

Present Continuous for the future

1 Look at these examples:

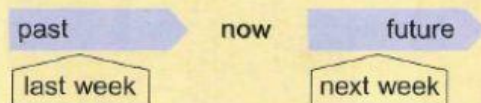
I'm flying home tomorrow.
He's starting a new job on Monday.
Tony and Ann are coming at the weekend.

In each example, we are using the Present Continuous (see Units 5 and 6), but we are talking about the future, not the present.

2 Look at this example:

You bought a plane ticket *last week*.
 You can now say:

I'm flying home next week.



We use the Present Continuous to talk about things we have arranged in the past to do in the future.

Here are some more examples:

A bank wrote to Steven and asked him to start work *next week*.

We can now say:

He's starting a new job next week.

John said to Tony and Ann:
Would you like to come for dinner on Sunday?

Tony and Ann said: Yes.

John now says:

Tony and Ann are coming on Sunday.

3 The important part of a Present Continuous for the future sentence is often a time or day (e.g. *next week, in July, tomorrow, on Sunday*):

PRESENT: *I'm leaving now.*

FUTURE: *I'm leaving tomorrow.*

PRESENT: *We're having a party at the moment. Can I phone you tomorrow?*

FUTURE: *We're having a party in July.*

4 We do not use the Present Continuous for future events that we cannot arrange or have not arranged:

NOT ~~*The sun is shining tomorrow.*~~
 (*The sun will shine ...*)

NOT ~~*The Irish team are winning next week.*~~
 (*The Irish team will win next week.*)

Practice

A Look at the past events in brackets (), and then write sentences using the words in the box. Use short forms of the Present Continuous for the future.

I/eat/in a new restaurant tonight
 I/fly/to Florida in August
 I/go/to a concert next Tuesday

I/go/to the doctor tomorrow
 I/study/English in London in May
 I/see/Mary this weekend

► (You paid for an English course in London yesterday.)

I'm studying English in London in May.

1 (You booked a table at a new restaurant last week.)

2 (You bought a ticket for a concert last month.)

3 (You telephoned your doctor this morning.)

4 (You paid for a holiday at a travel agent's last week.)

5 (You talked to Mary on the phone this morning.)

B Mark is an explorer. Look at the things he has arranged to do. Match the pictures with the words in the box. Write sentences about what he is doing next year, using the Present Continuous. Say when he is doing each thing.

he/drive/across the Sahara
he/walk/across the Antarctic
he/run/across/Africa
he/fly/over the Amazon
he/climb/Mount Everest
he/sail/across the Pacific



JANUARY



MARCH



MAY



JULY



SEPTEMBER



NOVEMBER

► He is running across Africa in January.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

C Finish these dialogues using the Present Continuous for the future, and the words in brackets (). Use short forms where possible.

► Steve: Are you doing (you/do) anything this weekend?

Lynn: I'm seeing (I/see) a film on Sunday. Do you want to come?

1 Pete: Jane, Joe and Sally (come) to my house on Friday night.

Mark: (you/have) a party?

Pete: No, we aren't. (We/play) cards. Would you like to come?

2 David: (I/fly) to New York on Sunday.

Chris: (you/see) John there?

David: Yes, (we/meet) at the airport.

3 Philip: Mary and I (drive) to Scotland next Wednesday.

Mike: (you/stay) in Edinburgh?

Philip: No. (we/visit) my mother in Aberdeen.

4 Paul: (I/start) a new job on Monday.

Clive: Really? What is it?

Paul: (I/sell) cars. Do you need a new car?