

Present Continuous or Present Simple?

1 Now or sometimes?



KITTY BEAMISH IS A TV REPORTER.



KITTY IS ON GUY'S CHAT SHOW.

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

We use the Present Continuous for something happening now. *I am speaking to you live* means that Kitty is in the middle of a live broadcast.

Here are some more examples.

*It's **raining** at the moment.*

*I'm **watching** this programme.*

*Look. That man **is taking** a photo of you.*

PRESENT SIMPLE

We use the Present Simple for repeated actions. *I often speak live to the camera* means that she does it again and again.

*It always **rains** at the weekend.*

*I **watch** television most weekends.*

*He's a photographer. He **takes** lots of photos.*

2 Thoughts, feelings and states

We normally use the Present Simple to talk about thoughts and feelings.

*I **think** it's a good programme.*

*Kitty **likes** her job.*

We also use it to talk about states (see Unit 7) and permanent facts.

*Reporting **means** a lot to her.*

*Paper **burns** easily.*

We also use the Present Simple in I promise, I agree, I refuse, etc.

*I **promise** I'll write to you.*

*It's all right. I **forgive** you.*

3 Temporary or permanent?

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

We use the Present Continuous for a routine or situation that we see as temporary (for a short period).

*I'm **working** at a sports shop for six weeks.*

*At the moment they're **living** in a very small flat.*

PRESENT SIMPLE

We use the Present Simple for a routine or situation that we see as permanent.

*I **work** at a sports shop. It's a permanent job.*

*They **live** in a very nice flat.*

4 Always

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

We can use always with the Present Continuous to mean 'very often', usually with the added meaning of 'too often'.

*Tom **is always inviting** friends here.*

(= He invites them very often.)

*I'm **always making** silly mistakes.*

(= I make silly mistakes too often.)

PRESENT SIMPLE

Always with the Present Simple means 'every time'.

*Tom **always invites** us to stay at Christmas.*

(= He invites us every Christmas.)

*I **always make** silly mistakes in exams.*

(= I make mistakes in every exam.)

Practice

A Present Continuous or Present Simple? (1–2)

At work Mark is talking to Alan in the corridor. Complete their conversation.

Put in the Present Continuous or Present Simple of the verbs.

Mark: ▶ Are you looking (you / look) for someone?

Alan: Yes, ▶ I need (I / need) to speak to Neil. He isn't in his office.

Mark: (1) (he / talk) to the boss at the moment.

(2) (I / think)

(3) (they / discuss) money.

Alan: Oh, right. And what about you? (4) (you / look) for someone too?

Mark: Yes, Linda. (5) (you / know) where she is?

Alan: Oh, she isn't here today. She only (6) (work) four days a week.

(7) (she / not / work) on Fridays. She'll be here on Monday.

Mark: Thank you. (8) (you / know) a lot about Linda.

Alan: Well, most days (9) (I / give) her a lift, or

(10) (she / give) me one. (11)

(she / live) quite close to me. (12) (it / save) petrol.

Mark: Yes, of course. Good idea. Yes, (13) (I / agree). Well,

(14) (I / waste) my time here then. I'll get back to my computer.

B Present Continuous or Present Simple? (1–3)

Complete the sentences. Put in the Present Continuous or Present Simple of the verbs.

▶ I'm writing (I / write) to my parents. I write (I / write) to them every weekend.

1 (it / snow) outside. (it / come) down quite hard, look.

2 Normally (I / start) work at eight o'clock, but
..... (I / start) at seven this week. We're very busy at the moment.

3 I haven't got a car at the moment, so (I / go) to work on the bus this week. Usually (I / drive) to work.

4 The sun (rise) in the east, remember. It's behind us so
..... (we / travel) west.

5 I'm afraid I have no time to help just now. (I / write) a report. But
..... (I / promise) I'll give you some help later.

6 (I / want) a new car. (I / save) up to buy one.

C Always (4)

Complete the sentences. Use *always* and the Present Continuous or Present Simple.

▶ Melanie: Tom talks too much, doesn't he?

Rita: Yes, and he's always talking about football.

▶ Laura: You forget your keys every time.

Trevor: I try to remember them, but I always forget.

1 Claire: Sarah takes the train every day, doesn't she?

Mark: Yes, the train.

2 Vicky: Rachel misses lectures much too often in my opinion.

Emma: I agree. lectures.

3 Mike: Every time I drive along here, I go the wrong way.

Harriet: But it's very simple, isn't it? Why the wrong way?

4 David: Trevor and Laura argue much too often, I think.

Melanie: I know.