

Present continuous and present simple (1)

(I am doing and I do)

Study the explanations and compare the examples:

Present continuous (I am doing)

Use the continuous for something that is happening at or around the time of speaking. The action is not finished.

I am doing

past now future

- The water is **boiling**. Can you turn it off?
- Listen to those people. What language are they **speaking**?
- Let's go out. It **isn't raining** now.
- 'Don't disturb me. I'm **busy**.' 'Why? What are you **doing**?'
- I'm **going** to bed now. Goodnight!
- Maria is in Britain at the moment. She's **learning** English.

Use the continuous for a *temporary* situation:

- I'm **living** with some friends until I find a flat.
- 'You're **working** hard today.' 'Yes, I've got a lot to do.'

See Unit 1 for more information.

Present simple (I do)

Use the simple for things in general or things that happen repeatedly.

←----- I do -----→
past now future

- Water **boils** at 100 degrees celsius.
- Excuse me, do you **speak** English?
- It **doesn't rain** very much in summer.
- What **do** you usually **do** at weekends?
- What **do** you **do**? (= What's your job?)
- I **always go** to bed before midnight.
- Most people **learn** to swim when they are children.

Use the simple for a *permanent* situation:

- My parents **live** in London. They have lived there all their lives.
- John **isn't lazy**. He **works** very hard most of the time.

See Unit 2 for more information.

I always do and I'm always doing

Usually we say 'I always do something' (= I do it every time):

- I **always go** to work by car. (*not* 'I'm always going')

You can also say 'I'm always doing something', but this has a different meaning. For example:

I've lost my key again. I'm always losing things.



'I'm always losing things' does *not* mean that I lose things every time. It means that 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're **always watching** television. You should do something more active.
- John is **never satisfied**. He's **always complaining**.

EXERCISES

Are the underlined verbs right or wrong? Correct the verbs that are wrong.

- 1 Water boils at 100 degrees celsius. ...**RIGHT**...
- 2 The water boils. Can you turn it off? ...**WRONG: is boiling**...
- 3 Look! That man tries to open the door of your car.
- 4 Can you hear those people? What do they talk about?
- 5 The moon goes round the earth.
- 6 I must go now. It gets late.
- 7 I usually go to work by car.
- 8 'Hurry up! It's time to leave.' 'OK, I come.'
- 9 I hear you've got a new job. How do you get on?

Put the verb in the correct form, present continuous or present simple.

- 1 Let's go out. It isn't raining (not/rain) now.
- 2 Julia is very good at languages. She speaks (speak) four languages very well.
- 3 Hurry up! Everybody (wait) for you.
- 4 (you/listen) to the radio?' 'No, you can turn it off.'
- 5 (you/listen) to the radio every day?' 'No, just occasionally.'
- 6 The River Nile (flow) into the Mediterranean.
- 7 Look at the river. It (flow) very fast today – much faster than usual.
- 8 We usually (grow) vegetables in our garden but this year we (not/grow) any.
- 9 'How is your English?' 'Not bad. It (improve) slowly.'
- 10 Ron is in London at the moment. He (stay) at the Park Hotel. He (always/stay) there when he's in London.
- 11 Can we stop walking soon? I (start) to feel tired.
- 12 'Can you drive?' 'I (learn). My father (teach) me.'
- 13 Normally I (finish) work at 5.00, but this week I (work) until 6.00 to earn a bit more money.
- 14 My parents (live) in Bristol. They were born there and have never lived anywhere else. Where (your parents/live)?
- 15 Sonia (look) for a place to live. She (stay) with her sister until she finds somewhere.
- 16 'What (your father/do)?' 'He's an architect but he (not/work) at the moment.'
- 17 (at a party) Usually I (enjoy) parties but I (not/enjoy) this one very much.
- 18 The train is never late. It (always/leave) on time.
- 19 Jim is very untidy. He (always/leave) his things all over the place.

Finish B's sentences. Use always -ing (see Section B).

- 1 A: I'm afraid I've lost my key again.
B: Not again! You're always losing your key.
- 2 A: The car has broken down again.
B: That car is useless! It
- 3 A: Look! You've made the same mistake again.
B: Oh no, not again! I
- 4 A: Oh, I've left the lights on again.