State Verbs

State verbs are verbs which do not normally have continuous tenses because they describe a state rather than an action. These include:

- **verbs which express likes and dislikes: *like, love, hate, dislike, enjoy, prefer*, etc.**
  *e.g. Cathy **likes** romantic films.*
- **verbs of perception: *believe, know, notice, remember, forget, recognise, understand, realise, seem, think*, etc.** *e.g. **I don't believe** a word he's saying.*
- **verbs of the senses: *see, hear, feel, taste, look, smell, sound*. We often use can or could with these verbs when we refer to what we see, hear, etc. at the moment of speaking.**
  *e.g. The soup **tastes** delicious.*
  *John must be in the attic. I **can hear** his footsteps.*
- **some other verbs: *be, contain, fit, include, matter, need, belong, cost, owe, mean, own, appear, want, have* (=possess), etc.**
  *e.g. This book **is** mine. It **belongs** to me.*

Some state verbs have continuous tenses, but there is a difference in meaning.
Study the following examples:

1) *I **think** she's Italian. (=believe)*
   *I'**m thinking about** my holiday. (=am considering)*
2) *The soup **tastes** awful. (=has an awful flavour)*
   *She's **tasting** the soup. (=is testing the flavour of)*
3) *I can **see** an aeroplane in the sky. (=perceive with my eyes)*
   *I'**m seeing** Jill tonight. (=am meeting)*
4) *Susan **looks** tired. (=appears)*
   *Susan **is looking** at some photos. (=is studying)*
5) *The room **smells** of perfume. (=has the smell)*
   *The cat **is smelling** its food. (=is sniffing)*
6) *This towel **feels** soft. (=has a soft texture)*
   *Jill **is feeling** her son's forehead. (=is touching)*
7) *He **is** selfish. (character – permanent state)*
   *He **is being** selfish. (behaviour – temporary situation)*
8) *He **has** a sports car. (=possesses)*
   *He's **having lunch** now. (=is eating – idiom)*

Some idioms with *have* include:

have	*breakfast / lunch / dinner*, etc.
	a bath / shower / swim / party, etc.
	a(n) accident / experience / dream, etc.
	a baby
	difficulty / fun / trouble, etc.

11 **Put the verbs in brackets into the *present simple* or the *present continuous*.**

1 A: *...Do you know...* (you/know) that man over there?
  B: Actually, I do. He's Muriel's husband.
2 A: Are you doing anything tomorrow evening?
  B: Yes. I ..... (see) Jack at nine o'clock.
3 A: I ..... (see) you're feeling better.
  B: Yes, I am, thank you.
4 A: What's that noise?
  B: The people next door ..... (have) a party.
5 A: Graham ..... (have) a new computer.
  B: I know. I've already seen it.
6 A: This dress ..... (not/fit) me any more.
  B: Why don't you buy a new one?
7 A: Your perfume ..... (smell) nice. What is it?
  B: It's a new perfume called Sunshine.
8 A: What is Jane doing?
  B: She ..... (smell) the flowers in the garden.
9 A: What ..... (you/look) at?
  B: Some photos I took during my holidays. They aren't very good, though.
10 A: You ..... (look) very pretty today.
  B: Thank you. I've just had my hair cut.
11 A: I ..... (think) we're being followed.
  B: Don't be silly! It's just your imagination.
12 A: Is anything wrong?
  B: No. I ..... (just/think) about the party tonight.
13 A: This fabric ..... (feel) like silk.
  B: It is silk, and it was very expensive.
14 A: What are you doing?
  B: I ..... (feel) the radiator to see if it's getting warm.
15 A: She ..... (be) generous, isn't she?
  B: Yes, she has never been a mean person.
16 A: He ..... (be) very quiet today, isn't he?
  B: Yes, I think he has some problems.
17 A: Would you like some cherries?
  B: Yes, please. I ..... (love) cherries. They're my favourite fruit.
18 A: I'm sorry, but I ..... (not understand) what you mean.
  B: Shall I explain it again?
19 A: The children are making lots of noise today.
  B: I know, but they ..... (have) fun.
20 A: This cake ..... (taste) awful.
  B: I think I forgot to put the sugar in it!

LIVEWORKSHEETS