

THE PRESENT TENSE (SADAŠNJE VREME) The Serbian present tense of –am Verbs

Here is the list of endings for the –am verb class

Table 1: The Present Tense Endings of -am Verbs

	SINGULAR	PLURAL
First person	-am	-amo
Second person	-aš	-ate
Third person	-a	-aju

1) The majority of the verbs (over 5,000) in this class are formed from the infinitive verbs which end in –**ati**.

Table 2. Examples of -am verbs derived from the infinitive in -ati

infinitive	čekati 'to wait'	čitati 'to read'	imati 'to have'
present stem	ček-	čit-	im-

Click [here](#) to see a more comprehensive list of –am verbs derived from the infinitive –**ati**.

Since –im verbs can also be derived from the infinitive in –**ati**, you may wonder how to know which verb belongs to which class. Since the majority of verbs in –**ati**, belong to the –**am** class, you may safely assume that an –**ati** verb you encounter in a dictionary belongs to the –**am** class. The majority wins, as always.

But there is also a rule to guide you if you don't want to take guesses:

If you see an infinitive verb that ends in –**ati** with any of the following palatal consonants: **č, ž, j, št, žd** preceding the –**ati**, that verb would belong to the –**im** class. All other –**ati** verbs would belong to the –**am** class.

Some examples of –**am** verbs (for a longer list click [here](#))

Table 3: Examples of present tense of -am verbs

-ati infinitive	-ati infinitive	-ati infinitive
Čitati (to read)	Pričati (to talk)	Spavati (to sleep)
Čit- am (I read)	Prič- am (I talk)	Spav- am (I sleep)
Čit- aš (you read)	Prič- aš (you talk)	Spav- aš (you sleep)
Čit- a (he/she/it read)	Prič- a (he/she/it talks)	Spav- a (he/she/it sleep)
Čit- amo (we read)	Prič- amo (we talk)	Spav- amo (we sleep)
Čit- ate (you read)	Prič- ate (you talk)	Spav- ate (you sleep)
Čit- aju (they read)	Prič- aju (they talk)	Spav- aju (they sleep)

The present tense of **imati** 'have'

The verb **imati** 'have' behaves like a regular –**am** verb, but when it is negated, it has a bit unusual (though predictable) pattern. The table below shows this.

Table 4: Present tense of the verb imati 'to have'

Non-negated	Negated	Examples
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form		form	
SINGULAR			
1	imam	nemam	Ja nemam ništa. 'I don't have anything.'
2	imaš	nemaš	Ti imaš sve. 'You have everything.'
3	ima	nema	On ima malo. 'He has little.'
PLURAL		Examples	
1	imamo	nemamo	Mi nemamo novca. 'We don't have money.'
2	imate	nemate	Vi imate novac. 'You have money.'
3	imaju	nemaju	Oni imaju sve. 'They have everything.'

As a conclusion to this section, here is the table of conjugated forms for some verbs in the **-am** class:

Table 5: Present tense verb forms for -am verbs

English	Infinitive	Present – for all persons – singular first line, plural –second line	Verb class
sleep	spavati	spavam, spavaš, spava, spavamo, spavate, spavaju	-am
read	čitati	čitam, čitaš, čita, čitamo, čitate, čitaju	-am
ask	pitati	pitam, pitaš, pita, pitamo, pitate, pitaju	-am
know	znati	znam, znaš, zna, znamo, znate, znaju	-am
have	imati	imam, imaš, ima, imamo, imate, imaju	-am
talk	razgovarati	razgovaram, razgovaraš, razgovara, razgovaramo, razgovarate, razgovaraju	-am
speak	pričati	pričam, pricaš, priča, pričamo, pričate, pričaju	-am
watch	gledati	gledam, gledaš, gleda, gledamo, gledate, gledaju	-am