

Stative Verbs

Stative verbs are verbs which do not normally have continuous tenses because they describe a state rather than an action. Some of them are: **have** (= possess), **like**, **love**, **hate**, **want**, **know**, **remember**, **forget**, **understand**, **think**, **believe**, **need**, **smell**, **see**, **cost**, etc.

I **love** Chinese food. (NOT: ~~I'm loving~~ Chinese food.)

I **believe** you're wrong. (NOT: ~~I'm believing~~ you're wrong.)

Some **stative verbs** have continuous tenses but there is a difference in meaning. Read the following examples:

- She **has** a red car. (= possesses)
She's **having** lunch now. (= is eating)
- I **think** she's a very clever girl. (= believe)
I'm **thinking** about working late tonight. (= I am considering)
- The flower **smells** nice. (= it has a nice smell)
She **is smelling** the flower. (= she is sniffing)
- **Do you see** that man over there? (= perceive with my eyes)
I'm **seeing** my doctor this evening. (= I am meeting)
- She **is** selfish. (= that's her character)
She **is being** selfish. (= that's her behaviour at the moment)
- They **look** tired. (= they appear to be tired)
They **are looking** at the building. (= they are examining)
- The food **tastes** delicious. (= has a nice flavour)
Why are you **tasting** the food? (= eat it to try its flavour)



She **is smelling** the flowers. They **smell** nice.

1 Put the verbs in brackets into the present simple or the present continuous.

- 1 A: Those flowers **smell** (**smell**) lovely.
What are they?
B: They are orchids.
- 2 A: What (**you/look**) at?
B: Oh, these are some pictures my sister drew.
- 3 A: Here! Touch this. It (**feel**) so soft.
B: It's nice, isn't it?
- 4 A: Do you know that girl over there?
B: No, but I (**think**) she's Spanish.
- 5 A: Are you coming tomorrow?
B: Sorry, I can't. I (**have**) lunch with my aunt.
- 6 A: Have some of this. It (**taste**) so good.
B: You're right. It's delicious!
- 7 A: Would you like to go to the cinema tonight?
B: I'm afraid I can't. I (**see**) Michael.
- 8 A: (**you/understand**) how it works?
B: No, could you show me, please?
- 9 A: I (**think**) about buying a new car.
B: Oh really? What's wrong with your old car?