Present Continuous (I am doing, you are speaking)

Lauren is in her car. She is on her way to work.
She's driving to work. (= She is driving ...)
This means: she is driving now, at the time of speaking.
The action is not finished.

am/is/are + -ing is the present continuous:

I he/she/it we/you/they	am is are	(= I'm) (= he's etc.) (= we're etc.)	driving working doing etc.

Study this example situation:

I am doing something = I started doing it and I haven't finished; I'm in the middle of doing it.

- Please don't make so much noise. I'm trying to work. (not I try)
- 'Where's David?' 'He's having a shower.' (not He has a shower)
- Let's go out now. It isn't raining any more. (not It doesn't rain)
- How's your new job? Are you enjoying it?
- What's all that noise? What's going on? or What's happening?

Sometimes the action is not happening at the time of speaking. For example:

Mark is talking to a friend on the phone. He says:

I'm reading a really good book at the moment. It's about a man who ...

Mark says 'I'm reading ...' but he is not reading the book at the time of speaking.
He means that he has started reading the book, but has not finished it yet. He is in the middle of reading it.

Some more examples:

- Kate wants to work in Italy, so she's learning Italian.
  (*But perhaps she isn't learning Italian at the time of speaking.*)
- Some friends of mine are building their own house. They hope to finish it next summer.

You can use the present continuous with today / this week / this year etc. (periods around now):

- a: You're working hard today. (not You work hard today)
  b: Yes, I have a lot to do.
- The company I work for isn't doing so well this year.

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LEARNING ENGLISH CAN BE FUN!

We use the present continuous when we talk about a change that has started to happen. We often use these verbs in this way:

getting, becoming
starting, beginning
changing, improving
increasing, rising, falling, growing

- Is your English getting better? (not Does your English get better)
- The population of the world is increasing very fast. (not increases)
- At first, I didn't like my job, but I'm starting to enjoy it now. (not I start)

Exercises

1 What's happening in the pictures? Choose from these verbs:
cross hide scratch take tie wave

1 She's taking a picture.
2 He _____ a shoelace.
3 They _____ the street.
4 He _____ his head.
5 She _____ behind a tree.
6 They _____ to somebody.

2 The sentences on the right follow those on the left. Which sentence goes with which?

1 Please don't make so much noise.	a I'm getting hungry.	1 f
2 We need to leave soon.	b They're lying.	2 ___
3 I don't have anywhere to live right now.	c It's starting to rain.	3 ___
4 I need to eat something soon.	d They're trying to sell it.	4 ___
5 They don't need their car any more.	e It's getting late.	5 ___
6 Things are not so good at work.	f I'm trying to work.	6 ___
7 It isn't true what they say.	g I'm staying with friends.	7 ___
8 We're going to get wet.	h The company is losing money.	8 ___

3 Write questions. Use the present continuous.

1 What's all that noise? What's happening? (what / happen?)

2 What's the matter? _____? (why / you / cry)

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3 Where's your father? _____? (**he / work / today**)

4 I haven't seen you for ages. _____? (**what / you / do / these days**)

5 Emily is a student. _____? (**what / she / study**)

6 Who are those people? _____? (**what / they / do**)

7 I heard you started a new job. _____? (**you / enjoy / it**)

8 We're not in a hurry. _____? (**why / you / walk / so fast**)

4 Put the verb into the correct form, positive (**I'm doing** etc.) or negative (**I'm not doing** etc.).

1 Please don't make so much noise. I'm trying (**I / try**) to work.

2 Let's go out now. It isn't raining (**it / rain**) any more.

3 You can turn off the radio. _____ (**I / listen**) to it.

4 Mariah phoned last night. She's on vacation with friends. _____ (**She / have**) a great time and doesn't want to come back.

5 Sam has started evening classes recently. _____ (**He / learn**) Chinese.

6 Peter and Julia have had an argument and now _____ (**they / speak**) to one another.

7 The situation is already bad and now _____ (**it / get**) worse.

8 Tim _____ (**work**) today. He's taken the day off.

9 _____ (**I / look**) for Lise. Do you know where she is?

10 The washing machine has been repaired. _____ (**It / work**) now.

11 _____ (**They / build**) a new hospital. It will be finished next year.

12 Mike is a student, but he's not very happy. _____ (**He / enjoy**) his course.

13 _____ (**The weather / change**). Look at those clouds. I think it's going to rain.

14 Daniel has been in the same job for a long time. _____ (**He / start**) to get bored with it.

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