

Unit 1

Present continuous (I am doing)

A Study this example situation:

Sarah is in her car. She is on her way to work.
She's **driving** to work. (= She **is driving** ...)

This means: she is driving *now*, at the time of speaking.
The action is not finished.

am/is/are + -ing is the *present continuous*:

I	am	(= I'm)	driving
he/she/it	is	(= he's etc.)	working
we/you/they	are	(= we're etc.)	doing etc.



B **I am doing** something = I started doing it and I haven't finished; I'm in the middle of doing it.

- Please don't make so much noise. **I'm trying** to work. (*not* I try)
- 'Where's Mark?' 'He's **having** a shower.' (*not* He has a shower)
- Let's go out now. It **isn't raining** any more. (*not* It doesn't rain)
- How's your new job? **Are you enjoying** it?
- What's all that noise? What's **going on**? *or* What's **happening**?

Sometimes the action is not happening at the time of speaking. For example:

Steve is talking to a friend on the phone. He says:



Steve says '**I'm reading** ...' but he is *not* reading the book at the time of speaking.

He means that he has started reading the book, but has not finished it yet. He is in the middle of reading it.

Some more examples:

- Kate wants to work in Italy, so she's **learning** Italian.
(but perhaps she isn't learning Italian at the time of speaking)
- Some friends of mine **are building** their own house. They hope to finish it next summer.

C You can use the present continuous with **today / this week / this year** etc. (periods around now):

- A: You're **working** hard **today**. (*not* You work hard today)
- B: Yes, I have a lot to do.
- The company I work for **isn't doing** so well **this year**.

D We use the present continuous when we talk about a change that has started to happen. We often use these verbs in this way:

getting, becoming **changing, improving**
starting, beginning **increasing, rising, falling, growing**

- Is your English **getting** better? (*not* Does your English get better)
- The population of the world **is increasing** very fast. (*not* increases)

