

# 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.

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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



## 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.

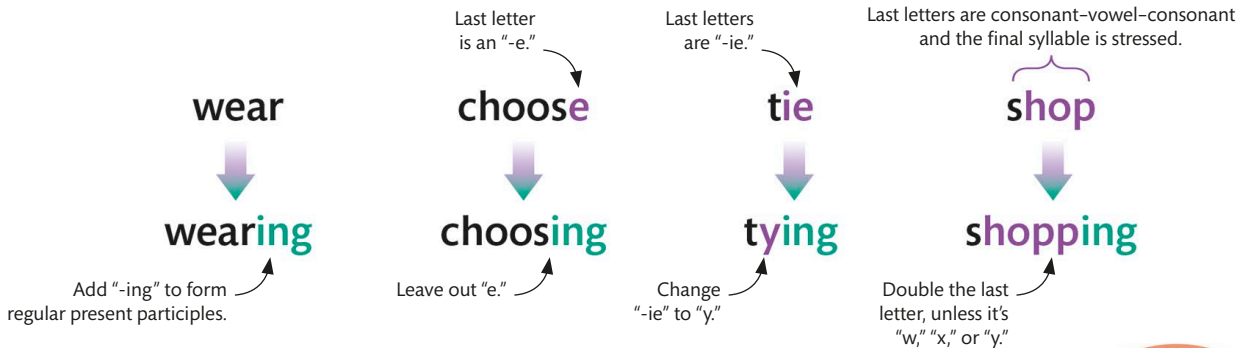


**It's raining** a lot outside.




## 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.





### FURTHER EXAMPLES


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


 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.

### TIP


Present participles follow the same spelling rules as gerunds.


### ! 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

 I **read** every day. ✓

 I **am reading** right now. ✓

 I **own** two cars. ✓

 I **am owning** two cars. ✗

## 4.3 QUESTIONS IN THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

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

"He" is the subject.  
**He is playing tennis.**



**Is he playing tennis?**

In a question, the verb moves to the start of the sentence.

This action is happening right now.



### HOW TO FORM



### FURTHER EXAMPLES

**Are they going** to the park?



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

**Where are we going** today?



**Is he cycling** to work?



**Are you coming** to the party?



**Is she eating** pizza?



**What are you eating** for dinner?



**Are they working** late?



**Is it raining** outside?



## 4.4 THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS NEGATIVE

To make the negative of the present continuous, add "not" after "be."

He is wearing a tie, but he **is not** wearing a hat.

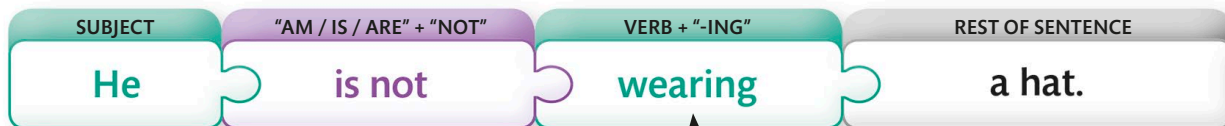
Add "not" after "be" to make the negative. Contractions are also possible.

is not  
isn't

The present participle stays the same when you make the negative.



### HOW TO FORM



The present participle doesn't change.

### FURTHER EXAMPLES

He isn't walking the dog.



We aren't taking the bus today.



They aren't singing well today.



You aren't doing your job!



She isn't cleaning up her bedroom.



James isn't reading his book.



They aren't looking where they're going.



We aren't eating out this week.



He isn't playing football today.



You aren't doing well at school this year.

