

A

Compare:

Present continuous (I am doing)

We use the continuous for things happening at or around the time of speaking.
The action is not complete.

I am doing

past now future

- ☐ The water **is boiling**. Can you turn it off?
- ☐ Listen to those people. What language **are they speaking**?
- ☐ Let's go out. It **isn't raining** now.
- ☐ 'I'm busy.' 'What **are you doing**?'
- ☐ I'm **getting** hungry. Let's go and eat.
- ☐ Kate wants to work in Italy, so she's **learning** Italian.
- ☐ The population of the world **is increasing** very fast.

We use the continuous for *temporary* situations:

- ☐ I'm **living** with some friends until I find a place of my own.
- ☐ A: You're **working** hard today.
B: Yes, I have a lot to do.

See Unit 1 for more information.

Present simple (I do)

We use the simple for things in general or things that happen repeatedly.

I do

past now future

- ☐ Water **boils** at 100 degrees Celsius.
- ☐ Excuse me, **do you speak** English?
- ☐ It **doesn't rain** very much in summer.
- ☐ What **do** you usually **do** at weekends?
- ☐ I always **get** hungry in the afternoon.
- ☐ Most people **learn** to swim when they are children.
- ☐ Every day the population of the world **increases** by about 200,000 people.

We use the simple for *permanent* situations:

- ☐ My parents **live** in London. They have lived there all their lives.
- ☐ Joe isn't lazy. He **works** hard most of the time.

See Unit 2 for more information.

B

I always do and I'm always doing

I **always do** (something) = I do it every time:

- ☐ I **always go** to work by car. (*not* I'm always going)

'I'm always doing something' has a different meaning. For example:



I'm **always losing** things = I lose things very often, perhaps too often, or more often than normal.

More examples:

- ☐ You're **always playing** computer games. You should do something more active. (= You play computer games too often)
- ☐ Tim is never satisfied. He's **always complaining**. (= He complains too much)

Exercises

3.1 Are the underlined verbs right or wrong? Correct them where necessary.

- 1 Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius.
- 2 The water boils. Can you turn it off?
- 3 Look! That man tries to open the door of your car.
- 4 Can you hear those people? What do they talk about?
- 5 The moon goes round the earth in about 27 days.
- 6 I must go now. It gets late.
- 7 I usually go to work by car.
- 8 'Hurry up! It's time to leave.' 'OK, I come.'
- 9 I hear you've got a new job. How do you get on?
- 10 Paul is never late. He's always getting to work on time.
- 11 They don't get on well. They're always arguing.

OK

is boiling

3.2 Put the verb into the correct form, present continuous or present simple.

- 1 Let's go out. It isn't raining (it / not / rain) now.
- 2 Julia is very good at languages. She speaks (she / speak) four languages very well.
- 3 Hurry up! _____ (everybody / wait) for you.
- 4 '_____ (you / listen) to the radio?' 'No, you can turn it off.'
- 5 '_____ (you / listen) to the radio every day?' 'No, just occasionally.'
- 6 The River Nile _____ (flow) into the Mediterranean.
- 7 The river _____ (flow) very fast today – much faster than usual.
- 8 _____ (we / usually / grow) vegetables in our garden, but this year
_____ (we / not / grow) any.
- 9 A: How's your English?
B: Not bad. I think _____ (it / improve) slowly.
- 10 Rachel is in New York right now. _____ (she / stay) at the Park Hotel.
_____ (she / always / stay) there when she's in New York.
- 11 Can we stop walking soon? _____ (I / start) to feel tired.
- 12 A: Can you drive?
B: _____ (I / learn). My father _____ (teach) me.
- 13 Normally _____ (I / finish) work at five, but this week
_____ (I / work) until six to earn a little more money.
- 14 My parents _____ (live) in Manchester. They were born there and have never
lived anywhere else. Where _____ (your parents / live)?
- 15 Sonia _____ (look) for a place to live. _____ (she / stay)
with her sister until she finds somewhere.
- 16 A: What _____ (your brother / do)?
B: He's an architect, but _____ (he / not / work) at the moment.
- 17 (at a party) _____ (I / usually enjoy) parties, but
_____ (I / not / enjoy) this one very much.

3.3 Finish B's sentences. Use **always -ing**.

- 1 A: I've lost my phone again.
B: Not again! You're always losing your phone.
- 2 A: The car has broken down again.
B: That car is useless. It _____.
- 3 A: Look! You've made the same mistake again.
B: Oh no, not again! I _____.
- 4 A: Oh, I've forgotten my glasses again.
B: Typical! _____.