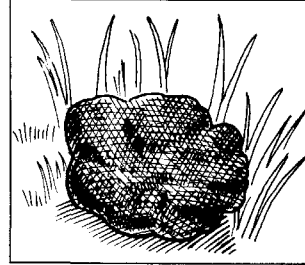


Getting started

1 A truffle is a fungus found under the ground which is very good to eat. Read the newspaper article about truffle-hunting dogs and answer the questions.

- a) How are truffles found?
.....
- b) What is the problem for truffle farmers in the year of the article?
.....



a truffle

TRUFFLERS DOGNAPPED

Police in southern France are trying to find ten truffle-hunting dogs, stolen from their owners in the middle of the season for the fungi. Police in Carpentras believe the dogs, trained to dig up truffles growing five centimetres below the ground, have been kidnapped.

Farmers are getting around £150 a kilo for truffles this year. Hervé de Chiré, mayor of the village of Pernes-les-Fontaines, said: 'Training the dogs takes years and the truffle season is very short. Some of the farmers are offering up to £650 for the return of their dogs.'

2 Underline three examples of the present continuous (*am / is / are + -ing*) in the article.

3 Tick (✓) the correct choices:

- a) The underlined verbs in the article refer to:
- every year
 - the year of the article
- b) The present continuous is used to talk about actions and situations which are:
- true at the moment
 - always true

Looking at language

The present continuous

Use

The present continuous is used to talk about:

1 Actions that are going on around or at the time of speaking:

Jane's having a bath at the moment.

2 Temporary situations. Compare:

He's working in Oxford just now. (but next year he will do something else)

present continuous – a temporary situation

He works for a company in Oxford. (he works there all the time)

present simple – a permanent situation

3 Changing situations, especially with verbs like *get* and *become* and with comparative adjectives like *more*, *worse*, *better*:

He's getting fat, isn't he?

This city is becoming more and more dangerous.

4 Behaviour that happens more often than expected, with *always*, *forever* and *constantly*:

Why are you always shouting?

She's forever buying me presents.

Note that the auxiliary *be* comes before words like *always* and *forever*.

5 Future plans. See Unit 11.

1 Are these sentences examples of 1, 2, 3 or 4 above?

- I'm sure the air quality is *getting worse* round here.
- I hope he's OK. He's *constantly getting* headaches.
- I'm *staying* with friends in New York at the moment, but I live in Washington.
- You can't see her I'm afraid. She's *trying to get* some rest.

Stative verbs

Some verbs are not usually used in the continuous. They are called **stative verbs**, and are:

- verbs which describe thoughts, feelings and senses: *think, know, believe, agree, remember, forget, understand, like, love, hate, mind, prefer, want, see, hear, smell, taste*. So we do not say: ~~I'm knowing the answer.~~ or ~~She isn't understanding anything.~~ We say: *I know the answer. She doesn't understand anything.*

We use *can* with sense verbs. We do not say: ~~I'm not hearing you.~~ or ~~I don't hear you.~~

We say: *I can't hear you.*

- some other verbs which describe what things (and people) are, what they are like, and what they possess: *be, have, need, own, involve, depend on, seem, look, sound, smell, taste, weigh*. So we do not say: ~~I am being hungry.~~ or ~~This soup is tasting nice.~~ We say: *I am hungry. This soup tastes nice.*

But some of these stative verbs can be used in the continuous sense. Compare *She's tasting the soup* (her action) and *The soup tastes good* (what the soup is like), and *What are you thinking about?* (what are your thoughts?) and *What do you think?* (what is your opinion?).

Form

The present continuous is formed with the present tense of *be* and the *-ing* form of the verb.

Positive statements	Negative statements	Wh- questions
I am (I'm) playing you are (you're) playing we are (we're) playing they are (they're) playing	I'm not playing you're not playing / you aren't playing we're not playing / we aren't playing they're not playing / they aren't playing	Where are you playing?
she / he / it is (she's / he's / it's) playing	he's not playing / he isn't playing	Where is she playing?
Yes / No questions	Positive short answers	Negative short answers
Are they playing? Is he playing?	Yes, they are. Yes, he is.	No, they aren't. / No, they're not. No, he isn't. / No, he's not .

Spelling

- In one-syllable verbs which end in a vowel and a consonant (e.g. *stop*, *run*), the consonant is doubled in the *-ing* form: *stopping*, *running*.
- In verbs which end in *e* (e.g. *take*, *lose*), the *e* is lost in the *-ing* form: *taking*, *losing*. But verbs which end in double *e* (e.g. *see*, *agree*), keep both *es*: *seeing*, *agreeing*.

Other points

- We use *at the moment* with the present continuous to show that something is going on at the time of speaking and is temporary:
He's doing his homework at the moment.
- We use *still* to show that something is continuing and is temporary:
I'm still living with my parents, but I want to get my own flat.

Getting it right

▷ Exercise 1 Learning from learners

Look at this learner's text. Match the teacher's ticks (✓) and corrections 1–10 to rules a)–f) below.

<i>My name is Kim and I'm Korean. My family <u>is living</u> in</i>	<i>lives .b).</i>
<i>an apartment near the centre of Seoul, and they all</i>	<i>1 ✓</i>
<i>1 <u>love</u> the city except me. They 2 <u>are thinking</u> that</i>	<i>2 think</i>
<i>cities are exciting, but 3 <u>I'm not agreeing</u> with them; I</i>	<i>3 don't agree</i>
<i>4 <u>am preferring</u> quieter towns or villages. Anyway,</i>	<i>4 prefer</i>
<i>just this month I 5 <u>work</u> for a small travel agency; I</i>	<i>5 'm working</i>
<i>6 <u>want</u> to go travelling in Europe next month but 7 <u>I'm</u></i>	<i>6 ✓</i>
<i><u>needing</u> to earn some money first. 8 <u>I'm thinking</u> of doing</i>	<i>7 need</i>
<i>a course when I come back from Europe – my English</i>	<i>8 ✓</i>
<i>9 <u>gets</u> better so maybe I can study abroad next time.</i>	<i>9 is getting</i>
<i>That's very expensive, of course. Perhaps that 10 <u>is</u></i>	<i>10 depends</i>
<i><u>depending</u> on how much I can earn – and my parents!</i>	

- a) Use the present continuous to talk about changing situations.
- b) Use the present simple to talk about a permanent situation.
- c) Use the present simple with a 'thought' or 'feeling' verb.
- d) Use the present simple with verbs describing what things are, what they are like and what they possess.
- e) Use the present continuous for a temporary situation.
- f) Use the present continuous for a temporary thought.

▷ Exercise 2 Choosing the correct tense

In the conversation between two friends below, put the verbs in brackets () into the present simple or present continuous.

A: I hear you *are working* (*work*) in a pub at the moment. What's it like?

B: It *is*. (*be*) fine, although it's very hard work. I'm always tired, but I 1 (*not mind*).

A: Is the money good?

B: No, not really, but I 2 (*like*) the hours. You know I don't like working early in the morning.

A: Oh yes, I 3 (*remember*) now. You never used to get up before 11.00.

B: Well, I'm not like that now, but I certainly don't like getting up before 9.00. Anyway, tell me about you. What 4 you (*do*) now?

A: I 5 (*be*) still a student. I 6 (*study*) German at university. Actually, I 7 (*work*) quite hard at the moment because my exams are next week. I 8 (*want*) to be a teacher when I finish at university.

B: Oh well, good luck in your exams. I must go – I 9 (*start*) work at 12.00 on Mondays, and I 10 (*not want*) to be late. I 11 (*not have*) my car any more, so I 12 (*cycle*) everywhere at the moment.

▷ Exercise 3 Writing about developments

Change the text below so that it is true about developments in your country. Use verbs in the present continuous and underline the word in *italics* that you want. Use the verbs in the box if you want to. You can use the verbs more than once.

change earn fall get go up / down increase leave rise
--

In my country, many things *are changing*. The population 1 , and the number of unemployed people 2 Young people 3 home *earlier / later*, and 4 married *earlier / later* than before. People 5 *more / less* money these days, while the cost of living 6 Our capital city 7 *bigger / smaller*, the number of people with cars 8 and traffic problems 9 *better / worse*. Overall, I think life in my country 10 *better / worse* for most people.

▷ Exercise 4 Extending headlines

Headlines for newspaper articles often use the present simple, but the articles sometimes use the present continuous to describe activities that are still going on. Rewrite these headlines as full sentences to start the articles.

Example: **CHESTER POLICE LOOK FOR STOLEN DINOSAUR EGG**

Museum offers big reward for return of egg

Police in Chester are looking for a stolen dinosaur egg. The Museum is offering a big reward for the return of the egg.

1 **US scientists examine Mars rocks and try to find signs of life**

2 **GRANDMOTHER STILL WORKS IN SUPERMARKET AT 75 BUT THINKS OF RETIRING**

3 ***Man who lives in tree house tries to set new one-year record***

4 **New York man builds own rocket and plans to reach moon**

5 **Tokyo woman celebrates 120th birthday and looks forward to 121st**

Classwork

1 Write three sentences about yourself 'at the moment', using the present continuous. One sentence should be **untrue**.

Example:

I'm preparing for an exam at the moment.

2 Ask questions to find out what your partner wrote, and answer your partner's questions.

Example:

A: *What are you doing at the moment?*

B: *I'm preparing for an exam.*

3 Which of your partner's answers is untrue, do you think?