

present simple and continuous, action and non-action verbs

present simple: *I live, he works, etc.*

- 1 I live in London. She **works** in a restaurant. 1.11
 We **don't eat** meat. Jack **doesn't wear** glasses.
 Where **do you live**? Does the supermarket **open** on Sundays?
- 2 She usually **has** cereal for breakfast.
 I'm never late for work.
 We only **eat out** about once a month.

- 1 We use the present simple for things that are always true, or happen regularly.
- Remember the spelling rules for third person singular, e.g. *lives, studies, watches*.
 - Use **ASI** (Auxiliary, Subject, Infinitive) or **QuASI** (Question word, Auxiliary, Subject, Infinitive) to help you with word order in questions. *Do you know David? What time does the film start?*
- 2 We often use the present simple with adverbs of frequency, e.g. *usually, never*, or expressions of frequency, e.g. *every day, once a week*.
- Adverbs of frequency go **before** the main verb and **after** *be*.
 - Expressions of frequency usually go at the end of the sentence or verb phrase.

present continuous: *be + verb + -ing*

- A Is your sister still **going out** with Adam? 1.12
 B No, they broke up. She **isn't going out** with anyone now.
 The phone's **ringing**. Can you answer it?
 House prices **are going up** very fast at the moment.

- We use the present continuous (**NOT** the present simple) for actions in progress at the time of speaking, e.g. things that are happening now or around now. These are normally temporary, not habitual, actions.
- Remember the spelling rules, e.g. *living, studying, getting*.
- We also use the present continuous for future arrangements (see 1B).

action and non-action verbs

- A What **are you looking for**? 1.13
 B My car keys.
 A I'll help you in a moment.
 B But I **need** them now!
 A What **are you cooking**? It **smells** delicious.
 B I'm **making** pasta.
 A Great! I **love** pasta.

- Verbs which describe **actions**, e.g. *cook, make*, can be used in the present simple or continuous. *I'm making lunch. I usually make lunch at the weekend.*
- Verbs which describe **states or feelings (NOT actions)**, e.g. *be, need, love*, are **non-action verbs**. They are not usually used in the present continuous, even if we mean 'now'.
- Common non-action verbs are *agree, be, believe, belong, depend, forget, hate, hear, know, like, love, matter, mean, need, prefer, realize, recognize, remember, seem, suppose, want*.
- Verbs of the senses are normally also non-action, e.g. *look, smell, taste, and sound*.

Verbs that can be both action and non-action

A few verbs have an action and a non-action meaning, e.g. *have* and *think*.

I can't talk now. I'm having lunch. = action (*have lunch*)

I have a cat now. = non-action (possession)

What are you thinking about? = action (*think about sth*)

I think this music's great. = non-action (opinion)

a Circle the correct form, present simple or continuous.

- I don't believe / I'm not believing that you cooked this meal yourself.*
- Come on, let's order. The waiter *comes* / *is coming*.
 - Kate *doesn't want* / *isn't wanting* to have dinner now. She *isn't hungry*.
 - The head chef is ill, so he *doesn't work* / *isn't working* today.
 - The bill *seems* / *is seeming* very expensive to me.
 - We've had an argument and now we *don't speak* / *aren't speaking* to each other.
 - My mum *thinks* / *is thinking* my diet is awful these days.
 - Do we need* / *Are we needing* to go shopping today?
 - Can I call you back? *I have* / *I'm having* lunch right now.
 - I didn't use to like oily fish, but now *I love* / *I'm loving* it!
 - Your cake is wonderful! It *tastes* / *is tasting* like one my mother used to make.

b Complete with the present simple or present continuous forms of the verbs in brackets.

- We don't go to Chinese restaurants very often. (not go)
- I _____ high cholesterol so I never _____ fried food. (have, eat)
 - _____ you _____ any vitamins at the moment? (take)
 - Don't eat the spinach if you _____ it. (not like)
 - _____ your boyfriend _____ how to cook fish? (know)
 - We _____ takeaway pizzas once a week. (order)
 - What _____ your mother _____? It _____ delicious! (make, smell)
 - You look sad. What _____ you _____ about? (think)
 - I _____ the diet in my country _____ worse. (think, get)
 - How often _____ you _____ seafood? (have)
 - I _____ usually _____ red meat. (not cook)

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