

## a Present Simple vs Present Progressive / Present Continuous

## Present Simple

Affirmative	Questions
I work He works	Do you work? Does she work?
Negative	
It does not (doesn't) work They do not (don't) work	

## Present Progressive

Affirmative	Questions
I am (I'm) working He is (He's) working	Are you working? Is she working?
Negative	
It is not (isn't) working They are not (aren't) working	

## We use the Present Simple:

- for habits or actions that happen regularly in the present.  
*I usually drink coffee in the morning.*  
*The school bus picks us up at 7:30 every morning.*
- for situations that are true in the present.  
*We live in a flat.*
- for general truths.  
*Bees make honey.*
- for actions that take place according to a schedule.  
*What time does your plane leave tomorrow?*
- in story telling, film and book reviews, sports commentaries, instructions.  
*Peter Roth scores and the fans go wild.*

## Time Expressions

always, usually, often, occasionally, rarely, never, hardly ever, etc.  
every day/week, etc.  
once/twice/three times, etc. a day/month, etc.  
at the weekend, etc.  
on Sundays/Sunday morning, etc.  
in the morning, in winter, etc.

## We use the Present Progressive:

- for temporary states.  
*Mark is working at his father's shop this week.*
- for actions taking place at the moment of speaking.  
*He's studying for a test right now.*
- for future arrangements (we mention when).  
*We are going to London next week.*
- for annoying habits or repeated actions, with adverbs of frequency such as **always**, **constantly**, etc.  
*My brother is always telling me what to do!*

## Time Expressions

now, at present, at the moment, today, these days, this week/year, etc.  
tonight, tomorrow, next week/year, etc.

## b Stative Verbs

Stative verbs describe states (not actions). We do not usually use stative verbs in continuous tenses.

Stative verbs express states. They are **not** usually used in the Present Progressive.

## Stative Verbs usually refer to:

- Verbs of the senses:** feel, hear, smell, taste, see, sound, notice, look (=seem), etc.
- Verbs of emotions and preferences:** love, hate, like, dislike, prefer, want, fear, mind, wish, need, admire, etc.
- Verbs of perception and opinion:** think (=believe), believe, imagine, hope, know, mean, understand, expect, remember, forget, etc.
- Other verbs:** be, have (=possess), cost, belong, appear, weigh, seem, consist, own, etc.

Some **stative verbs** are used in the Present Progressive, but with a different meaning. Some of these are:

**see**  
*I see Jack's car in the distance.*  
**think**  
*I think that Sandra Bullock is a good actress.*  
**have**  
*They have a Siamese cat.*  
**taste**  
*This cake tastes delicious!*  
**look**  
*You look worried. Is something wrong?*

**see** (=meet, visit)  
*I am seeing my dentist tomorrow.*  
**think of/about** (=process in one's mind)  
*She's thinking of buying a new car.*  
**have** (=drink, eat, take)  
*We are having breakfast now.*  
**taste** (=try food)  
*The chef is tasting the food.*  
**look** (=see)  
*What are you looking at?*

**NOTE:** The verbs **listen** and **watch** refer to senses but they are not stative verbs, so they can be used in the Present Progressive.  
*We're watching a football game right now.*

The verbs **see**, **hear**, **smell**, **taste** and **feel** are commonly used with **can** to indicate an action happening now.  
*I can hear a strange noise coming from the kitchen.*

## Activities

### A. Circle the correct words.

1. Can you please answer the phone? I **have** / **'m having** a shower.
2. Summer **comes** / **is coming** after spring.
3. That woman **looks** / **is looking** at you. I **believe** / **'m believing** she **wants** / **'s wanting** to talk to you.
4. Stevenson **takes** / **is taking** the ball and **passes** / **is passing** it to McFerry.
5. Kevin **doesn't go** / **isn't going** out at all this week. He **studies** / **'s studying** for a test.
6. My mum **drinks** / **is drinking** three cups of coffee a day.
7. Kathy **is meeting** / **meets** Maria tomorrow afternoon.
8. Hurry up! The bus **leaves** / **is leaving**!

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Complete with the Present Simple or the Present Continuous of the verbs in brackets.

1. A: Why are you in such a hurry? What time \_\_\_\_\_ the train to Brighton \_\_\_\_\_ (leave)?  
 B: At 9 p.m. But I \_\_\_\_\_ (want) to be at the train station at six o'clock because I \_\_\_\_\_ (meet) my friend Sally.
2. A: Whose suitcase is this?  
 B: It's Timothy's. He \_\_\_\_\_ (stay) with us for a few days.  
 A: Really? Where is he now?  
 B: He's outside with Larry. They \_\_\_\_\_ (wash) the car. Larry \_\_\_\_\_ (always / wash) the car on Sundays.
3. A: Hey, Mary. Can you explain this text to me? I \_\_\_\_\_ (not understand) it.  
 B: Not now, Kevin. I \_\_\_\_\_ (work).  
 A: Oh Mary. You \_\_\_\_\_ (never / help) me!
4. A: Why \_\_\_\_\_ the children \_\_\_\_\_ (cry)?  
 B: Because they can't find their cat. They \_\_\_\_\_ (think) someone took it.  
 A: Their cat is outside. It \_\_\_\_\_ (sleep) next to the garage.