

Present continuous (I am doing)

Study this example situation:

Ann is in her car. She is on her way to work.
She is driving to work.

This means: she is driving *now*, at the time of speaking. The action is not finished.

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

I	am (= I'm)	driving
he/she/it	is (= he's etc.)	working
we/you/they	are (= we're etc.)	doing etc.



I am doing something = I'm in the middle of doing something; I've started doing it and I haven't finished yet.

Often the action is happening at the time of speaking:

- Please don't make so much noise. I'm working. (*not* 'I work')
- 'Where's Margaret?' 'She's having a bath.' (*not* 'she has a bath')
- Let's go out now. It isn't raining any more. (*not* 'it doesn't rain') (*at a party*) Hello, Jane. Are you enjoying the party? (*not* 'do you enjoy')
- I'm tired. I'm going to bed now. Goodnight!

But the action is not necessarily happening at the time of speaking. For example:

Tom and Ann are talking in a café. Tom says:



I'm 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.

Some more examples:

- Catherine wants to work in Italy, so she is learning Italian. (but perhaps she isn't learning Italian exactly at the time of speaking)
- Some friends of mine are building their own house. They hope it will be finished before next summer.

We use the present continuous when we talk about things happening in a period around now (for example, today / this week / this evening etc.):

- 'You're working hard today.' 'Yes, I have a lot to do.' (*not* 'you work hard today')
- 'Is Susan working this week?' 'No, she's on holiday.'

We use the present continuous when we talk about changes happening around now:

- The population of the world is rising very fast. (*not* 'rises')
- Is your English getting better? (*not* 'does your English get better')

EXERCISES

1 Complete the sentences with one of the following verbs in the correct form:

come get happen look make start stay try work

- 'You're working... hard today.' 'Yes, I have a lot to do.'
- I for Christine. Do you know where she is?
- It dark. Shall I turn on the light?
- They haven't got anywhere to live at the moment. They with friends until they find somewhere.
- 'Are you ready, Ann?' 'Yes, I
- Have you got an umbrella? It to rain.
- You a lot of noise. Could you be quieter? I to concentrate.
- Why are all these people here? What

2 Use the words in brackets to complete the questions.

- '... Is Colin working... this week?' 'No, he's on holiday.' (Colin/work)
- Why at 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)

3 Put the verb into the correct form. Sometimes you need the negative (I'm not doing etc.).

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

4 Read this conversation between Brian and Sarah. Put the verbs into the correct form.

- SARAH: Brian! How nice to see you! What (1) (you/do) these days?
 BRIAN: I (2) (train) to be a supermarket manager.
 SARAH: Really? What's it like? (3) (you/enjoy) it?
 BRIAN: It's all right. What about you?
 SARAH: Well, actually I (4) (not/work) at the moment.
 I (5) (try) to find a job but it's not easy.
 But I'm very busy. I (6) (decorate) my flat.
 BRIAN: (7) (you/do) it alone?
 SARAH: No, some friends of mine (8) (help) me.

5 Complete the sentences using one of these verbs: get change rise fall increase
 You don't have to use all the verbs and you can use a verb more than once.

- The population of the world ...is rising... very fast.
- Ken is still ill but he better slowly.
- The world Things never stay the same.
- The cost of living Every year things are more expensive.
- The economic situation is already very bad and it worse.