

Present Continuous (*I am doing*)

A

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. |



B

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 Lauren?" "She's **taking a bath.**" (*not* She takes a bath)
- Let's go out now. It **isn't raining** anymore. (*not* It doesn't rain)
- (*at a party*) Hello, Lisa. **Are you enjoying the party?** (*not* Do you enjoy)
- I'm tired. **I'm going to bed** now. Good night!

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

Tom and Ann are talking. 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 has not finished it yet.
He is in the middle of reading it.

Here are some more examples:

- Maria wants to work in Italy, so she is **studying Italian.** (but perhaps she isn't studying Italian exactly at the time of speaking)
- Some friends of mine are **building their own house.**

C

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

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

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

1.1 Complete the sentences using one of the following verbs in the correct form.

come get happen look make start stay try work

1. "You *are working* hard today." "Yes, I have a lot to do."
2. I _____ for Christine. Do you know where she is?
3. It _____ dark. Should I turn on the light?
4. They don't have anywhere to live at the moment. They _____ with friends until they find a place.
5. "Ann! Let's go!" "OK, I _____."
6. Do you have an umbrella? It _____ to rain.
7. You _____ a lot of noise. Could you please be quieter?
I _____ to concentrate.
8. Why are all these people here? What _____ ?

1.2 Use the words in parentheses to complete the questions.

1. "*Is Brad working* this week?" "No, he's on vacation." (Brad / work)
2. Why _____ at me like that? What's the matter? (you / look)
3. "Jenny is a student at the university." "Is she? What _____ ?" (she / study)
4. _____ to the radio, or can I turn it off? (anybody / listen)
5. How is your English? _____ better? (it / get)

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

1. I'm tired. I *'m going* _____ (go) to bed now. Good night!
2. We can go out now. It *isn't raining* _____ (rain) anymore.
3. Laura phoned me last night. She's on vacation in France. She _____ (have) a great time and doesn't want to come back.
4. I want to lose weight, so this week I _____ (eat) lunch.
5. Angela has just started evening classes. She _____ (study) German.
6. I think Dave and Amy had an argument. They _____ (speak) to each other.

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

Sarah: Brian! I haven't seen you in ages. What (1) *are you doing* _____ (you / do) these days?

Brian: I (2) _____ (train) to be a police officer.

Sarah: Really? What's it like? (3) _____ (you / enjoy) it?

Brian: It's all right. How about you?

Sarah: Well, actually, I (4) _____ (not / work) right now.

I (5) _____ (try) to find a job, but it's not easy. But I'm pretty busy.

I (6) _____ (paint) my apartment.

Brian: (7) _____ (you / do) it alone?

Sarah: No, some friends of mine (8) _____ (help) me.

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

1. The population of the world *is rising* _____ very fast.
2. Robert is still sick, but he _____ better slowly.
3. The world _____. Things never stay the same.
4. The cost of living _____. Every year things are more expensive.
5. The economic situation is already very bad, and it _____ worse.