

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.

