

## Present continuous (I am doing)

**A** 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.



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

- 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*) Hello, Jane. **Are you enjoying** the party? (*not* Do you enjoy)
- What's all that noise? What's **going on**? (= What's happening?)

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

Steve is talking to a friend on the phone. He says:



I'm reading a really good book at the moment.  
It's about a man who ...

Steve 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.

Some more examples:

- Kate wants to work in Italy, so she's **learning** Italian. (*but perhaps she isn't learning Italian at the time of speaking*)
- Some friends of mine **are building** their own house. They hope to finish it next summer.

**C** 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**.

**D** 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)

## 1.1 Complete the sentences with the following verbs in the correct form:

get – happen look lose make start stay try ~~work~~

- 1 'You 're working hard today.' 'Yes, I have a lot to do.'
- 2 I looked for Christine. Do you know where she is?
- 3 It got dark. Shall I turn on the light?
- 4 They don't have anywhere to live at the moment. They stay with friends until they find somewhere.
- 5 Things are not so good at work. The company losing money.
- 6 Have you got an umbrella? It isn't raining to rain.
- 7 You make a lot of noise. Can you be quieter? I try to concentrate.
- 8 Why are all these people here? What is happening ?

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

- 1 Please don't make so much noise. I 'm trying (try) to work.
- 2 Let's go out now. It isn't raining (rain) any more.
- 3 You can turn off the radio. I 'm not listening (listen) to it.
- 4 Kate phoned me last night. She's on holiday in France. She has (have) a great time and doesn't want to come back.
- 5 I want to lose weight, so this week I 'm not eating (eat) lunch.
- 6 Andrew has just started evening classes. He is learning (learn) German.
- 7 Paul and Sally have had an argument. They aren't speaking (speak) to each other.
- 8 I get (get) tired. I need a rest.
- 9 Tim isn't working (work) this week. He's on holiday.

## 1.3 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 is he studying? (what / he / study)  
A: Psychology.  
B: Is he enjoying it? (he / enjoy)  
A: Yes, he says it's a very good course.
- 2 A: Hi, Liz. How you getting on in your new job? (you / get on)  
B: Not bad. It wasn't so good at first, but things are getting better now. (things / get)  
A: What about Jonathan? Is he OK?  
B: Yes, but he's not enjoying his work at the moment. (he / not / enjoy)  
He's been in the same job for a long time and he began to get bored with it. (he / begin)

## 1.4 Complete the sentences using the following verbs:

begin change get ~~increase~~ rise

- 1 The population of the world is increasing very fast.
- 2 The world is changing. Things never stay the same.
- 3 The situation is already bad and it is getting worse.
- 4 The cost of living is rising. Every year things are more expensive.
- 5 The weather is beginning to improve. The rain has stopped, and the wind isn't as strong.