

2: PRESENT PROGRESSIVE

Examples :

I am reading.

She isn't working today.

Am / is / are + -ing is the present continuous

What are you doing?

Are you listening?

A/ Form

✓ Positive Statements

The **present** form of **be** + the **-ing** form of the verb.

I **am**

He, she, it **is** + the **-ing** form of the verb

You, we, they **are**

I **am** reading.

He, she, it **is** reading.

You, we, they **are** reading.

Contracted forms

I'm (I am), **you're** (you are), **s/he's** (s/he is), **it's** (it is), **we're** (we are), **they're** (they are)+ the **-ing form**.

✓ Negative statements

I **am**

He, she, it **is not** + the **-ing** form of the verb

You, we, they **are**

I **am not** working.

He, she, it **is not** working.

You, we, they **are not** working.

Contracted forms

There are two ways of contracting a negative sentence in the present continuous:

She is not working can become:

a) She **isn't working**. Or

b) She's **not working**.

Both are correct. The negative in (b) is a bit stronger than the negative in (a).

Negative with not

I'm

He's, She's, It's **not** + the **-ing form**.

You're, we're, they're

Negative with n't

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He, She, It **isn't** + the **-ing form**

We, You, They **aren't**

✓ Questions

Am I

Is he/ she/ it + the **-ing** form of the verb

Are you/ we/ they

Am I listening?

Is he/ she/ it listening?

Are you/ we/ they listening?

✓ Negative interrogative

Am I not working?

Is he/she/it not working?

Are we /you/they not working?

Note the irregular contraction aren't I? for am I not?

contracted forms

Aren't I working?

Isn't he/ she /it working?

Aren't we / you / they working?

✓ Short Answers

Yes, I am

No, I am not (I'm not).

Yes, s/he, it is

No, s/he/ it isn't.

Yes, you/we/they are No, you/we/they aren't.

B/ Use

We use the present continuous :

1. To say: we are in the middle of doing something; we have started doing it and we have not finished yet.

✦ Often the action is happening at the time of speaking(the action is actually in progress)

Example: Please don't make so much noise. I'm working. (not 'I work')
(at a party) Hello, Jane. Are you enjoying the party? (not 'do you enjoy')
Where is Mark? He's having a shower. (not 'he has a shower')

✦ But the action is not necessarily happening at the time of speaking.(the action is generally in progress but not actually happening at the moment)

Examples: Tom and Ann are talking in a café. Tom says: I am reading an interesting book at the moment. I'll lend it to you when I've finished it.
(Tom is not reading the book at the time of speaking. He means that he has started it but not finished it yet. He is in the middle of reading it).
Catherine wants to work in Italy, so she is learning Italian. (but perhaps she isn't learning Italian exactly at the time of speaking.

Note: When two continuous tenses having the same subject are joined by **and**, the auxiliary may be dropped before the second verb, as in the above example. This applies to all pairs of compound tenses:
She was knitting and listening to the radio.

2. To talk about things happening in a period around now (for example, today/ this week/ this evening _____ etc.)

Examples: 'You are working hard today.' 'yes, I have a lot to do.' (not 'you work hard today')
'Is Suzan working this week?' 'No, she's on holiday.'

3. To talk about a temporary situation.

Examples: I'm living with some friends until I find a flat.
I am working in my father's restaurant this month.

4. To talk about developing and changing situations.(to talk about changes happening around now especially with these verbs: get, change, become, increase, rise, fall, grow, improve, begin, start)

Examples: the weather is getting warmer.
The population of the world is increasing very fast.
At first I didn't like my job, but I am beginning to enjoy it now.
House prices are going up again.

5. To talk about plans and arrangements in the future. (actions and events which are already planned; we often give the time or date)

Examples: Are you doing anything special this weekend?
We're going to Mexico next summer.
I'm having dinner with Larry on Saturday.

6. To talk about annoying or surprising habits with 'always'.

Examples: I've lost my key again. I'm always losing things.
'I'm always losing things' doesn't mean that I lose things every time. It means I lose things too often, more often than normal.
'You're always -ing' means that you do something very often, more often than the speaker thinks is normal or reasonable.
You are always watching television. You should do something more active.
John is never satisfied. He's always complaining.
They're always holding hands even after fifty years of marriage.
Other possible adverbs are: **constantly, continually, and forever.**

7. The present progressive can refer to repeated actions and events if these are happening around the moment of speaking.

Examples: I'm travelling a lot these days.

8. Can be used to describe something we regularly do at a certain time.

Examples: At 8 o'clock I'm usually driving to work, so phone me on my mobile.
7 o'clock is a bit early. We're generally eating then.

9. We can use the present (or past) continuous rather than the present (or past) simple with the verb wonder if we want to be especially friendly or polite, particularly if we are unsure about the other person's feelings towards something or how they will react to what we say.

Example: you said that there were only 50 books in the boxes. I'm just wondering / I was just wondering whether you counted them all? (more polite than 'I just wonder...?')

Reminder: Spelling rules of the -ing form of the verb

1. 'y' doesn't change before -ing: hurrying, studying, enjoying, trying, playing, etc.
2. If a Verb ends in '-ie', 'ie' changes to 'y' before -ing: die/dying, lie/lying, tie/tying, etc.
3. If a Verb ends in '-e', we leave out 'e' before the ending -ing: hope/hoping, smile/smiling, dance/dancing, confuse/confusing, etc

Exceptions are: be/being, age, dye, singe

And verbs ending in '-ee': see/seeing, agree/agreeing, etc.

4. If a Verb ends in vowel+consonant:
 - If the verb has one syllable, double the consonant at the end: stop/stopping, plan/planning
 - If the verb has more than one syllable, double the consonant at the end only if the final syllable is stressed: prefer/preferring, permit/permitting, begin/beginning, regret/regretting, etc.
 - If the final syllable is not stressed, we do not double the final consonant: visit/visiting, happen/happening, develop/developing, remember/remembering, etc.
 - Exception: In British English, verbs ending in '-l' have '-ll-' before -ing whether the final syllable is stressed or not: travel/travelling, cancel/cancelling, etc.
5. -ic changes to -ick: picnic/picnicking.
6. We don't double the consonant if the verb ends in two consonants (start/starting), OR if there are two vowel letters before it (boil/boiling).
7. We don't double 'y', 'w', or 'x' at the end of verbs: stay/staying, grow/growing, fax/faxing, etc.

Exercises

Exercise 1 . How do you spell it? write these verbs in the continuous form (-ing) in the correct list.

Help	put	decide	die	swim	listen	have	forget	write	arrive
play	begin	start	come	stop	win	work	laugh	live	lie
wear	tie	cry	dance	dig	make	rob			

+ -ing

t-tt, p-pp,etc.

e-ing

ie-ying

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Exercise 2. Use the following verbs to complete the jokes. Watch your spelling!

Chew down eat fly give look tell try wait use

- The police
for a man with one eye called Smith.
• What's his other eye called?
- Tell the passengers that I have both good news and bad news for them.
• What's the good news?
We in perfect weather and we are making excellent time.
• And what's the bad news?
We're lost.
- It's Paul's first day at his new school.
Excuse me, young man, but are gum?
• No, sir. I'm Paul Welsh.
- Two sisters are in bed together.
Are you asleep?
• I..... not.....you.
- Come out of the water. Swimming is not allowed here.
• But I'm not swimming, officer. I!
- A man is having a meal in a restaurant.
Waiter. This meat is very tough. What is it?
• The problem isn't the meat, sir.
You to eat the plate.
- Why is your cat looking at me?
• Probably because you.....its bowl.

Exercise 3. Use the words in brackets to complete the questions.

- '..... this week?' 'no, he's on holiday.' (Colin/work)
- Whyat me like that? What's the matter? (you/look)
- 'Jenny is a student at university.' 'is she? What..... ? (she /study)
- to the radio or can I turn it off? (anybody/listen)
- How is your English?.....better? (it/get).

Exercise 4. Put the verb into the correct form. Sometimes you need the negative.

- I'm tired. I.....to bed now. Goodnight!(go)
- We can go out now. It..... anymore. (rain)
- 'How is your new job?' 'Not so good at the moment. I..... it very much.'(enjoy)
- Catherine phoned me last night. She's on holiday in France. Shea great time and doesn't want to come back.(have)
- I want to lose weight, so this week I..... lunch. (eat)
- Angela has just started evening classes. She..... German. (learn)
- I think Paul and Ann have had an argument. Theyto each other.(speak)

Exercise 5 .Read this conversation between Brian and Sara. Put the verbs into the correct form.

Sarah: Brian! How nice to see you! What..... these days? (you /do)

Brian: I.....(train) to be a supermarket manager.

Sarah: really? What's it like? (.you/enjoy)it?

Brian: it's all right. What about you?

Sarah: well, actually I (not/work) at the moment.

I..... (try) to find a job but it's not easy.
But I'm very busy. I..... (decorate) my flat.

Brian:..... (you/do)it alone?

Sarah: No, some friends of mine..... (help) me.

Exercise 6 . Complete the sentences using one of these verbs: get change rise fall increase

1. The population of the world..... very fast.
2. Ken is still ill but he..... better slowly.
3. The world..... Things never stay the same.
4. The cost of livingEvery year things are more expensive.
5. The economic situation is already very bad and it worse.

Exercise 7. Complete the sentences. Put the verbs into the present simple or present continuous, positive or negative.

1. A: have a chocolate. B: No, thank you. I..... (like chocolate)
2. A: let's have lunch in the garden. B: No, we can't. it..... (rain)
3. A: what ? B: Pam? She is a doctor. (do)
4. Tony at the moment. He is on holiday. (work)
5. A: Why ? B: because I'm happy. (smile)
6. A: what ? B: a letter from my sister. (read)
7. A: what time..... ? B: Me? At 7.00 a.m. usually.(get up)
8. A: where's Jim? B: he is in the kitchen. He.....(make) coffee.
9. A: I think shaun and David are asleep. B: Turn the TV off, they..... (watch) it.
10. John and I want to go to Greece for our holidays, so we..... (learn)Greek.

Exercise 8 . Use the correct present tense form.

1. Let me explain what you have to do. First you(take)the photos and(sort) them into categories. Then you..... (file) them according to subject.
2. We (hope) you(enjoy) this marvellous weather as much as we are. We(sunbathe)and (go) swimming every day. Next week we..... (go) snorkeling.
3. The play is set in London in 1890. The action(take) place in Sir Don Wyatt's mansion. When the curtain (go) up, the hero and heroine..... (sit) in the lounge. They(argue).
4. The house is in a mess because we've got the workmen in. The plumber(put)in a new bath, the electricians (rewire) the system, and the carpenter(build)us some new bookshelves.
5. Dear Jane, Sorry to hear about your problem at work. I..... (think)you(do) the right thing, but I(doubt) whether your boss really (know) his job from what you..... (tell) me!
6. Pym(pass) to Smith, who (run) straight at the central defence and(shoot), and Gomez.....(push) it over the bar for a corner.

Exercise 9 . Put the simple present or present progressive, note where both forms are possible.

A HOLIDAY JOB WITH A DIFFERENCE!

I (study)..... English at Exeter University. I'm on holiday at the moment and I (work)in a public library. I'm lucky to have this job. I (not have to)get up early. The library (open)at 10 and (close) at 7. It's interesting work because people (always come in)and (ask) me to help them. so I (learn)..... a lot about different subjects. I (enjoy).....the job and (find)..... it very amusing, too. People (use) the strangest things as bookmarks. I have found a rasher of bacon (uncooked!).Matchsticks (be)common and so (be)bus tickets. My colleagues (always find).....things too- even a £ 10 note, but I haven't been so lucky. I often (think)of the photo of a beautiful woman which I found. On the back were the words: " I (love)you. I (miss)..... you and I'll never forget you."