
[he/she/it] is	است
[we] are	یم
[you (pl.)] are	ید
[they] are	ند

And here are some examples:

[I] am happy.	خوشحالم.
You are sad.	تو ناراحتی.
He is sad.	او ناراحت است.
My friends and I are sorry.	من و دوستانم متأسفیم.
You are free!	شما آزادید!
The children are awake.	بچه‌ها بیدارند.
We are tired.	ما خسته‌ایم.
They are cowards.	آنها ترسویند.

They look more like suffixes (except "است", of course). In the last two examples, the words preceding the suffix-like verb end with vowels ("خسته" means "tired" and "ترسو" means "coward") and therefore the consonants "ء" (glottal stop) and "ی" ("y") have come in between to prevent two vowels being pronounced right after each other.

Additionally, the word "است" too can undergo changes when following a vowel (The normal way is also correct):

The doctor is angry. دکتر عصبانی است.

He/She is alone. او تنهاست.

Shahab is [a] coward. شهاب ترسو است.

Another odd thing about the verb "بودن" is that its present simple form is in no way related to its present stem. The usages of its present stem will be observed later, however, in the conjugation of more complicated tenses.

To Be (Alternate Conjugation)

By the way, this is not the only way the verb "to be" is conjugated in the present simple tense. Here is the alternative way:

Verb Infinitive: بودن Present Stem: باش

[I] am	هستم
[you] are	هستی
[he/she/it] is	هست
[we] are	هستیم
[you (pl.)] are	هستید
[they] are	هستند

Usually, when it is conjugated in this way, it shows emphasis and sometimes gives the meaning "to exist".

I think, therefore I am. من می‌اندیشم، پس هستم.
God exists. خدا هست.

This is not always the case, anyway. Here are some examples where the verb is used in its second form but has exactly the same meaning as its first form.

I'm Hossein. حسین هستم.
Ehsan and Shayan are at the university. احسان و شایان در دانشگاه هستند.
We are Afghans. ما افغان هستیم.

Common Verbs

It was already mentioned that the number of Persian simple verbs is very little; most sentences contain combined verbs which are a combination of one simple verb and a noun (or preposition). Combined verbs will be covered later in future lessons.

Among the less than 250 simple verbs used in today's Persian, 65 verbs that are commonly used both in written and colloquial Persian are listed [here](#). This list will almost suffice till the end of our lessons and while reading any other simple Persian texts.