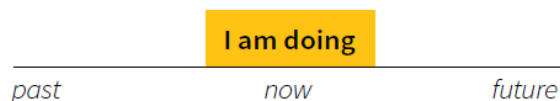


Present continuous and present simple 1 (I am doing and I do)

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.



- ☐ The water **is boiling**. Be careful.
- ☐ Listen to those people. What language **are they speaking**?
- ☐ Let's go out. It **isn't raining** now.
- ☐ 'I'm busy.' 'What **are you doing**?'
- ☐ I'm **getting** hungry. Let's go and eat.
- ☐ Kate wants to work in Italy, so she's **learning** Italian.
- ☐ The population of the world **is increasing** very fast.

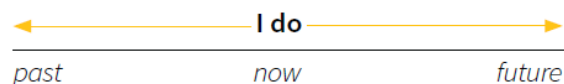
We use the continuous for *temporary* situations (things that continue for a short time):

- ☐ 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.



- ☐ Water **boils** at 100 degrees Celsius.
- ☐ Excuse me, **do you speak** English?
- ☐ It **doesn't rain** very much in summer.
- ☐ What **do** you usually **do** at weekends?
- ☐ I always **get** hungry in the afternoon.
- ☐ Most people **learn** to swim when they are children.
- ☐ Every day the population of the world **increases** by about 200,000 people.

We use the simple for *permanent* situations (things that continue for a long time):

- ☐ 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.

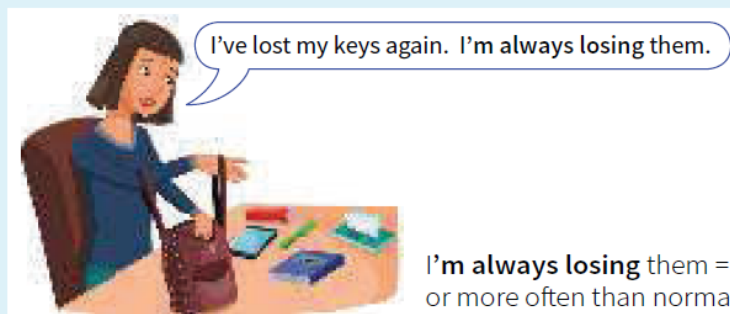
B I always do and I'm always doing

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 = I do it too often or more often than normal.

For example:



I'm **always losing** them = I lose them too often, or more often than normal.

- ☐ Paul is never satisfied. He's **always complaining**. (= he complains too much)
- ☐ You're **always looking** at your phone. Don't you have anything else to do?

Present continuous and present simple 2 (I am doing and I do)

A

We use continuous forms (**I'm waiting**, **it's raining** etc.) for actions and happenings that have started but not finished.

Some verbs (for example, **know** and **like**) are not normally used in this way. We don't say 'I am knowing', 'they are liking'. We say 'I **know**', 'they **like**'.

The following verbs are not normally used in the present continuous:

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|-----------|------|
| like | want | need | prefer | |
| know | realise | understand | recognise | |
| believe | suppose | remember | mean | |
| belong | fit | contain | consist | seem |

- ☐ I'm hungry. I **want** something to eat. (*not* I'm wanting)
- ☐ Do you **understand** what I **mean**?
- ☐ Anna **doesn't seem** very happy right now.

B

think

When **think** means 'believe' or 'have an opinion', we do not use the continuous:

- ☐ I **think** Mary is Canadian, but I'm not sure. (*not* I'm thinking)
- ☐ What **do** you **think** of my idea? (= what is your opinion?)

When **think** means 'consider', the continuous is possible:

- ☐ I'm **thinking** about what happened. I often **think** about it.
- ☐ Nicky **is thinking** of giving up her job. (= she is considering it)

C

see hear smell taste look feel

We normally use the present simple (not continuous) with **see/hear/smell/taste**:

- ☐ Do you **see** that man over there? (*not* are you seeing)
- ☐ The room **smells**. Let's open a window.
- ☐ This soup **doesn't taste** very good.

You can use the present simple or continuous to say how somebody **looks** or **feels** now:

- ☐ You **look** well today. *or* You're **looking** well today.
- ☐ How **do** you **feel** now? *or* How **are** you **feeling** now?

but

- ☐ I usually **feel** tired in the morning. (*not* I'm usually feeling)

D

am/is/are being

You can say **he's being** ..., **you're being** ... etc. to say how somebody is behaving *now*:

- ☐ I can't understand why he's **being** so selfish. He isn't usually like that.
(**being** selfish = behaving selfishly now)
- ☐ 'The path is icy. Don't slip.' 'Don't worry. I'm **being** very careful.'

Compare:

- ☐ He never thinks about other people. He's very selfish.
(= he is selfish generally, not only now)
- ☐ I don't like to take risks. I'm a very careful person.

We use **am/is/are being** to say how a person is *behaving* (= doing something they can control) now.

It is not usually possible in other situations:

- ☐ Sam **is** ill. (*not* is being ill)
- ☐ **Are** you tired? (*not* are you being tired)