

# Present Continuous

Positive	Negative	Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I <b>am</b> speaking.</li><li>• You <b>are</b> speaking.</li><li>• We <b>are</b> speaking.</li><li>• They <b>are</b> speaking.</li><li>• He <b>is</b> speaking.</li><li>• She <b>is</b> speaking.</li><li>• It <b>is</b> speaking.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I <b>am not</b> speaking.</li><li>• You <b>are not</b> speaking.</li><li>• We <b>are not</b> speaking.</li><li>• They <b>are not</b> speaking.</li><li>• He <b>is not</b> speaking.</li><li>• She <b>is not</b> speaking.</li><li>• It <b>is not</b> speaking.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Am I <b>speaking?</b></li><li>• Are you <b>speaking?</b></li><li>• Are we <b>speaking?</b></li><li>• Are they <b>speaking?</b></li><li>• Is he <b>speaking?</b></li><li>• Is she <b>speaking?</b></li><li>• Is it <b>speaking?</b></li></ul>

Note 1: when speaking we use the contractions:

**I am = I'm // you are = you're // he is = he's // she is = she's**

**it is = it's // we are = we're // you are = you're // they are = they're**

**I am not = I'm not // you are not = you aren't // he is not = he's isn't**

**she is not = she isn't // it is not = it isn't // we are not = we aren't**

**you are not = you aren't // they are not = they aren't**

We also use contractions for informal writing like emails to friends and colleagues. When you write a formal text, like a job application letter, you **MUST** use full forms.

## USE 1 Now - The Moment of Speaking



We use the Present Continuous for things that are happening at the moment of speaking.

- I'm working at the moment.
- Please can you call back later because we're having dinner now.
- Julie's sleeping.
- You're studying the present continuous.

## USE 2 Now - An Action in Progress



We use the Present Continuous to say that we are in the process of doing something; however, we might not be doing it at this exact second.

Examples: (All of these sentences can be said while eating dinner in a restaurant.)

- I'm studying to become a doctor.
- I'm not studying to become a dentist.
- I'm reading the book Tom Sawyer.
- I'm not reading any books right now.
- Are you working on any special projects at work?
- Aren't you teaching at the university now?

## USE 3: Temporary Situations

We use the Present Continuous for temporary situations, when we feel something won't continue for a long time.

- She's staying with her friend for a week.
- I'm living in London for a few months.
- John's working in a bar until he finds a job in his field.

## USE 4: Temporary or New Habits

We use the present continuous for habits but they have to be temporary or new habits (for normal habits that continue for a long time, we use the present simple).

- He's eating a lot these days.
- She's swimming every morning at the moment.
- You're smoking too much.
- They're working late every night.

## USE 5 Repetition and Irritation with "Always" etc



We use the present continuous to talk about annoying habits, when we want to show that something happens too often and we don't like it. In this case we usually use an adverb like 'always', 'forever' or 'constantly' (Remember to put the adverb between 'be' and the main verb (the one that has '-ing')

- You're always losing your keys!
- She's constantly missing the train.
- He's always sleeping in.
- They're forever being late.

## USE 6 A situation which is slowly changing.

We use the present continuous to talk about situations that change slowly over time.

- I'm getting better at playing the piano.
- The weather is improving.

## USE 7 Present Continuous with Future Meaning for Fixed Arrangements

We use the present continuous to talk about fixed arrangements in the future. These are most typically (but not always) social and travel arrangements, work related meetings and appointments and appointments to see the doctor or the dentist or the hairdresser or something similar. These are all the kinds of things you write down in your organiser/diary/schedule planner/agenda for the days and weeks ahead.

When we use the present continuous to talk about the future, it frequently goes with time expressions such as 'later', 'after work' 'this evening', 'at the weekend', 'on Monday' 'next week' etc.

- What are you doing later/this evening/tomorrow evening/on Friday evening/over the weekend?
- I'm meeting some friends after work.
- I'm not going to the party tonight.
- Is he visiting his parents next weekend?
- Isn't he coming with us tonight?
- I'm flying to Paris tomorrow morning.
- I'm leaving at 8.00am.
- We're having a meeting about it tomorrow.
- She's coming home at the weekend.

## REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs/ Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs (also known as 'stative' or 'state' verbs) cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Present Continuous with these verbs, you must use the Present Simple.

- She **is loving** this chocolate ice cream. *Not Correct*
- She **loves** this chocolate ice cream. *Correct*

## ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

- You are **still** watching TV.
- Are you **still** watching TV?

## ACTIVE / PASSIVE

- Right now, Tom **is writing** the letter. *Active*
- Right now, the letter **is being written** by Tom. *Passive*

Go to <http://www.perfect-english-grammar.com/english-language-pdf.html> and/or to <http://www.englishpage.com/verbpage/presentcontinuous.html> (scroll down) to find exercises to practice this tense.