



Present Simple or Continuous

Understanding the Difference: Examples

- I play football every Saturday.
- I am playing football this afternoon.
- Do I play football every Saturday?
- Am I playing football this afternoon?
- I don't play football every Saturday.
- I am not playing football this afternoon.
- I do play football every Saturday.
- I am playing football now.
- I usually play football.
- I am usually playing football (in this context).
- When do I play football?
- When am I playing football?
- I play football, but I am playing football today.
- I play football every weekend; at the moment I am playing football.
- I do play football; I am playing football now.
- I don't play football regularly, but I am playing football at the moment.
- Do you play football or are you playing football now?
- (فاعل فعل مفعول)

Present Simple or Continuous?: Grammar Chart

PRESENT SIMPLE VS CONTINUOUS – MEANING			
PRESENT SIMPLE		PRESENT CONTINUOUS	
HABITS. REGULAR OR REPEATED ACTIONS		ACTIONS IN PROGRESS NOW	
➞ I wash my hair every day.		➞ I can't talk. I'm brushing my teeth.	
➞ He usually gets up very early.		➞ He can't talk now. He's having a shower.	
FACTS, PERMANENT SITUATIONS OR STATES		ACTIONS IN PROGRESS AROUND NOW	
➞ I have one brother. He lives in Paris.		➞ I'm reading a new book. I love it!	
➞ Water boils at 100 degrees.		➞ He is training hard these days.	
WITH * STATIVE VERBS		SIGNAL WORDS	
➞ Give me the money. I need it now.		<i>now, at the moment, these days, this week, this month, etc.</i>	
➞ What happened? You look sad.			
SIGNAL WORDS		I DO IT REGULARLY	I'M DOING IT NOW
<i>always, never, often, sometimes, every day, once a month, twice a week, etc.</i>		➞ I drink tea.	➞ I'm drinking tea.
		➞ I do yoga.	➞ I'm doing yoga.
*Verbs of the senses: hear, see, smell, look, seem, sound. Opinion: believe, consider, like, love, hate, prefer, think, etc. Possession: have, own, belong, etc. Also: be, need, mean, remember, want, etc.			
t e s t - e n g l i s h . c o m			

Present Simple

- We use the present simple for **habits** or **permanent situations**.
- Habits or actions that happen regularly:
 - We use the present simple for habits or actions that we repeat regularly:
 - I **wash** my hair every day.
 - I never **go** to the library.
 - I **go** to the library on Saturdays.
- Permanent situations or things that are always or often true:
 - I **don't drink** coffee.
 - She's very tall.
 - I **have** two brothers.
 - Water **boils** at 100 degrees.
 - I **like** soup.
- Adverbs and expressions of frequency:
 - We use [adverbs and expressions of frequency] with the present simple to talk about how often something happens.
 - We **usually** order a pizza on Fridays.
 - I go running **twice a week**.
- Stative or non-action verbs:
 - Some verbs don't describe actions. These verbs are called **stative** or **non-action** verbs, and we can use these verbs in the present simple but NOT in the present continuous. Some of these verbs are **be, have** (=possess/own), **like, love, hate, prefer, need, want, know, etc.**
 - They **have** a new car. ●
 - They **are having** a new car. ✗
 - I **like** chocolate. ●
 - I'm **liking** chocolate. ✗

Present Continuous

- We use the present continuous for things that are happening **now** (at the moment of speaking) or for temporary things that are happening **around now** (these days or weeks, etc.).
- Actions happening around now:
 - We use the present continuous for **temporary things** that are happening **around now** (=not at the moment of speaking but **these days, weeks, etc.**)
 - **I'm reading** a very good book at the moment. (=I'm not reading it at the moment I'm speaking, but I'm reading it these days.)
 - What TV series **are** you **watching** these days? (=You are not watching it at the moment of speaking, but these days.)
- Now, these days, at the moment, etc.:
 - We use the present continuous with time expressions that mean **now** or **around now**. Some of these expressions are: **now, at the moment, at present, today, these days, this week, etc.**

Present Simple or Continuous?

- Usually or now?
 - We use the **present simple** for things that we **usually do**, and we use the **present continuous** for things that we are doing **now**.
 - I **listen** to the radio. (=I usually listen to the radio; it's a habit.)
 - I **'m listening** to the radio. (=I'm doing it now.)
 - I don't **usually** watch documentaries, but I'm watching a documentary **now**.
- Temporary or permanent?
 - We use **present simple** when a situation is **permanent** or **present continuous** when a situation is **temporary**.
 - I **work** in an office. (=Permanent situation.)
 - I **'m working** in an office. (=Temporary situation.)
 - I **live** in Edinburgh. (=Permanent situation.)
 - I **'m living** in Edinburgh. (=Temporary situation.)
- What do you do? vs What are you doing?
 - What **does** Erik **do**? (=What is his job?)
 - What **is** Erik **doing**? (=What is he doing now, at the moment of speaking?)