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1. **Present simple tense or «It never gets you anywhere»**

In this story you will find many examples of how the Present Simple Tense can be used. As you know we use the present simple for things that are true in general, or for things that happen sometimes or all the time:

- She *likes* black tea.
- I start *work* at 9 o’clock and finish at 5:30.
- Water *boils* at 100 degrees Celsius.
- We usually *visit* our friends on the weekend.

You probably remember that after *he/she/it* an «s» is added to the verb as in these examples:

- She *speaks* excellent French.
- He sometimes *calls* her «my darling».
- It *makes* perfect sense to me.

When we want to make a negative sentence we use the following structure:

subject (*I/you/we/they*) + auxiliary verb (*don’t*) + main verb (*infinitive*)

subject (*he/she/it*) + auxiliary verb (*doesn’t*) + main verb (*infinitive*)

Examples:

- I *don’t* speak Chinese.
- You *don’t* work very hard
- She *doesn’t call* me every day.

When we want to make a question we also use *don’t* after *I/you/we/they* and *doesn’t* after *he/she/it*:

- Do you speak Chinese?
- Does she work here?
- What *do* you do for a living?
- How *do* you usually get to work?

Now enjoy the following story and find the present simple in *italics*. 
«It never gets you anywhere»

Andrew Smodley is a natural worrier. It is something he has inherited from his father — the king of all worries. But then there are those who are never happy unless they have a problem to solve. Andrew worried about the weather, the state of the pound, his health, the cost of living and once he even worried because he thought he wasn't worrying enough. But that was in the past. Things have changed because something happened to him exactly two years ago.

It was in the spring when leaves appear on trees and nature prepares herself for renewal. Other things happen too — people often fall in love. Now Andrew doesn't have a romantic disposition. He never looks up at the leaves starting to grow, sighs and says: «Ah here comes the spring!» He simply thinks to himself: «I live in a small village by a little stream and around this time of year lots of creatures start to wake up and make a lot of noise.» In London, which stands on the River Thames, people make a lot of noise all the time.

I apologize for the simplicity of these statements but I want to illustrate the unimaginative nature which Andrew possesses. Towards the end of this story I give examples to show the extent of the change that he underwent.

The other character in this anecdote is a young woman called Sally Fairweather. She too lives in this tiny and remote village where Andrew has his cottage. Now Sally is an entirely different kettle of fish. Her philosophy runs as follows: «Worrying never gets you anywhere and life is too short to waste time imagining the worst.»

In a word she is the complete opposite in temperament of Andrew. Here comes another cliche: Opposites attract. But you must remember that two years ago the two main characters hadn't met, which was surprising when you consider the proximity of Andrew's cottage and Sally's flat. If you take the first left after the post office, you come to Sally's place and if you take the second turning to the right after that you come to the cottage where Andrew lives.

The next participant in this village drama is the weather, which plays a very significant part in English life. It was late April and the sun had disappeared behind dark heavy rain clouds but Andrew had already set off for the local pub. Naturally he had his umbrella with him and a heavy coat following that aphorism his mother always used: «Never cast a clout (remove an article of clothing) before May is out.»

Fortunately he made it to the pub before the storm broke. The moment he crossed the doorstep an old schoolfriend comes up to Andrew, offers to buy him a drink and tells him not to look so worried. Andrew showed him the newspaper headlines: «Petrol prices rise again.» — «But you haven't got a car» said his friend. — «I know», retorted Andrew, «still it means everything else will go up in price, too.»
Everyone in the pub looks suitably depressed at this remark and begins to think of all the price increases that will follow. The gloom is palpable. Then suddenly the door bursts open and in walks our heroine, Sally looking like a drowned rat. Most people in the pub think to themselves: «What a pretty girl!» Andrew sees her as someone who is drenched and needs help. He walks over to her and asks if she is all right. For probably the first time in his life Andrew actually transferred his worry from himself to someone else and he mixes her a special drink to protect her from a possible cold. The conversation went as follows: «I hear you live in this village, too» — «How do you know?» asked Andrew.

But Sally changed the subject. «This drink tastes delicious. How did you make it?» — «I put a drop of ginger ale and a piece of lemon in the alcohol and then stir thoroughly. I always keep those two ingredients with me when I go out at night.» Suddenly Sally looked at her watch: «I must fly. My train leaves in ten minutes.» — «Don’t forget to take those tablets I suggested and let me know how you are.» — «I’ll let you know as soon as I come back from London.» And then she went.

Immediately Andrew started to worry. He didn’t know her name, he didn’t know her address and he felt strange. He checks his pulse. He tests his mental faculties: «Two and two make four.» It was a different sort of worry that was almost a concern. He wants to see her again. Within seconds he rushed out of the pub leaving his coat behind, ran into the pouring rain with no umbrella. What was happening to him? He saw Sally standing on the platform getting into the train and the train leaving the station. He jumps down from the platform onto the track and waves at the train driver to stop. The train stops and Andrew gets onto it.

Six weeks after this extraordinary episode Sally got married. Andrew doesn’t worry any more now. He stays calm. The obvious time when people expected him to start worrying was during the wedding ceremony in the village church just over two years ago. As he says, «I know what everyone was thinking. They thought I would go to pieces. But I was perfectly relaxed and I owe it all to Sally. She is certainly a wonderful wife. She smiled at me when we were standing at the altar and I stopped worrying from that moment on. You can see me looking relaxed in the newspaper pictures especially that one with the caption:

ANDREW SMODLEY HANDS THE RING TO SALLY FAIRWEATHER’S FUTURE HUSBAND.»