



## Understanding Tenses

Welcome to DigiMar videos!

In this video, we will explore the importance of using correct tenses in VHF communication. After watching this video, you will be able to use the correct tenses in VHF communication to ensure clarity and avoid misunderstandings.

This video uses examples from real-life scenarios. They may have been kept in their authentic form to support learning, even when they include mistakes or deviate from maritime communication standards.

### Why do tenses matter?

Using the correct tense in VHF communication is essential. It helps clarify whether an action is happening now, has already happened, or will happen in the future. Misused tenses can cause confusion, leading to misunderstanding.

### Common misunderstandings with tenses

Let us examine an example of how tenses can create confusion. In the following authentic VHF communication, it is not clear if the vessel that is in the vicinity is dropping anchor, or if DigiMar VTS is instructing Motor Vessel Sunrise to drop anchor.

“You just proceed in the direction of pilot station. You will see Motor Vessel Moonshine, and there somewhere near dropping anchor. Over.”

### Correct use of tenses in vhf communication

To avoid ambiguity, use the following tenses based on the context:

- Present tense for actions happening now: “You are entering Port Greyhaven.”
- Future tense for planned actions: “You will berth at one eight zero zero hours.”
- Past tense for completed actions: “Motor Vessel Sunrise departed Port Greyhaven.”

Always specify time if necessary to reinforce your message.

### Example of clear communication

Here’s an example of clear communication using correct tenses. Motor Vessel is entering Port Greyhaven.

VTS	VESSEL
You are entering Port Greyhaven. You will berth at 1800 hours.	Copy. Berthing at 1800 hours.



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Notice how both the Motor Vessel and the VTS use precise tenses to confirm actions and timing.

### **Best practices for using tenses in VHF communication**

Follow these best practices to ensure effective use of tenses:

1. Always consider whether the action is in the past, present, or future.
2. When specifying time, use 24-hour format to avoid confusion, and pronounce digits separately.
3. Confirm understanding of critical information through readbacks.

These practices help ensure safe and effective communication.

Please take a moment to reflect on what you have learnt from this video. We hope that it has been useful and that it will help you to successfully complete the chatbot exercises available at:  
<https://digimar.si/category/digital-tools/chatbots/>

Thank you for watching and stay tuned for more Digimar videos on effective maritime communication.