

# 04 The present continuous

The present continuous is used to talk about continued actions that are happening in the present moment. It is formed with "be" and a present participle.

**See also:**

Present simple **1** Action and state verbs **50**

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## 4.1 THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

The present continuous is used to describe a current, continued action.

Julie usually wears jeans, but today **she is wearing** a dress.

The present continuous uses the verb "be."

This is the present continuous. It describes what is happening right now.

This is the present simple. It describes a repeated action or situation.



## HOW TO FORM



Present participle

## FURTHER EXAMPLES

**We are walking** the dog.



**They're fighting** with each other.



**He is washing** the dishes.



**She's relaxing** at the moment.



**They are talking** on their phones.

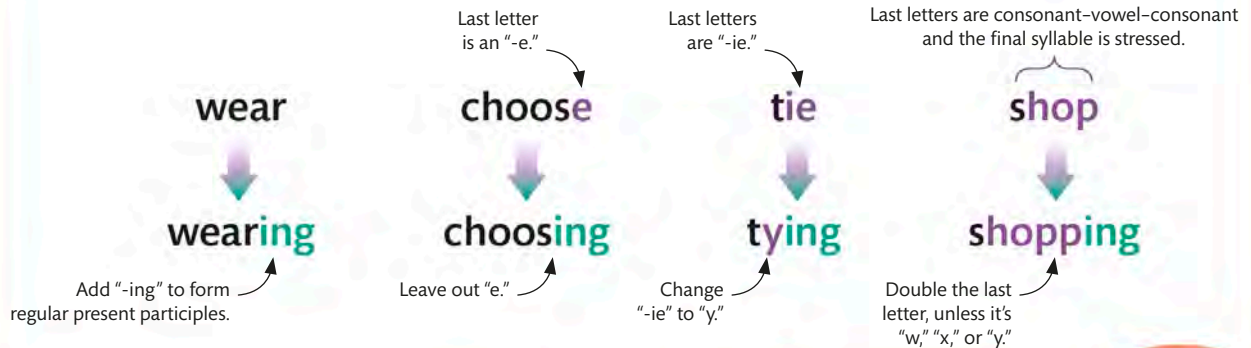


**It's raining** a lot outside.



## 4.2 PRESENT PARTICIPLE SPELLING RULES

The present participle is formed by adding “-ing” to the base form of the verb. Some participles have slightly different spelling rules.



### TIP

Present participles follow the same spelling rules as gerunds.


## FURTHER EXAMPLES

 They’re **opening** a store next week.

 Harry is always **lying** to his mother.

 I am **cutting** some apples.

 My uncle is **writing** a novel.

 Terry is **mopping** the floor.

 My mother is **baking** us a cake.

Don’t double the last letter because the final syllable is not stressed.

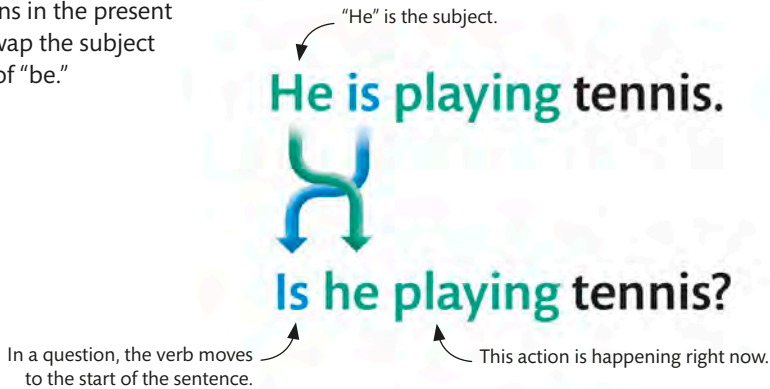
## COMMON MISTAKES STATE VERBS IN CONTINUOUS TENSES

Action verbs can be used in simple and continuous forms.  
State verbs are not usually used in continuous forms.

ACTION	STATE
 <p><b>I read</b> every day. ✓</p> <p><b>I am reading</b> right now. ✓</p>	 <p><b>I own</b> two cars. ✓</p> <p><b>I am owning</b> two cars. ✗</p>

### 4.3 QUESTIONS IN THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

To ask questions in the present continuous, swap the subject and the form of "be."



#### HOW TO FORM



#### FURTHER EXAMPLES

Are they going to the park?



Is he cycling to work?



Is she eating pizza?



Are they working late?



Question words such as "what," "where," and "how" can be used before the verb to form open questions.

Where are we going today?



Are you coming to the party?



What are you eating for dinner?



Is it raining outside?

