



Tikrit University

College of Education for Women

English Department

Subject : Grammar

{First and Third Year}

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**Present Continuous Tense**

We often use the **Present Continuous tense** in English. It is very different from the present simple tense, both in structure and in use.

### How do we make the Present Continuous tense?

The structure of the Present Continuous tense is:

subject	+	auxiliary <i>be</i>	+	main verb
		conjugated in Present Simple		
		<b>am, are, is</b>		<b>present participle (-ing)</b>

The auxiliary verb (be) is conjugated in the Present Simple: *am, are, is*

The main verb is invariable in present participle form: *-ing*

For negative sentences we insert **not** between the auxiliary verb and the main verb.

For question sentences, we **exchange** the subject and the auxiliary verb.

Look at these example sentences with the Present Continuous tense:

	subject	auxiliary verb		main verb	
+	I	am		speaking	to you.
+	You	are		reading	this.
-	She	is	not	staying	in London.
-	We	are	not	playing	football.

	subject	auxiliary verb		main verb	
?	Is	he		watching	TV?
?	Are	they		waiting	for John?

### How do we use the Present Continuous tense?

We use the Present Continuous to talk about:




- action happening now
- action in the future

### Present Continuous for action happening now

a) for action happening **exactly now**

I <b>am eating</b> my lunch.		
past	present	future
	The action is happening now.	

Look at these images. Right now you are looking at this screen and at the same time...

		
the pages <b>are turning</b>	the candle <b>is burning</b>	the numbers <b>are spinning</b>

b) for action happening **around now**

The action may not be happening exactly now, but it is happening just before and just after now, and it is not permanent or habitual.

John <b>is looking</b> for a new job.		
past	present	future
	The action is happening "around" now.	

Look at these examples:

- Muriel **is learning** to drive.
- I **am living** with my sister until I find an apartment.

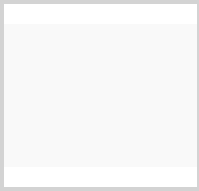
### Present Continuous for the future

We can also use the Present Continuous tense to talk about the **future** - if we add a **future word!!** We must add (or understand from the context) a future word. "Future words" include, for example, **tomorrow, next year, in June, at Christmas** etc. We only use the Present Continuous tense to talk about the future when we have planned to do something before we speak. We have already **made a decision and a plan** before speaking.

I <b>am taking</b> my exam next month.		
past	present	future
	A firm plan or programme exists now.	The action is in the future.

In these examples, **a firm plan or programme exists before speaking**. The decision and plan were made **before** speaking.

	play	→	playing
	assist	→	assisting
	see	→	seeing
	be	→	being
	stop	→	stopping
	run	→	running
	begin	→	beginning
	<p><i>Note that this exception does <b>not</b> apply when the last syllable of the base verb is not stressed:</i></p>		
	open	→	opening
<b>Exception</b>	<p>If the base verb ends in <b>ie</b>, change the <b>ie</b> to <b>y</b>:</p>		



lie

→

lying