

Signal Words

In English, we sometimes come across the term signal or trigger word. Basically, it refers to expressions that indicate the use of particular verb tenses. Such phrases can be single words, typical word combinations, or groups of words (in most cases adverbials), or even whole sentences.

Simple present	Simple past	Simple future	Present continuous
every...day, month, week, year, etc., always often sometimes frequently never, etc.,	yesterday last year two hours ago last weekend in (past year), last...month, week, year)	tomorrow in...future year, month, week, etc., on (future day) next... month, week, year, name of day, etc., number of...days, months, weeks, years from now, etc., this...month, week, afternoon, year, etc., someday	now at the moment currently this week next month (future)
Past continuous	Present perfect	Past perfect	Present perfect continuous
while when at 5 o'clock yesterday last night	since for yet never ever so far number...times many times lately recently already just once twice several times up to now	by the time before after by 2pm yesterday	for since how long before after lately recently