

41 Present simple or present continuous?

1 Use

PRESENT SIMPLE

to talk about things we do regularly:



with time expressions:

usually, often, every day, once a month

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

to talk about things that are happening at the time we are speaking:



with time expressions:

right now, at the moment

PRESENT SIMPLE

to talk about permanent situations:



no time expressions

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

to talk about temporary situations:



with time expressions:

today, this week, at the moment

2 Verbs that don't use the continuous form



We don't normally use the continuous with these verbs:

- feeling verbs (*like, love, hate, prefer, need, want*):
~~✗ I am liking music.~~
 ✓ I **like** music.
- thinking verbs (*agree, believe, forget, know, mean, remember, think, understand*):
~~✗ My brother is agreeing with me.~~
 ✓ My brother **agrees** with me.
- sense verbs (*hear, see, smell, taste*):
~~✗ That coffee is smelling delicious!~~
 ✓ That coffee **smells** delicious!
- the verbs *be, belong, contain, cost, own*:
~~✗ That bag isn't belonging to me.~~
 ✓ That bag **doesn't belong** to me.

The verb *think* has a different meaning in the present simple and the present continuous:

What **do** you **think** of the show? (= What is your opinion?)

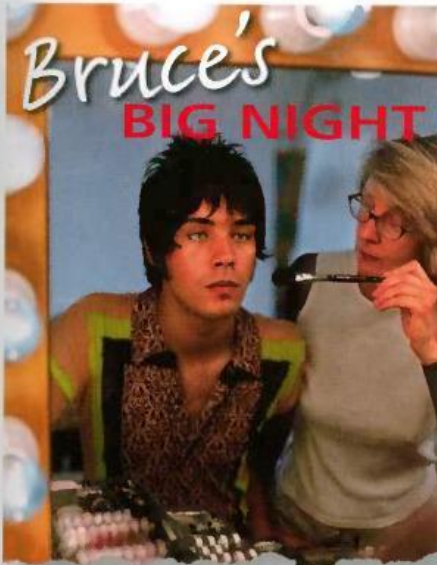
What **are** you **thinking** about? (= Tell me your thoughts now.)

Practice

1 Match the two parts of the sentences.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 0 Davina's computer isn't working so | A she visits clients once a week. |
| 1 Caroline misses her family so | B she stays with her grandparents. |
| 2 Lucy likes to be clean so | C she's staying at home today. |
| 3 I'm afraid Maria can't speak to you right now; | D she's sending her emails from an Internet café. |
| 4 Melissa isn't in the office today; | E she's having a bath. |
| 5 As part of Anne's job | F she's visiting some clients. |
| 6 When Judy goes to the sea | G she sends them emails every day. |
| 7 Stephanie has a headache so | H she has a bath every day. |

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Choose the correct words in *italics* in the text.



BRUCE LAURENCE (0) *is* ~~is~~ being a young actor. He is very excited because right now he (1) *acts* / *is acting* in a professional show for the first time. He (2) *loves* / *is loving* the theatre and this is his first proper job. It's 7.15 and he (3) *waits* / *'s waiting* in his dressing room. His assistant (4) *puts* / *'s putting* on his make-up and Bruce (5) *practises* / *is practising* his words.

Tonight's show is at the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh. Bruce (6) *lives* / *is living* in London but while he is in the show he (7) *stays* / *is staying* at a small hotel in Edinburgh. It isn't very comfortable but single rooms (8) *don't cost* / *aren't costing* very much and two other actors (9) *stay* / *are staying* at the same place. Bruce (10) *thinks* / *is thinking* the show will be a big success.

3 GRAMMAR IN USE Complete the conversation. Use forms of the words in brackets () and short forms.

CLARA Hi, Josie. How are things?

JOSIE Busy. We moved into our new flat last week.

CLARA That's great. Where is it?

JOSIE (0) *Do you remember* (you remember) the garage on Old Street? It's next to that.

CLARA Oh, yes. I (1) (know) that place. It's quite old, isn't it?

JOSIE Yes. So we're in the middle of painting it at the moment.

CLARA (2) (you use) professional painters?

JOSIE No, they (3) (cost) too much. We (4) (do) it all ourselves. It's very hard work!

CLARA Well, I (5) (not do) much at the moment. Would you like me to help?

JOSIE That's kind of you but we (6) (not need) any help really.

CLARA OK. How's your little baby?

JOSIE Oh, she (7) (be) fine. My mother (8) (look after) her today.