

Unit 1

Present continuous (I am doing)

A Study this example situation:

Sarah is in her car. She is on her way to work.
She's **driving** to work. (= She **is driving** ...)

This means: she is driving *now*, at the time of speaking.
The action is not finished.

am/is/are + -ing is the *present continuous*:

I	am	(= I'm)	driving
he/she/it	is	(= he's etc.)	working
we/you/they	are	(= we're etc.)	doing etc.



B I am doing something = I started doing it and I haven't finished; I'm in the middle of doing it.

- ☐ Please don't make so much noise. **I'm trying** to work. (*not* I try)
- ☐ 'Where's Mark?' 'He's **having** a shower.' (*not* He has a shower)
- ☐ Let's go out now. It **isn't raining** any more. (*not* It doesn't rain)
- ☐ How's your new job? **Are you enjoying** it?
- ☐ What's all that noise? What's **going** on? or What's **happening**?

Sometimes the action is not happening at the time of speaking. For example:

Steve is talking to a friend on the phone. He says:



I'm reading a really good book at the moment.
It's about a man who ...

Steve says '**I'm reading** ...' but he is *not* reading the book at the time of speaking.
He means that he has started reading the book, but has not finished it yet. He is in the middle of reading it.

Some more examples:

- ☐ Kate wants to work in Italy, so she's **learning** Italian.
(but perhaps she isn't learning Italian at the time of speaking)
- ☐ Some friends of mine **are building** their own house. They hope to finish it next summer.

C You can use the present continuous with **today / this week / this year** etc. (periods around now):

- ☐ A: You're **working** hard **today**. (*not* You work hard today)
B: Yes, I have a lot to do.
- ☐ The company I work for **isn't doing** so well **this year**.

D We use the present continuous when we talk about a change that has started to happen. We often use these verbs in this way:

getting, becoming
starting, beginning

changing, improving
increasing, rising, falling, growing

- ☐ Is your English **getting** better? (*not* Does your English get better)
- ☐ The population of the world **is increasing** very fast. (*not* increases)
- ☐ At first I didn't like my job, but I'm **starting** to enjoy it now. (*not* I start)

Unit 2

Present simple (I do)

A Study this example situation:



Alex is a bus driver, but now he is in bed asleep. He is not driving a bus. (He is asleep.)

but He **drives** a bus. He is a bus driver.

drive(s), work(s), do(es) etc. is the *present simple*:

I/we/you/they	drive/work/do etc.
he/she/it	drives/works/does etc.

B We use the present simple to talk about things in general. We use it to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly, or that something is true in general:

- ☐ Nurses **look** after patients in hospitals.
- ☐ I usually **go** away at weekends.
- ☐ The earth **goes** round the sun.
- ☐ The cafe **opens** at 7.30 in the morning.

We say:

I **work** but he **works** you **go** but it **goes**
they **teach** but my sister **teaches** I **have** but he **has**

For spelling (-s or -es), see Appendix 6.

C We use **do/does** to make questions and negative sentences:

do does	I/we/you/they he/she/it	work? drive? do?	I/we/you/they he/she/it	don't doesn't	work drive do
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- ☐ I come from Canada. Where **do** you **come** from?
- ☐ I **don't go** away very often.
- ☐ What **does** this word **mean**? (*not* What means this word?)
- ☐ Rice **doesn't grow** in cold climates.

In the following examples, **do** is also the main verb (do you **do** / doesn't **do** etc.):

- ☐ 'What **do** you **do**?' 'I work in a shop.'
- ☐ He's always so lazy. He **doesn't do** anything to help.

D We use the present simple to say how often we do things:

- ☐ I **get** up at 8 o'clock **every morning**.
- ☐ **How often do** you **go** to the dentist?
- ☐ Julie **doesn't drink** tea **very often**.
- ☐ Robert usually **goes** away **two or three times a year**.

E I promise / I apologise etc.

Sometimes we do things by saying something. For example, when you promise to do something, you can say '**I promise ...**'; when you suggest something, you can say '**I suggest ...**':

- ☐ I **promise** I won't be late. (*not* I'm promising)
- ☐ 'What do **you suggest** I do?' 'I **suggest** that you ...'

In the same way we say: I **apologise ...** / I **advise ...** / I **insist ...** / I **agree ...** / I **refuse ...** etc.