

Essential Grammars

Preset Continuous

Present Continuous _ Structure

subject + am/is/are + verb + ing

*Example: She **is working** in Dubai.*

subject + am/is/are not + verb + ing

*Example: I **am not working** in Dubai..*

am/is/are + subject + verb + ing?

*Example: **Are you working** in Dubai?*

The principal uses of the present continuous are listed below.

1. To describe actions happening at the exact moment of speech:

The boy **is crying**.

2. To refer to temporary situations:

I'm **living** in London **at the moment**. (I don't normally live here)

My cousin **is working** in a restaurant **until** she finds a job in her field.

The present continuous is often used with: now, at the moment, today, this morning/afternoon/evening/week/month/year, currently

3. To refer to tendencies and trends:

The world's population **is increasing** rapidly.

Google **is making** it easier for people to find, rate and share information about local businesses.

4. To express irritation, anger or envy:

She's **always** losing her gloves! (complaint)

He's **always** travelling around the world! (envy)

The following adverbs are often used: always, constantly, forever

5. To use with state verbs when the meaning is temporary.

I'm **thinking** of buying a new car. (trying to reach a decision)

I **think** you should buy a new car. (my opinion, so not temporary)

He is **tasting** the wine they have brought him. (activity)

The wine **tastes** sweet rather than sour. (sense)

I **was having** a bath when the phone rang. (activity, not possession)

The room **has** a private bathroom with a tub and shower. (possession)

Grammar Exercise #1: Present Simple or Present Continuous?

Fill in the gaps with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

1This workshop_ (take place) in the Art Gallery every Wednesday from 10am-12pm.

2The whole team_ (perform) well at the moment. I believe they will win.

3In the UK students_ (enter) law undergraduate degree programs immediately after high school.

4Natural gas spot prices_ (fall) as a result of relatively warm weather in much of the U.S.

5Green plants_ (consume) carbon dioxide and_ (release) oxygen under the influence of light.

6What_ (you/do)? I_ (try) to write an essay.

7Please be quiet! I_ (want) to watch the game.

8The company_ (operate) a wide range of cultural sightseeing every year.

9My parents_ (sail) around western Italy this summer, and probably won't be back until late September.

10Paula is busy right now. She_ (talk) on the phone with her dad.