

The Use of the Present Continuous Tense (Level A-B)

<i>Affirmative</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Interrogative</i>
I am working now. We are talking now. He/she is reading a book now. You are listening to me. It's raining now. Look! They are dancing.	I am not working now. We aren't talking now. He/she isn't reading now. You aren't listening to me. It isn't raining now. They aren't dancing now.	Am I working now? Are we talking now? Is he/she reading now? Are you listening to me? Is it raining now? Are they dancing now?

Mind the changes in spelling:

run – running	come-coming	lie – lying
shop – shopping	give – giving	tie – tying
begin – beginning	make- making	die – dying

Don't omit 'y':

study - studying
carry - carrying

We use the Present Continuous Tense:

1) to denote an action in progress now or around now. Study the typical patterns:

- Don't bother me now. I'm working.
- He is writing a report at the moment.
- What are they busy with? - They are making a film.
- Who are you waiting for? What are you doing here?

2) to denote changes and tendencies we can witness at present. Study the typical patterns:

- More and more people are getting concerned about the environment.
- Young people are no longer reading serious books these days.

3) to denote planned future, one's own plans, not a timetable. Study the typical patterns:

- Are you leaving tomorrow? – Yes, I am, but only for two days. I'm coming back on Wednesday.
- My sister is getting married this Saturday.
- Mark isn't coming for dinner, he's working night.

NB Compare: When are you leaving? **but** When does the train leave?

4) to denote somebody's annoying habit. Study the typical patterns:

- You are always taking my scissors! Use yours.
- She is only talking about herself! It's really boring.

5) when we speak about two routine actions, one of them, normally that after *when* or *if* takes a Continuous form. Study the typical patterns:

- And what do you do when you are not working?
- If you're doing an international business, you have to speak English.

The use of Present Continuous with stative verbs

-to denote behaviour or temporary action (not sense or characteristic)

Compare: - She is oversensitive and vulnerable. - She is being so nervous these days. What's up?

- The roses smell too strong. – Look! The dog is smelling the roses.
- I normally feel good in the morning. – It's autumn again. I'm feeling so lonely and sad.
- I think you should work harder. – I'm thinking about changing my job.
- I have a lot of work to do at the moment. – She is having a bath now.

Mind it: *verbs of mind, possession & obligation* don't take Continuous forms: *understand; recognise; believe, belong; owe; want; need; mind; mean; possess; notice; seem; sound* and some other.

NB Some of them can be used in Present Continuous to denote an action taking place right now.

E.g. Here, in Greece, I am liking every moment of my holiday.

Exercises

1. Ask your partner to (not to) do something because you're doing something or something is happening.
E.g. Will you please switch on the light? It's getting dark. I am writing an essay. Stop making noise, I'm....
Don't open the window! I'm changing clothes. You can work on my computer. I'm not using it today.

2. Ask your partner to help you when you're doing something.
E.g. Could you please help us? We're pushing the car off the road.

3. Ask each other about your plans for today/tonight/ Saturday night/tomorrow.
E.g. –What are you doing after classes? – I'm going to the gym. –Are you doing anything special this weekend? –Nothing special. I'm staying in. I'm not going out.

4. Speak about somebody or something really annoying.
E.g. My boss drives me mad! He is always losing my reports! I hate drivers! They are always parking their cars on the pavement!

5. Speak about changes and trends (prices; fashion; people; weather; etc) that happening these days.
E.g. The climate is getting warmer day by day.
Use the verbs: *become; rise; go up; decline; decrease; buy; get (worse, freer, more comfortable etc)*

6. Compare things that you do usually and are doing at the moment.
E.g. I usually get to work by car, but now that my car is in the garage I'm travelling by bus. I don't normally eat a lot of proteins, but I'm eating meat and fish now because I'm training for a competition
Use the verbs: *work; sleep; drink; eat; meet; go out; spend; feel; do exercise; do the cleaning (myself)....*

7. Open the brackets, using Present Simple or Present Continuous.

1) I (study) at Moscow State University. I (do) a course in microbiology. My friend (take) a post-graduate project. We both (have) our exams in June. Then we (go) to London for a holiday.

2) When the train (leave)? When it (arrive) in Edinburgh? Anybody (meet) you at the station?

3) Tomorrow (be) a very difficult day: I (meet) the delegation at the airport at 7 am; then I (take) them to the hotel; after a short break we (have) negotiation with our French partners, then we (attend) the exhibition at the Expocentre; in the evening we (go) to the Bolshoi Theatre....

4) Mike (have) breakfast now? That's not like him: he never (eat) so early. He usually (have) brunch! What (be) brunch? Well, some people (get up) so late that they (combine) breakfast and lunch and (get) brunch, which they often (have) in bed.

5) I (keep) in touch with my old friends: we (email) and (call) each other and from time to time we (get) together and (have) fun. What about you? You (know) what your old classmates (do) now?

6) You (be) so slow today? What (go on)? You (not want) to work on this project? Why didn't you refuse earlier? Now it (be) too late. We all (depend) on you!

7) What you (smell) there? My roses? They really (smell) wonderful. You (like) flowers?

8) How the soup (taste) to you? You (not think) it (be) a bit salty? It (smell) of garlic?

9) You (think) that your mother (have) to cook vegetarian food for you? But it was your choice to give up eating meat! It (seem) to me that you (be) selfish. If you (not eat) meat, cook your own meals!

10) What you (think) of? You still (doubt) that you've made the only possible decision?

8. Open the brackets using Present Simple or Present Continuous.

1)-What you (look) at? –I (see) a crowd of people over there. What you (think) they (do)?

2) Just (leave) me alone! I (do) this awful translation. One of those Mr. Gray always (give) us!

3) –Mum, (believe) me! I (ask) you for help because I really (need) it. I (know) I (be) selfish and careless, because I've spent this month's pocket money. But we agreed to buy this mobile phone for Jane's birthday and all my friends (depend) on me now.

- 4) –You (like) my new shoes? They (be not) gorgeous? –How much (be) they? \$ 250? I (not spend) \$250 on a pair of shoes! –Oh, you always (spoil) everything!
- 5) Let's role-play the whole scene. Look, I (be) Rachel and you (be) Mr. Jason.
- 6) I gradually (forget) all the history I learnt at school.
- 7) –What you (try) on? Why you (smell) it? It (smell) of anything bad?
- 8) We (lie) on the beach right now. Jane has gone off for a swim and I (write) postcards. She always (leave) this job to me. We (stay) in a wonderful hotel overlooking the sea. The weather (be) great, and we (enjoy) every minute of our holiday. Tomorrow we (go) on an excursion to the mountains....
- 9) Why you always (offer) me some coffee? I (hate) it! I (know) that you've made it yourself. But I (not like) any coffee at all! Why you (think) I (like) this one made by you?
- 10) –What you (do)? – I (study) at Kent University. I (do) my first degree. I (live) in a student's residence and (share) my room with a guy from Germany. We (have) a lot in common and (get) on really well. The only thing we (argue) about is the housework. I really can't stand it when he (tidy) the room and (put) everything in their "right" places.
- 11) It (be) of importance to know about cultural differences when you (do) business with foreign partners. Personally I always (find) out about the local customs before I (meet) my potential partners.
- 12) - I've warned you against him! You never (listen) to me! I (doubt) if you will ever learn to listen to your head. –Now I (understand) that you (be) right. I (not see) him any more.
- 13) This spring (be) so cold and rainy. I (feel) bad all the time.
- 14) -How you (feel) now that your film has become a great success? –I (feel) fantastic!
- 15) When your lectures (begin)? How long the term (be)? When you (have) your exams?
- 16) Oh, I must be off! The lecture (begin) in 10 minutes.
- 18) We (experience) a period of climatic change now. A lot of species accustomed to colder conditions (move) to the north as the temperatures (rise).
- 19) You (be) always on the move in your profession, but what you (do) when you (not travel)?
- 20) –We (go) out tonight? – It (depend) on the weather. If it (rain) again, I will stay in.

NB The use of the Present Continuous in the meaning of plans is close to the use of 'be going to'. We use Present Continuous to speak about something already organised or booked and we use 'be going to' to speak about intentions to do something or to speak about evident future.

Compare:

-We are going to marry next summer. -We're getting married on the 1st of August.

-When is he arriving? - Look! The tree is going to fall down!

-It's 6 o'clock! We're going to be late. - She isn't working this weekend.

1. Open the brackets, using the Present Continuous Tense or the construction 'be going to'.

- 1)-What you (do) after finishing the course? – I don't know. My friends (take) a coach tour across the country; so maybe I'd like to join them.
- 2) I'm afraid I can't come to the party tomorrow. I (babysit) for Mrs. Smith because she and her husband (leave) for the weekend, so I (stay) with their children.
- 3) My back (kill) me! I feel like I (die).
- 4) I've been appointed the head of HR department. The year (be) hard.
- 5) Anybody coming to dinner tonight?
- 6) How many people you (invite) to your birthday party?
- 7) You (do) something about this car?

2. Open the brackets using the Present Simple or Present Continuous and 'be going to'.

- 1) Matilda (study) at Moscow State University. She (do) a course in biology.
- 2) Gerard (be) a writer. He (write) a detective novel now.
- 3) We (go) to the gym twice a week because we (want) to keep fit. We (not to get) old.
- 4) -My parents (come) down to Moscow tomorrow. –We (meet) them? –Sure! When the plane (arrive)?
- 5) –What you (look) for? –I (look) for my tie! Where it (can; be)? –I (not know). You always (lose) things!

- 6) –Look! The child (fall down)! –What I (can; do)? I (mend) the car!
- 7) -We (go) to Italy this summer. –Lucky you! We (not take) a holiday this year.
- 8) I (be) very busy at the moment. I (make) a report for my boss. You (know), we (have) a lot of things to do this year. On the 1st of February we (launch) a new project. From the 1st of March to the 1st of April we (take part) in several international exhibitions.... We (be) dog-tired by summer.

3. Open the brackets using the Present Simple or the Present Continuous

- 1) I (study) at Moscow State University. I (do) a course in microbiology. My friend (take) a post-graduate project. We both (have) our exams in June. Then we (go) to London for a holiday.
- 2) When the train (leave)? When it (arrive) in Edinburgh? Anybody (meet) you at the station?
- 3) Tomorrow (be) a very difficult day: I (meet) the delegation at the airport at 7 am; then I (take) them to the hotel; after a short break we (have) negotiation with our French partners, then we (attend) the exhibition at the Expocentre; in the evening we (go) to the Bolshoi Theatre....
- 4) Mike (have) breakfast now? That's not like him: he never (eat) so early. He usually (have) brunch! What (be) brunch? Well, some people (get up) so late that they (combine) breakfast and lunch and (get) brunch, which they often (have) in bed.
- 5) I (keep) in touch with my old friends: we (email) and (call) each other and from time to time we (get) together and (have) fun. What about you? You (know) what your old classmates (do) now?
- 6) You (be) so slow today? What (go on)? You (not want) to work on this project? Why didn't you refuse earlier? Now it (be) too late. We all (depend) on you!
- 7) What you (smell) there? My roses? They really (smell) wonderful. You (like) flowers?
- 8) How the soup (taste) to you? You (not think) it (be) a bit salty? It (smell) of garlic?
- 9) You (think) that your mother (have) to cook vegetarian food for you? But it was your choice to give up eating meat! It (seem) to me that you (be) selfish. If you (not eat) meat, cook your own meals!
- 10) What you (think) of? You still (doubt) that you've made the only possible decision?