

Present continuous (I am doing)

Study this example situation:

Sarah 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 it; I've started doing it and I haven't finished:

- ☐ Please don't make so much noise. **I'm trying** to work. (*not* I try)
- ☐ 'Where's Mark?' 'He's **having** a shower.' (*not* He has a shower)
- ☐ Let's go out now. It **isn't raining** any more. (*not* It doesn't rain)
- ☐ (*at a party*) Hi, Jane. **Are you enjoying** the party? (*not* Do you enjoy)
- ☐ What's all that noise? What's **going on**? (= What's happening?)

You can use the present continuous with **today** / **this week** / **this year** etc. (periods around now):

- ☐ A: You're **working hard today**. (*not* You work hard today)
B: Yes, I have a lot to do.
- ☐ The company I work for **isn't doing** so well **this year**.

We use the present continuous when we talk about changes happening around now, especially with these verbs:

get change become increase rise fall grow improve begin start

- ☐ **Is** your English **getting** better? (*not* Does your English get better)
- ☐ The population of the world **is increasing** very fast. (*not* increases)
- ☐ At first I didn't like my job, but I'm **beginning** to enjoy it now. (*not* I begin)

Exercises

1.1 The sentences on the right follow those on the left. Which sentence goes with which?

- 1 Please don't make so much noise.
- 2 I need to eat something soon.
- 3 I don't have anywhere to live right now.
- 4 We need to leave soon.
- 5 They don't need their car any more.
- 6 Things are not so good at work.
- 7 It isn't true what they said.
- 8 We're going to get wet.

- a It's getting late.
- b They're lying.
- c It's starting to rain.
- d They're trying to sell it.
- e I'm getting hungry.
- f ~~I'm trying to work.~~
- g I'm looking for an apartment.
- h The company is losing money.

- 1 f
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
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- 7
- 8

1.2 Complete the conversations.

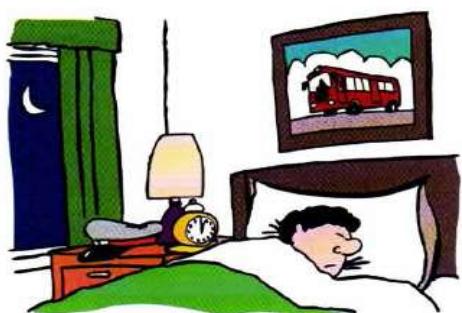
- 1 A: I saw Brian a few days ago.
B: Oh, did you? What's he doing these days? (what / he / do)
A: He's at university.
B:? (what / he / study)
A: Psychology.
B: it? (he / enjoy)
A: Yes, he says it's a very good course.
- 2 A: Hi, Nicola. How? (your new job / go)
B: Not bad. It wasn't so good at first, but better now.
(it / get)
A: What about Daniel? Is he OK?
B: Yes, but his work right now. (he / not / enjoy)
He's been in the same job for a long time and to get bored
with it. (he / begin)

1.3 Put the verb into the correct form, positive (I'm doing etc.) or negative (I'm not doing etc.).

- 1 Please don't make so much noise. I'm trying (I / try) to work.
- 2 Let's go out now. It isn't raining (it / rain) any more.
- 3 You can turn off the radio. (I / listen) to it.
- 4 Kate phoned me last night. She's on holiday in France. (she / have)
a great time and doesn't want to come back.
- 5 I want to lose weight, so this week (I / eat) lunch.
- 6 Andrew has just started evening classes. (he / learn) Japanese.
- 7 Paul and Sally have had an argument. (they / speak)
to each other.
- 8 (I / get) tired. I need a rest.
- 9 Tim (work) today. He's taken the day off.
- 10 (I / look) for Sophie. Do you know where she is?

Present simple (I do)

Study this example situation:



Alex is a bus driver, but now he is in bed asleep.
He is not driving a bus. (He is asleep.)

but He **drives** a bus. (He is a bus driver.)

Drive(s)/work(s)/do(es) etc. is the *present simple*:

I/we/you/they	drive/work/do	etc.
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he/she/it	drives/works/does	etc.
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We use the present simple to talk about things in general. We use it to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly, or that something is true in general:

- ☐ Nurses **look** after patients in hospitals.
- ☐ I usually **go** away at weekends.
- ☐ The earth **goes** round the sun.
- ☐ The cafe **opens** at 7.30 in the morning.

Remember:

I **work** ... but He **works** ... They **teach** ... but My sister **teaches** ...

We use **do/does** to make questions and negative sentences:

do does	I/we/you/they he/she/it	work? drive? do?	I/we/you/they he/she/it	don't doesn't	work drive do
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- ☐ I come from Canada. Where **do** you **come** from?
- ☐ I **don't go** away very often.
- ☐ What **does** this word **mean**? (*not* What means this word?)
- ☐ Rice **doesn't grow** in cold climates.

In the following examples, **do** is also the main verb (do you **do** / doesn't **do** etc.):

- ☐ 'What **do** you **do**?' 'I work in a shop.'
- ☐ He's always so lazy. He **doesn't do** anything to help.

We use the present simple to say how often we do things:

- ☐ I **get** up at 8 o'clock **every morning**.
- ☐ **How often** do you **go** to the dentist?
- ☐ Julie **doesn't drink** tea **very often**.
- ☐ Robert usually **goes** away **two or three times a year**.

I promise / I apologise etc.

Sometimes we do things by saying something. For example, when you *promise* to do something, you can say '**I promise** ...'; when you *suggest* something, you can say '**I suggest** ...':

- ☐ I **promise** I won't be late. (*not* I'm promising)
- ☐ 'What do you **suggest** I do?' 'I **suggest** that you ...'

In the same way we say: I **apologise** ... / I **advise** ... / I **insist** ... / I **agree** ... / I **refuse** ... etc.

Exercises

2.1 Complete the sentences using the following verbs:

cause(s) connect(s) drink(s) live(s) open(s) ~~speaks(s)~~ take(s)

- 1 Tanya speaks German very well.
- 2 I don't often coffee.
- 3 The swimming pool at 7.30 every morning.
- 4 Bad driving many accidents.
- 5 My parents in a very small flat.
- 6 The Olympic Games place every four years.
- 7 The Panama Canal the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

2.2 Put the verb into the correct form.

- 1 Julie doesn't drink (not / drink) tea very often.
- 2 What time (the banks / close) here?
- 3 I've got a car, but I (not / use) it much.
- 4 'Where (Ricardo / come) from?' 'From Cuba.'
- 5 'What (you / do)?' 'I'm an electrician.'
- 6 It (take) me an hour to get to work. How long (it / take) you?
- 7 Look at this sentence. What (this word / mean)?
- 8 David isn't very fit. He (not / do) any sport.

Complete using the following:

I apologise I insist I promise I recommend ~~I suggest~~

- 1 Mr Evans is not in the office today. I suggest you try calling him tomorrow.
- 2 I won't tell anybody what you said.
- 3 (*in a restaurant*) You must let me pay for the meal.
- 4 for what I did. It won't happen again.
- 5 The new restaurant in Hill Street is very good. it.

Past simple (I did)

Study this example:

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart **was** an Austrian musician and composer. He **lived** from 1756 to 1791. He **started** composing at the age of five and **wrote** more than 600 pieces of music. He **was** only 35 years old when he **died**.

Lived/started/wrote/was/died are all *past simple*.



Very often the past simple ends in **-ed** (*regular verbs*):

- ☐ I work in a travel agency now. Before that I **worked** in a department store.
- ☐ We **invited** them to our party, but they **decided** not to come.
- ☐ The police **stopped** me on my way home last night.
- ☐ Laura **passed** her exam because she **studied** very hard.

For spelling (**stopped**, **studied** etc.), see Appendix 6.

But many verbs are *irregular*. The past simple does **not** end in **-ed**. For example:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| write → wrote | <input type="checkbox"/> Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music. |
| see → saw | <input type="checkbox"/> We saw Tanya in town a few days ago. |
| go → went | <input type="checkbox"/> I went to the cinema three times last week. |
| shut → shut | <input type="checkbox"/> It was cold, so I shut the window. |

In questions and negatives we use **did/didn't** + *infinitive* (**enjoy/see/go** etc.):

I	enjoyed		you	enjoy?	I		enjoy
she	saw	did	she	see?	she	didn't	see
they	went		they	go?	they		go

- ☐ A: **Did** you **go** out last night?
- B: Yes, I **went** to the cinema, but I **didn't enjoy** the film much.
- ☐ 'When **did** Mr Thomas **die**?' 'About ten years ago.'
- ☐ They **didn't invite** us to the party, so we **didn't go**.
- ☐ '**Did** you **have** time to do the shopping?' 'No, I **didn't**.'

In the following examples, **do** is the main verb in the sentence (**did ... do / didn't do**):

- ☐ What **did** you **do** at the weekend? (*not* What did you at the weekend?)
- ☐ I **didn't do** anything. (*not* I didn't anything)

The past of **be** (**am/is/are**) is **was/were**:

I/he/she/it	was/wasn't	was	I/he/she/it?
we/you/they	were/weren't	were	we/you/they?

Note that we do not use **did** in negatives and questions with **was/were**:

- ☐ I **was** angry because they **were** late.
- ☐ **Was** the weather good when you **were** on holiday?
- ☐ They **weren't** able to come because they **were** so busy.
- ☐ Did you go out last night or **were** you too tired?

Exercises

5.1 Read what Laura says about a typical working day:



Laura

I usually get up at 7 o'clock and have a big breakfast. I walk to work, which takes me about half an hour. I start work at 8.45. I never have lunch. I finish work at 5 o'clock. I'm always tired when I get home. I usually cook a meal in the evening. I don't usually go out. I go to bed at about 11 o'clock, and I always sleep well.

Yesterday was a typical working day for Laura. Write what she did or didn't do yesterday.

- | | | | | |
|--------------|------------------|----|--|---------------------------|
| 1 She got up | at 7 o'clock. | 7 | | at 5 o'clock. |
| 2 She | a big breakfast. | 8 | | tired when home. |
| 3 She | | 9 | | a meal yesterday evening. |
| 4 It | to get to work. | 10 | | out yesterday evening. |
| 5 | at 8.45. | 11 | | at 11 o'clock. |
| 6 | lunch. | 12 | | well last night. |

Complete the sentences using the following verbs in the correct form:

buy catch cost fall hurt sell spend teach throw ~~write~~

- Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music.
- 'How did you learn to drive?' 'My father taught me.'
- We couldn't afford to keep our car, so we sold it.
- Dave fell down the stairs this morning and hurt his leg.
- Joe threw the ball to Sue, who caught it.
- Ann spent a lot of money yesterday. She bought a dress which cost £100.

Complete the sentences. Put the verb into the correct form, positive or negative.

- It was warm, so I took off my coat. (take)
- The film wasn't very good. I didn't enjoy it much. (enjoy)
- I knew Sarah was busy, so I didn't disturb her. (disturb)
- We were very tired, so we left the party early. (leave)
- The bed was very uncomfortable. I didn't sleep well. (sleep)
- The window was open and a bird flew into the room. (fly)
- The hotel wasn't very expensive. It didn't cost much to stay there. (cost)
- I was in a hurry, so I didn't have time to phone you. (have)
- It was hard carrying the bags. They were very heavy. (be)