

## PRESENT CONTINUOUS

1) It is used to denote an action taking place at the present moment:

a) at the moment of speaking. The moment of speaking is indicated by the adverbials: *at the moment, now, at present, just now, right now*, etc.

*e.g.* The woman **is wearing** a white blouse and a black skirt. Nell **is putting** down the examples on the blackboard.

b) during the present period of time or around the present moment (in this case *now* obviously has a broader meaning) = a temporary situation. The durative character of the action may be expressed by the adverbial modifiers *all day/night/morning, the whole day, still*, etc.

*e.g.* They are very busy all this time, they **are preparing** for exams. David **is collecting** material for his new book now. She **is working** in Paris this week.

There might be two simultaneous (parallel) actions in progress: *e.g.* **I'm writing** the letter *while* the children **are playing** in the garden.

2) It is used to denote the nearest future action which is planned or arranged.

*e.g.* **I'm seeing** Rachel tonight. We **aren't going** anywhere for Christmas, we **are staying** at home.

The construction "*to be going to*" is often used for the same purpose.

*e.g.* **I'm going to explore** the neighbourhood.

3) It is used to show the unusual frequency of an action in the present. It is often used with the adverbials of frequency *always, constantly, never, again*, etc. The speaker conveys the feeling of irritation, surprise or criticism (wants to give emotional colouring to his sentence).

*e.g.* Mr Stone **is always grumbling**. He **is constantly making** comments about my weight.

4) It is used to denote actions or states having a dynamic character.

= changing and developing situations.

*e.g.* The climate **is getting** warmer. Mary **is putting** on weight. His health **is improving**.

5) It is used to express a continual process. It is often used with the adverbials of frequency *always, constantly, ever*, etc.

*e.g.* The earth **is ever moving**. The sun **is ever shining**.

*Note:* Some stative verbs (see, smell, taste, feel, think, have, etc.) have continuous forms but there is a difference in meaning.

STATE	ACTION
I <b>think</b> she is rich. (=I believe)	<b>I'm thinking</b> about your plan. (=I'm considering)
The milk <b>tastes</b> awful. (=it has bad flavour)	He's <b>tasting</b> the sauce; it might need salt. (=he's trying its flavour)
He <b>has</b> a pet dog. (=he owns)	He <b>is having</b> dinner now. (=he's eating)
The cloth <b>feels</b> like velvet. (=has the texture)	She's <b>feeling</b> her way in the dark. (=she's finding her way)
I <b>see</b> you are in trouble. (=I understand)	<b>I'm seeing</b> my lawyer tonight. (=I'm visiting)
The kitchen <b>smells</b> of burnt milk. (=has the smell)	Why <b>are you smelling</b> your food? (=trying the smell of)
He <b>comes</b> from Spain. (=he was born in)	He's <b>coming</b> from Spain. (=he's traveling from)
I <b>love</b> holidays. (=in general)	<b>I'm loving</b> this holiday. (=I'm enjoying; specific)
Your hair <b>looks</b> great. (=it appears)	She's <b>looking</b> at some old photographs. (=she's examining)
The baby <b>weighs</b> 5 kilos. (=it is)	<b>I'm weighing</b> myself on my new scales. (=I'm finding out my weight)
Ann <b>is</b> very tall.	Ann <b>is being</b> very kind to me these days. (=she's behaving)