

## 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.

- 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?*
- 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, 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)