

Present continuous and present simple 1 (I am doing and I do)

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
<input type="checkbox"/> The water is boiling . Can you turn it off?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Listen to those people. What language are they speaking ?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Let's go out. It isn't raining now.		
<input type="checkbox"/> 'I'm busy.' 'What are you doing ?'		
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm getting hungry. Let's go and eat.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Kate wants to work in Italy, so she's learning Italian.		
<input type="checkbox"/> 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
<input type="checkbox"/> Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Excuse me, do you speak English?		
<input type="checkbox"/> It doesn't rain very much in summer.		
<input type="checkbox"/> What do you usually do at weekends?		
<input type="checkbox"/> I always get hungry in the afternoon.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Most people learn to swim when they are children.		
<input type="checkbox"/> 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 (your parents / live) anywhere else. Where (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 always breaks down.
- 3 A: Look! You've made the same mistake again.
B: Oh no, not again! I always make mistakes.
- 4 A: Oh, I've forgotten my glasses again.
B: Typical! I always forget my glasses.