

Grammar reference

Present simple and continuous

The present simple has the following uses.

- regular events and processes
We **hold** four meetings a year.
We **don't** usually **start** till 9 o'clock.
How often **do** you **travel** on business?

Key words

a week / month / year, always, ever, never, often, rarely, seldom, sometimes, usually

- facts that will not change
Our company **manufactures** mobile phones.
Where **do** you **export** to?
I **don't** **take** sugar in coffee.
- timetables and scheduled events
When **does** the plane **leave**?
The conference **starts** at 9:30 am.

The present continuous has the following uses.

- events happening now
I **'m** **working** on a project to promote sales.
Our sales **are** **growing** fast.
Are you **enjoying** your new job?

Key words

now, at the moment, currently

- temporary situations
We **'re** **attending** a training course this week.
I **'m** **not** **working** at head office at the moment.
Are you **staying** at the new hotel?
- future arrangements
Where **are** we **meeting** on Friday?
My colleague **isn't** **coming** to the meeting.

The continuous is not usually used with the following stative verbs.

- verbs that express opinions or feelings
like, dislike, hate, prefer, want, believe, think, feel, mean, understand, realise, recognise
Exception: We **'re** **thinking** about your proposal. (=considering)
- verbs of the senses
see, hear, feel, smell, taste, seem
Exception: I **'m** **seeing** him tomorrow (=meeting)
- verbs of ownership
have, need, want
Exception: We **'re** **having** lunch tomorrow.
(have doesn't indicate ownership)

Exercises

1 Complete the text with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

I (¹ work) _____ for a company that
(² make) _____ office furniture.
We (³ sell) _____ to companies all over
Europe, so I often (⁴ travel) _____ in my job.
Right now I (⁵ plan) _____ a trip to Cyprus,
which is a new market for us. I (⁶ meet)
_____ some prospective distributors there
next week. Some people (⁷ say) _____ that
it's difficult to enter a new market.
But I (⁸ not think) _____ it's going to be a
problem for us. We (⁹ have) _____ good
contacts in the region who (¹⁰ know) _____
the local conditions.

2 Look at the underlined verb phrases. Is the verb form correct? If not, correct it.

Hi, Sam

¹ I am needing your help. ² We're thinking of buying some new equipment. ³ I know ⁴ you're having some experience of this, and ⁵ I'm hoping you can give me some advice. ⁶ We are currently trying out the Servex Multijob X15, which ⁷ we have on loan from head office, but it's too big for our needs. ⁸ Servex is also making a smaller model: the X12. Is that the model ⁹ you are using at the moment? If so, what ¹⁰ are you thinking about it? ¹¹ Are you liking it?

Many thanks for your help.

Best regards

Toni