

Going on – Present Continuous Tense

Reading/Discussion:

'Hi Mary, what are you doing?'

'I'm talking to you!'

'I know, silly, I mean what are you doing today?'

'I'm watching a DVD at Tom's house this afternoon.'

'Aren't you finishing your homework?'

'No, I'm not studying today, I'll start again tomorrow.'



It sounds as if Mary is skipping out on her homework, but the importance of the telephone call for us is that all the sentences in the conversation are in the present continuous tense. Present continuous tense is a bit of a mouthful but it is quite easy to use and to identify. The first thing to notice is that each verb has an **auxiliary verb** or a helping verb. I **am**, you **are**, she **is**, are all examples from the auxiliary verb '**to be**'. The second thing to notice is that the main verb has **ing** added to it.

The present continuous tense appears in different forms. 'I'm talking to you' is the **positive form**; 'I'm not studying today' is the **negative form**; and 'What are you doing?' is the **question form**. Notice that in the question, form the auxiliary verb comes before the subject. We use this tense to speak about what is happening (or not happening) right now: "I'm talking to you"; 'I'm not studying'. We also use it when we talk about something that is ongoing, for example, 'I'm studying hard this week.' and for something which we have planned to do: 'I'm watching a DVD at Tom's house.' Finally, we use the present continuous tense for things which keep happening: 'She is always complaining about the weather.'; or keep changing: 'It is getting colder every day.'

To show when the action is happening we use words and phrases like: today, now, at the moment, later, always and tomorrow.

Name _____

Date _____

Going on – Present Continuous Tense Questions

A: Change the tense

Here are some sentences with the main verb in brackets. Can you change the tense to present continuous?

1. I (talk) to my friend.
2. Right now she (sleep)
3. My mom (cook) at the moment.
4. We (go) to the movies
5. They (build) their house themselves.
6. Tomorrow I (sing) in the concert.

B. Questions

Now turn the sentences into questions. The first one has been done for you.

1. Am I talking to my friend?
2. .
3. .
4. .
5. .
6. .

C. When do we use the present continuous tense?

Underline the sentences which are correct:

1. What is happening right now.
2. What happened yesterday.
3. What is continuing to happen.
4. What happened last week.
5. What we plan to do later.
6. What we hope to do later.
7. What keeps on happening.

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Going on – Present Continuous Tense Answers

Activity A

1. I am talking to my friend.
2. Right now she is sleeping
3. My mom is cooking at the moment.
4. We are going to the movies
5. They are building their house themselves.
6. Tomorrow I am singing in the concert.

Activity B

1. Am I talking to my friend?
2. Is she sleeping right now?
3. Is my mom cooking at the moment?
4. Are we going to the movies?
5. Are they building their house themselves?
6. Am I singing in the concert tomorrow?

Activity C

1. What is happening right now.
2. What happened yesterday.
3. What is continuing to happen.
4. What happened last week.
5. What we plan to do later.
6. What we hope to do later.
7. What keeps on happening