

# 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)

## Exercises

## 4.1 Put the verb into the correct form, present continuous or present simple.

- Are you hungry? Do you want (you / want) something to eat?
- Alan says he's 90 years old, but nobody ..... (believe) him.
- She told me her name, but ..... (I / not / remember) it now.
- Don't put the dictionary away. .... (I / use) it.
- Don't put the dictionary away. .... (I / need) it.
- Air ..... (consist) mainly of nitrogen and oxygen.
- Who is that man? What ..... (he / want)?
- Who is that man? Why ..... (he / look) at us?
- Who is that man? ..... (you / recognise) him?
- ..... (I / think) of selling my car. Would you be interested in buying it?
- I can't make up my mind. What ..... (you / think) I should do?
- Gary wasn't well earlier, but ..... (he / seem) OK now.

## 4.2 Use the words in brackets to make sentences.

<p>1</p>  <p>(you / not / seem / very happy today) <u>You don't seem very happy today.</u></p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Are you OK? You look worried. (I / think) .....</p>
<p>3</p>  <p>(who / this umbrella / belong to?) ..... I've no idea.</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>(this / smell / good) .....</p>
<p>5</p>  <p>Excuse me. (anybody / sit / there?) ..... No, it's free.</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>(these gloves / not / fit / me) ..... They're too small.</p>

4.3 Are the underlined verbs OK? Correct them where necessary.

- Nicky is thinking of giving up her job. OK .....
- It's not true. I'm not believing it. I don't believe it. .....
- I'm feeling hungry. Is there anything to eat? .....
- I've never eaten that fruit. What is it tasting like? .....
- I'm not sure what she does. I think she works in a shop. ....
- Look over there. What are you seeing? .....
- You're very quiet. What are you thinking about? .....

4.4 Complete the sentences. Use **is/are being** (continuous) or **is/are** (simple).

- I can't understand why he's being so selfish. He isn't usually like that.
- You'll like Sophie when you meet her. She ..... very nice.
- Sarah ..... very nice to me at the moment. I wonder why.
- They ..... very happy. They've just got married.
- You're normally very patient, so why ..... so unreasonable about waiting ten more minutes?
- Would you like something to eat? ..... hungry?