

Stative Verbs

Verbs describing a permanent state (stative verbs) do not normally have continuous forms. These are:

(1) **verbs of the senses** : see, hear, smell, feel, taste etc (We often use **can** or **could** with these verbs.

eg. **Can** you **see** that tall boy over there?) The verbs look, watch and listen express deliberate actions and can be used in continuous forms. eg. *Be quiet please! I'm listening to the news.* But: *I can't hear you. Can you speak louder, please?* The verbs feel and hurt can be used in either continuous or simple forms, though. eg. A: *How are you feeling today?* or *How do you feel today?*

B: *My leg is hurting.* or *My leg hurts.*

(2) **verbs of opinion** : agree, believe, consider etc (3) **verbs of emotions** : feel, forgive, hate, like, love etc

(4) **other verbs** : appear (=seem), be, belong, fit (= be the right shape and size for sth), have (=possess), know, look (= appear), need, prefer, require, want, weigh, wish etc
eg. *He knows where Peter is.* (not ~~is knowing~~)

Some stative verbs (see, smell, taste, feel, think, have etc) have continuous forms but there is a difference in meaning.

STATE	ACTION
I think she's rich. (= I believe)	I'm thinking about your plan. (= I'm considering)
The milk tastes awful. (= it has a bad flavour)	He's tasting the sauce; it might need some salt. (= he's trying its flavour)
He has a pet dog. (= he owns)	He's having dinner now. (= he's eating)
This cloth feels like velvet. (= has the texture)	She's feeling her way in the dark. (= she's finding her way)
I see you're in trouble. (= I understand)	I'm seeing my lawyer tonight. (= I'm visiting)
The kitchen smells of burnt meat. (= has the smell)	Why are you smelling your food? (= trying the smell of)
He comes from Spain. (= he was born in)	He's coming from Spain. (= he's travelling from)
I love holidays. (in general)	I'm loving this holiday. (= I'm enjoying; specific)
Your hair looks great. (= it appears)	She's looking at some old photographs. (= she's examining)
The baby weighs 5 kilos. (= it is)	I'm weighing myself on my new scales. (= I'm finding out my weight)
Ann is very tall.	Ann is being very kind to me these days. (= she's behaving)

6 Underline the correct item.

1. I see / am seeing that the situation is out of control.
2. The sausages are tasting / taste delicious.
3. Do you enjoy / Are you enjoying this party?
4. You haven't said a word all morning. What are you thinking / do you think about?
5. He has / is having a Siamese cat.
6. These flowers are smelling / smell nice.
7. I don't know / am not knowing where she keeps the keys.
8. Why are you feeling / do you feel your pockets? Have you lost anything?
9. Why do you smell / are you smelling the milk? Do you think it has gone off?
10. Anna is Italian. She is coming / comes from Italy.
11. That dress looks / is looking nice on you.
12. Paul listens / is listening to a new record in his room.
13. If you don't look / aren't looking at that comic book, I'd like to see it.
14. Joan weighs / is weighing 50 kilos.
15. Mary is / is being very naughty these days.

7 Fill in with Present Simple or Continuous.

- Sue : What 1) are you doing (you/do) now?
 Mark : I 2) (look) through these old film magazines. Look, here's an old picture of Jack Nicholson.
 Sue : Oh, I 3) (think) he 4) (look) awful! And his suit 5) (not/fit) him properly.
 Mark : Yes, I 6) (agree). And he 7) (appear) to be really angry. I wonder what he 8) (think) about.
 Sue : He 9) (be) in that new film that's on at the Odeon now, isn't he?
 Mark : Yes, I saw it last night. He 10) (look) very different now. He 11) (weigh) a lot more.
 Sue : I 12) (hope) it's a good film. I 13) (see) it tonight. Stuart 14) (take) me. Actually, he 15) (be) very nice to me these days.
 Mark : He probably 16) (want) to borrow some money.
 Sue : I 17) (see). That explains it.

