

GRAMMAR REFERENCE

Present simple

Use the present simple

- to talk about routines
I usually arrive at work at about 8.30.
- to talk about things we think of as permanent
I work for IBM.
- to talk about states
Paris lies on the River Seine.
- (with future reference) to talk about timetabled events
The next train leaves at 11.15.
- to talk about future time introduced by *when, as soon as, after, if*, etc.
When I see Margaret tomorrow, I'll give you a ring.

Common phrases used with the present simple are: *as a rule, generally (speaking), on the whole, once (a week / in a while), every (winter), most of the time.*

Present continuous

Use the present continuous

- to talk about an action happening at the moment of speaking
Mr Takashi is waiting for you in Reception.
- to talk about a project that is ongoing and unfinished
I am writing a report on the takeover, and I should finish in a few days.
- to talk about things we think of as temporary
I am staying with my brother while my house is being redecorated.
- to talk about a gradual change or development
Because of global warming, sea levels are rising slowly.
- (with future reference) to talk about an appointment or arrangement
I am seeing Mrs Langer next Tuesday.

Common phrases used with the present continuous are: *currently, for the moment, at the moment, for the time being, tomorrow (afternoon), right now.*

Stative verbs

Verbs that describe states rather than actions are normally only used in the simple form, i.e. verbs of thinking (e.g. *know, agree*), verbs of appearance (e.g. *look, seem*), feeling (e.g. *prefer, want*), possession (e.g. *own, belong*), the senses (e.g. *taste, sound*). Some stative verbs can sometimes be used in the continuous form, but with a change in meaning.

simple: *I see the Eiffel Tower on my way to work.*

continuous: *I'm seeing Bob on Monday.*

(= *I am meeting Bob*)

Language at work

- 1 Complete 1–8 with the present simple or present continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

- A stockbroker is someone who _____ (buy) and _____ (sell) shares.
- The M40 _____ (go) from London to Birmingham.
- What time _____ (the last flight to New York / leave)?
- Because of the roadworks, it _____ (take) me much longer to get to work.
- I'm afraid Leon is out at the moment. He _____ (have) lunch with a client.
- I can give Anne your letter. I _____ (see) her tomorrow afternoon.
- Tell Heinrich I'll get in touch when I _____ (get back) next week.
- We _____ (develop) a new anti-malaria drug, and hope to start trials in a couple of years.

- 2 Write an appropriate question for these answers, using the stative verbs from the list. More than one correct question is possible.

belong taste look own prefer sound

- Q: *Does the car sound OK to you?* _____
A: I think so – I can't hear anything wrong with it.
- Q: _____?
A: He's about 2 m tall, with dark hair and blue eyes.
- Q: _____?
A: Tea – I don't like coffee at all.
- Q: _____?
A: It's delicious.
- Q: _____?
A: It's mine.
- Q: _____?
A: No, I rent it.

- 3 Choose the correct words in *italics*.

- As a rule, I *catch* / *'m catching* the 8 a.m. train.
- Right now I *design* / *'m designing* a new company website.
- I *stay* / *'m staying* with Clare for the time being.
- On the whole I *complete* / *'m completing* most tasks quite quickly.
- I generally *check* / *am checking* my emails twice a day.