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B1.U1

PRESENT & PAST



I am doing something = I'm in the middle of doing it; I've started doing it and I haven't finished yet:

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

Steve is talking on the phone. He says:

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

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



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

You're **working** hard **today**.

The company I work for **isn't doing** so well **this year**.

We use present continuous when we talk about changes happening around now, especially with these verbs:

get / change / become / increase / rise / fall / grow / improve / begin / start

Is your English **getting** better?

The population of the world **is increasing** very fast.

At first I didn't like my job, but **I'm beginning** to enjoy it now.

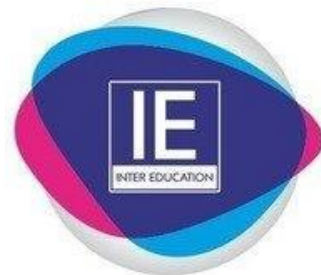


You use present simple to talk about things in general. we use it to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly, or that something is true in general:

Nurse **look** after patients in hospitals.
I usually **go away** at weekends.

We use 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?



We use the present simple with verbs which perform the action they describe.

I **suggest** you park outside the city and get the bus to the centre.
We **request** that you read the terms and conditions carefully before signing.

Basically saying, we do things by saying something.
In the same way we say: I apologise... / I advice... / I insist ... / I agree ... / I refuse ... etc.



I always do (something) = I do it every time:

I **always go** to work by car.

“I’m always doing something” has a different meaning.
For example: *“I’ve lost my pen again. I’m always loosing things.”*

I’m always loosing things = I lose things very often,
perhaps too often, or more often than normal.



Stative, or non action verbs do not express action. They express a state or condition, and *usually* only occur in the Present Simple.

They **like** big cities.

Martin **needs** help.

I always **agree** with my wife.

When they do occur in the Present Progressive, there is often a difference in meaning.

You look great in this hat. **I'm loving** it, man!

My baby is **smelling** a flower.



He's being selfish = He's behaving / He's acting.

Compare:

I can't understand why he **is being** so selfish. He isn't usually like that. (*being selfish = behaving selfish at the moment*)

He never thinks about other people. He **is** very selfish. (*He is selfish generally, not only at the moment*)

We use am/is/are to say how somebody is behaving. It's not usually possible in other sentences.



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.



We use past simple for the finished actions.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was an Austrian musician and composer. He **lived** from 1756 to 1791. He **started** composing at the age of five and **wrote** more than 600 pieces of music. He **was** only 35 years old when he **died**.

In questions and negatives we use **did/didn't** + *infinitive*

'**Did** you *have* time to write the letter?' 'No, I **didn't**.'

Keep in mind that **do** can be the main verb in the sentence.

What did you **do** at the weekend?

The past of be (am/is/are) is **was/were**. Note that we don't use **did** in negatives and questions with **was/were**.



I was doing something = I was in the middle of doing something at a certain time. The action or situation had already started before this time, but had not finished.

This time last year **I was living** in Brazil.

What **were you doing** at 10 o'clock last night?

Compare the past continuous and past simple:

I **was walking** home when I met Dave. (in the middle of an action)

I **walked** home after the party last night. (=all the way, completely)



We often use the past simple and past continuous together to say that something happened in the middle of something else:

Matt **phoned** while **we were having** dinner.
It **was raining** when I **got** up.

But we use the past simple to say that one thing happened after another:

I **was walking** along the road when I **saw** Dave. So I **stopped**,
and we **had** a chat.

I **walked** home after the party last night. (=all the way, completely)



CLASS ACTIVITIES & EXERCISES

