

## Explanations

### Present simple: frequency adverbs

- Frequency adverbs are often used with the present simple. They explain how often someone does an action, or something happens.

<i>always</i>	✓✓✓✓✓	<i>I <b>always</b> get up at 7.00.</i>
<i>often</i>	✓✓✓✓	<i>Pat <b>often</b> goes to football matches.</i>
<i>usually</i>	✓✓✓	<i>It <b>usually</b> rains when I go on holiday!</i>
<i>sometimes</i>	✓✓	<i>We <b>sometimes</b> eat pizza for lunch.</i>
<i>rarely</i>	✓	<i>Jane <b>rarely</b> listens to jazz.</i>
<i>never</i>	–	<i>My bus <b>never</b> arrives on time.</i>

- Note in the above examples that the frequency adverb comes before the verb. With the verb *be* the adverb comes after.

*Jim **is usually** late.*

- Other frequency adverbs are: *frequently* (✓✓✓✓), *normally* (✓✓✓), *occasionally* (✓✓), *seldom* (✓), *hardly ever* (✓).

### State verbs and action verbs

- A state is when something stays the same. An action is when something happens. State verbs are not usually used in any continuous form.

*I know what you mean.* (NOT ~~*I am knowing what you're meaning.*~~)

Examples of state verbs are:

- senses: *appear, hear, look like, see, taste*
- feeling: *like, hate, love, prefer, want, wish*
- thinking: *agree, believe, forget, know, think, understand*
- possession: *belong to, contain, have, own*
- being: *be, exist*
- other: *cost, depend on, mean, need*

- Some of the verbs in the previous list can have a 'state' meaning and an 'action' meaning. Examples include *be, have, taste, think*.

*I **have** two sisters.* (permanent state)

*I'm **having** problems with this computer.* (temporary action)

- Sometimes state verbs can describe temporary feelings.

*How are you **getting on** at your new school?*

*I **hate**/I'm **hating** it!*

Present simple or continuous?

Compare:  
Present simple  
 permanent habits and routines  
 facts that are always true  
 general situations

Present continuous  
 temporary  
 in progress now  
 events happening at the moment  
 a particular situation

*I live in Budapest.*

(all the time)

*I'm living in Budapest.*

(for a few months)

*This plane lands in Frankfurt.*

(routine)

*We're landing.*

(in progress now)

Present continuous: future meanings

- The present continuous can be used to describe a fixed future arrangement. There is usually a future time expression.

*Paul is leaving early tomorrow morning.*

*My parents are buying me a mountain bike for my birthday.*

This usage is common when we describe social arrangements.

*Are you doing anything on Saturday? We're going skating.*

Other problems

- *feel*

There is almost no difference of meaning between the simple and continuous.

*I feel awful!*

*I'm feeling awful!*

*How do you feel now?*

*How are you feeling now?*

- Present continuous or present perfect continuous?

*Sue is staying with Jill.*

(in progress now, and will continue)

*Sue has been staying with Jill since March.*

(in progress up to now, and may or may not continue)

- Present continuous with *always*

We can use *always* with the present continuous when we are exaggerating or complaining. We emphasize *always* in speech in this case.

*You're always forgetting your keys!*

- Present simple in narratives

In speech we can use the present simple to make a story or joke appear more immediate and interesting, even though the events were in the past. This is also used in written summaries such as plots of television series.

*A man walks into a bar and asks for a glass of water. The barman says ...*

*The story so far: Michael meets Susan in the library and tells her about the missing earrings ...*

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 4: Past time 1

Grammar 5: Past time 2

Grammar 6: Present perfect 1

Grammar 8: Future 1

## Practice

### 1 Underline the correct sentence for each situation.

- a) You want to invite a friend to your party on Friday. You say:  
 1 I have a party on Friday. Do you want to come?  
 2 I'm having a party on Friday. Do you want to come?
- b) You find a wallet on your desk and ask the people nearby:  
 1 Who does this wallet belong to?  
 2 Who is this wallet belonging to?
- c) A friend invites you to a snack bar at lunch time. You say:  
 1 Thanks, but I always go home.  
 2 Thanks, but I'm always going home.
- d) A friend opens the door and says: What are you doing? You reply:  
 1 I work as a secretary.  
 2 I'm repairing the computer.
- e) You haven't decided yet about buying a new bike. You say:  
 1 I think about it.  
 2 I'm thinking about it.
- f) A friend asks: Do you like lemon tea? You reply:  
 1 I prefer tea with milk.  
 2 I'm preferring tea with milk.
- g) A friend asks you if you have finished the book she lent you. You say:  
 1 Sorry, I still read it.  
 2 Sorry, I'm still reading it.
- h) It's a hot day, but a friend has a heavy coat on. You ask:  
 1 Why do you wear a heavy coat?  
 2 Why are you wearing a heavy coat?

### 2 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) That can't be right! I don't believe/I'm not believing it!
- b) Caroline can't swim today. She has/is having a cold.
- c) See you in the morning. I leave/I'm leaving now.
- d) What do you do/are you doing? If you drop it, it will explode!
- e) Stop doing that, Bill! You're/You're being very silly.
- f) I drive/I'm driving! You can sit in the back with Martin.
- g) What do we eat/are we eating this evening? I'm really hungry!
- h) You're a great cook! This cake tastes/is tasting wonderful.
- i) Where do you go/are you going? I haven't finished speaking to you!
- j) Chemistry is hard. I don't understand/I'm not understanding it.

**3 Put each verb in brackets into the present simple or present continuous.**

- a) Ugh, don't show me that picture! I (hate) ..... *hate* ..... mice!
- b) Who (you, go) ..... to the match on Saturday with?
- c) In the winter, what (you, wear) ..... ?
- d) I can't stand horror films. I (think) ..... they're silly!
- e) Diana (not, usually, sit) ..... next to Ellen.
- f) Why (you, look at) ..... me like that?
- g) Excuse me. (this bus, stop) ..... outside the station?
- h) I (not take) ..... the bus to school today.

**4 Match each sentence (a-h) with a suitable response (1-8).**

- a) What do you usually do on your birthday? ..... *1*.....
- b) Would you like to meet again on Saturday? .....
- c) What do you usually do when there is an earthquake? .....
- d) Have you finished your homework? .....
- e) What are you doing? .....
- f) What are you doing on Friday? .....
- g) Are you in the school basketball team? .....
- h) What do you do? .....

- 1 I have a party.
- 2 I lie under the table.
- 3 I work in a travel agency.
- 4 Yes, we play every Friday.
- 5 I'm still doing it.
- 6 It's hot in here. I'm opening some windows.
- 7 I'm going back to Canada tomorrow.
- 8 I'm having a party.

**5 Put each verb in brackets into the present simple or present continuous.**

- a) What (usually, you, do) *do..you..usually..do* at the weekend?
- b) Don't worry about the cat. It (only eat) ..... once a day.
- c) I can't work out the answer. (you, know) ..... what it is?
- d) What's the matter? Why (you, stare) ..... at me like that?
- e) (you, speak) ..... English? I'm looking for a hotel.
- f) Elena (stay) ..... with me while her house is being decorated.
- g) You should go on a diet. (you, put) ..... on weight.
- h) (they, speak) ..... French or German? I can't tell the difference.