



THE CONTINUOUS TENSES

Present Continuous Tense

Functions of the present continuous:

As with all tenses in English, the speaker's attitude is as important as the time of the action or event. When someone uses the present continuous, they are thinking about something that is unfinished or incomplete

The present continuous is used:

- to describe an action that is going on at this moment: You are studying English grammar.
- to describe an action that is going on during this period of time or a trend: More and more people are becoming vegetarian.
- to describe an action or event in the future, which has already been planned or prepared: We're going on holiday tomorrow.
- to describe a temporary event or situation: He usually plays the drums, but he's playing bass guitar tonight.
- with "always, forever, constantly", to describe and emphasise a continuing series of repeated actions: Harry and Sally are always arguing

Forming the present continuous

The present continuous of any verb is composed of two parts - the present tense of the verb to be (am, is, are) + the present participle of the main verb. The form of the present participle is: base+ing.

Affirmative

Subject + to be + base + ing I am reading

Negative

Subject + to be + not + base + ing I am not reading

Interrogative

to be + subject + base + ing Am I reading?

Present Continuous Tense

Verbs that are not usually used in the continuous form. The verbs in the list below are normally used in the simple form because they refer to states, rather than actions or processes.

Senses / Perception: to feel*, to hear, to see*, to smell, to taste;

Opinion: to assume, to believe, to consider, to doubt, to feel (= to think), to find (= to consider), to suppose, to think*;

Mental states: to forget, to imagine, to know, to mean, to notice, to remember, to understand;

Emotions / desires: to envy, to fear, to dislike, to hate, to hope, to like, to love, to mind, to prefer, to regret, to want, to wish;

Measurement: to contain, to cost, to hold, to measure, to weigh;

Others: to look (=resemble), to seem to be (in most cases), to have (when it means "to possess")*

Exceptions:

Perception verbs (see, hear, feel, taste, smell) are often used with can: : I can see... These verbs may be used in the continuous form but with a different meaning

This coat feels nice and warm. (your perception of the coat's qualities)

John's feeling much better now (his health is improving)

She has three dogs and a cat. (possession)

Past Continuous Tense

Functions of the Past continuous:

The past continuous describes actions or events in a time before now, which began in the past and is still going on at the time of speaking. In other words, it expresses an unfinished or incomplete action in the past.

Examples

Caroline was skiing when she broke her leg.

It is used:

- Often, to describe the background in a story written in the past tense;
- to describe an unfinished action that was interrupted by another event or action: "I was having a beautiful dream when the alarm clock rang."
- to express a change of mind: "I was going to spend the day at the beach but I've decided to get my homework done instead."
- with 'wonder', to make a very polite request: e.g. "I was wondering if you could baby-sit for my baby tonight."

Forming the Past continuous:

The past continuous of any verb is composed of two parts : the past tense of the verb "to be" (was/were) and the base of the main verb +ing.

Affirmative

Subject +was/were +base + ing

She was reading

Negative

Subject +was/were +not +base + ing

She was not reading

Interrogative

Was/were +subject +base+ing?

Was she reading?

Future Continuous Tense

Functions of the Future continuous:

The future continuous refers to an unfinished action or event that will be in progress at a time later than now. The future continuous is used for quite a few different purposes.

- The future continuous can be used to project ourselves into the future.
- The future continuous can be used for predicting or guessing about future events.
- In the interrogative form, the future continuous can be used to ask politely for information about the future.
- The future continuous can be used to refer to continuous events that we expect to happen in the future.

Examples

Just think, next Monday you will be working in your new job.

Will she be going to the clinic tomorrow?

Forming of the Future continuous:

The future continuous is made up of two elements: the simple future of the verb 'to be' + the present participle (base+ing)

Affirmative

Subject +simple future of the verb 'to be' + present participle She will be reading

Negative

Subject +simple future of the verb 'to be' +not +present participle She will not be reading

Interrogative

simple future of the verb 'to be' +subject +present participle? Will she be reading?

Examples

Present Continuous Tenses

- The doctor is administering the patient two tablets of tetracycline to be taken orally and a cough mixture to be taken three times a day.

Врач выписывает пациенту две таблетки тетрациклина перорально и принимать микстуру от кашля три раза в день.

- On the basis of all the findings the physician is making the diagnosis of acute bronchitis in a mild form.

На основе всех результатов врач ставит диагноз острого бронхита в легкой форме.



Examples

Past Continuous Tenses

- Patient Smirnov was calling in a physician from the local polyclinic at 7 o'clock yesterday.

Пациент Смирнов вызвал врача из местной поликлинике вчера в 7 вечера.

- The physician was questioning the patient on his condition.

Врач опрашивал пациента о его заболевании.



Examples

Future Continuous Tenses

- He will following a bed regimen and a light diet.

Он будет следовать постельному режиму и легкой диете.

- Doctor is will recommending to drink either warm milk or have warm applications to his chest.

Доктор порекомендует пациенту пить горячее молоко и прикладывать на грудь теплые компрессы.



Examples

Affirmative

Discharge was accumulating in the bronchial tubes.

Negative

Discharge wasn't accumulating in the bronchial tubes.

Interrogative

Was discharge accumulating in the bronchial tubes.

