

# Advanced Grammar in Use

# Unit 1

## Present continuous and present simple 1

### A State verbs

Reminder → A1–A5

We can use the present continuous with some state verbs (e.g. **attract, like, look, love, sound**) to emphasise that a situation is temporary or for a period of time around the present. Compare:

- Ella stays with us quite often. The children **love** having her here. *and*
- Ella's with us at the moment. The children **are loving** having her here.

State verbs which we rarely use with the present continuous include **believe, consist of, doubt, own**.

### B

Some verbs have different meanings when they are used to talk about states and when they describe actions. With their 'state' meanings, they usually take simple rather than continuous forms. With their 'action' meanings, they may take simple or continuous forms, depending on context. Compare:

- The app **doesn't appear** to work on my phone. (appear: *state* = seem) *and*
- Carley Robb **is** currently **appearing** in a musical on Broadway. / She often **appears** in musicals. (appear: *action* = take part)

*Also: cost, expect, feel, fit, have, imagine, measure, think, weigh*

### C

#### Mental state verbs

With some verbs describing *mental* states (e.g. **find, realise, regret, think, understand**) we can use the present continuous to emphasise that we have recently started to think about something or that we are not sure about something. Compare:

- I **regret** that the company will have to be sold. (= I've made the decision and I'm sorry about it) *and*
- I'm **regretting** my decision to give her the job. (= I'm increasingly aware that it was the wrong decision)

When it means 'think carefully about', **consider** is only used with the present continuous:

- He's **considering** taking early retirement. (*not* He considers taking early retirement.)

Some other verbs describing preferences and mental states (e.g. **agree, believe, conclude, know, prefer**) are rarely used with the present continuous:

- I **believe** you now. (*not* I'm believing you now.)

### D

#### Performatives

We use the present simple with verbs which perform the action they describe (= performatives):

- I **suggest** you park outside the city and get the bus to the centre.
- We **request** that you read the terms and conditions carefully before signing.

*Also: acknowledge, admit, advise, apologise, beg, confess, congratulate, declare, deny, forbid, guarantee, name, order, permit, predict, promise, refuse, remind, request, thank, warn*

Some verbs used as performatives with the present simple in affirmative (= positive) sentences (**apologise, deny, guarantee, promise, suggest**) have a similar meaning with either the present simple or the present continuous in negative sentences:

- I **don't deny** / I'm **not denying** taking the books, but Miguel said it would be okay.

Modals are often used with performatives to make what we say more tentative or polite:

- We **would advise** you to arrive two hours before the flight leaves.
- I **must beg** you to keep this a secret.

## Exercises

- 1.1** Complete each pair of sentences using the same verb (in a question form or negative if necessary) from the box. Use the present continuous; if this is not possible, use the present simple. Use  $\surd$  to add any words outside the gap and use contracted forms where appropriate.

A &amp; B

attract consist of doubt feel fit  
 have like ~~look~~ measure sound

- 1 a I hear you're having your house repainted. How  $\surd$  it <sup>'s</sup> looking? (or How  $\surd$  it <sup>does</sup> look?)  
 b I bought this new dress today. How  $\surd$  it <sup>does</sup> look?  
 2 a A: What are you doing with that ruler? B: I ..... the area of the kitchen.  
 b The garden ..... 12 by 20 metres.  
 3 a I ..... whether I'll get another chance to retake the exam.  
 b I suppose she might be at home tonight, but I ..... it.  
 4 a The new science museum currently ..... 10,000 visitors a month.  
 b Flowers ..... bees with their brightly-coloured petals.  
 5 a Carlos won't work at the top of the 20-storey building because he ..... heights.  
 b A: How's the new job? B: Well, at the moment, I ..... it at all.  
 6 a My car's in the garage today. They ..... new brakes.  
 b I bought this jumper for Anna, but it ..... her so I'll have to take it back.  
 7 a What's your shirt made from? It ..... like silk.  
 b I won't be coming to work today. I ..... very well.  
 8 a The roof of the house ..... only plastic sheets nailed down in a few places.  
 b Their school uniform ..... black trousers and a dark green jumper.  
 9 a Simon's new song ..... quite good, but he doesn't think he's ready yet to perform it in public.  
 b A: What's that noise? B: It ..... like a bird stuck in the chimney.  
 10 a Poulson ..... treatment for a knee injury, but should be fit to play on Saturday.  
 b My sister ..... long blonde hair. You're bound to recognise her.

- 1.2** Cross out any improbable answers. **C & D**

Dear Aunt Mara,

Thanks for your message. I (1) *apologise* / 'm *apologising* for not getting back to you sooner, but I've been incredibly busy. When I went into nursing, you warned me that it would be really hard work, but I (2) *admit* / 'm *admitting* that I didn't really believe you. Don't get me wrong – I (3) *don't suggest* / 'm *not suggesting* that I'm not enjoying it. It's incredibly rewarding, but I (4) *now realise* / 'm *now realising* how hard the job is. When I get home I just eat (not very well, I (5) *confess* / 'm *confessing*) and go straight to bed. It doesn't help that the bus journey to the hospital is so slow. I (6) *consider* / 'm *considering* buying a car, which will make things easier, I hope.

And what about you? How (7) *do you find* / *are you finding* living in a village after so many years in the city? I (8) *know* / 'm *knowing* how difficult it is for you to travel such a long way, but it would be lovely if you could come and stay with me for a weekend. I've got plenty of room in my flat. I (9) *don't guarantee* / 'm *not guaranteeing* to cook as well as you do, but I (10) *promise* / 'm *promising* to find time to show you around this lovely old town.

Hope to see you soon. Keep in touch.

Love,  
 Martina

→ Additional exercise 1 (page 240)

## Unit 2

### Present continuous and present simple 2

A

We often use the present simple and present continuous in stories and jokes in informal spoken English to create the impression that events are happening now. This can make them more direct and exciting and hold people's attention:

Reminder → A1–A5

- She **goes** up to this man and **looks** straight into his eyes. He's not **wearing** his glasses, and he **doesn't recognise** her ...
- This man's **playing** golf when a kangaroo **bounds** up to him, **grabs** his club and **hits** his ball about half a mile ...

The main events are usually described in sequence using the present simple and longer background events are described using the present continuous.

In narratives and anecdotes the present simple can be used to highlight an event. Often it is used after past tenses and with a phrase such as **suddenly** or **all of a sudden**:

- So last night, I'm waiting for the bus when this man **walks** up to me and **says** ...
- I was in the park reading a newspaper, when *all of a sudden* this dog **jumps** at me.



B

We also use the present simple and present continuous in live commentaries (for example, on sports events) when the report takes place at the same time as the action:

- King **serves** to the left-hand court and Adams **makes** a wonderful return. She's **playing** magnificent tennis in this match ...

C

We can use the present simple in phrases such as **It says here**, **I hear**, **I gather**, **I see**, **I understand** and **They say**, **(Someone) says**, **(Someone) tells me** to introduce news that we have heard, read, seen (e.g. on television), or been told. We can also use past tenses (e.g. **It said here**, **I heard**):

- I gather** you're worried about Pedro.
- Sophia **tells me** you're thinking of emigrating.
- Professor Hendriks is at the conference and **I hear** she's an excellent speaker.

D

The present simple is often used in news headlines to talk about events that have recently happened:

**SECOND QUAKE HITS JAPAN**

**FIRE BREAKS OUT IN HOTEL ROOM**

**SCIENTISTS FIND ICE ON THE MOON**

**FOREIGN MINISTER RESIGNS**

We can use the present simple to refer to the contents of books, films, newspapers, etc:

- Thompson **gives** a list of the largest European companies in Chapter 6.
- At the beginning of the book, three men **find** \$4 million in a crashed plane.
- In the film, Loni Baranski **takes** the role of a private detective.

E

We can use the present continuous with adverbs such as **always**, **constantly**, **continually** or **forever** to emphasise that something is done so often that it is characteristic of a person, group or thing:

- a: I think I'll stay here after all. b: You're **constantly changing** your mind.
- Jacob is a really kind person. He's **always offering** to help me with my work.

We often use this pattern to indicate disapproval. The past continuous is used in a similar way with these adverbs (e.g. **Was** Olivia **always asking** you for money, too?).

We can use the present continuous to describe something we regularly do at a certain time:




- At eight o'clock I'm usually **driving** to work, so phone me on my mobile.
- Seven o'clock is a bit early. We're generally **eating** then.

# Exercises

**2.1** Complete these sentences using the verbs in brackets. Use the present simple or present continuous. **A & B**

- Rodriguez passes to Messi who ..... just over the bar. Barcelona ..... much more in this half ... (pass – shoot – attack)
- A man ..... home late one night after the office Christmas party. His wife ..... for him, and she ..... to him ... (arrive – wait – say)
- I went to a concert yesterday in the Town Hall. In the middle of it, while the orchestra ..... this man suddenly ..... on his seat and ..... to conduct them. (play – stand – start)

**2.2** Complete what each person says about the news they have read or heard using the present tense phrases in C. **C**

- Government gives health service billions** I see the government's giving the health service a lot more money.
- Vegecorp to sack 1,000 workers.** ..... Vegecorp are going to .....
- President Cartman announced a new public holiday on his birthday, August 6th. He made the announcement ...  
..... we're going to have .....
-  Did you hear that Bruno's crashed his car again?  
*Ed* ..... Bruno's .....
-  I've got a new job.  
*Julia* ..... she's .....
-  A team of researchers claims to have identified a gene which causes some people to overeat.  
..... they've identified .....

**2.3** Expand one of the sets of notes below to complete each dialogue. **E**

continually / change / mind    forever / moan / work    forever / ask me / money  
 constantly / criticise / driving    ~~always / complain / handwriting~~

- A: I can't read this.    B: You're always complaining about my handwriting.
- A: Can I borrow €10?    B: You're .....
- A: That was a dangerous thing to do.    B: You're .....
- A: I think I'll stay here after all.    B: You're .....
- A: I had a bad day at the office again.    B: You're .....

**2.4** Complete each pair of sentences using the same verb (in negative form if necessary). Use the present continuous or the present simple. Use  $\checkmark$  to add any words outside the gap. **D & E**

- a A: Shall I phone at six?    B: No, we usually ..... dinner at that time.  
 b I ..... lamb, thanks. I'm a vegetarian.
- a Gielman ..... Henry V in the latest production at the Royal Theatre.  
 b They constantly ..... loud music until the early hours of the morning.
- a I normally ..... the children to school at 8:30. Perhaps we could meet at 9:00.  
 b In his 2007 book, Wall ..... a controversial view of Britain's role in the war.

## Unit 3

### Past simple and present perfect

A

Time expressions that refer to the present, such as **this morning** / **week** / **month** and **today**, can be used with either past simple or present perfect verbs.

Reminder → A6–A12

If we think of **this morning** (etc.) as a past, completed time period, then we use the past simple; if we think of **this morning** (etc.) as a time period which includes the present moment, then we use the present perfect. Compare:

- I **didn't shave** *this morning*. (= the morning is over and I didn't shave) *and*
- I **haven't shaved** *this morning*. (= it is still the morning and I might shave later)

B

In a sentence which includes a time clause with **since**, we generally prefer a past simple verb in the time clause and a present perfect verb in the main clause. The time clause refers to a particular point in the past:

- Since* Mr Dodson **became** president unemployment **has increased**. (*rather than ... has become ...*)
- She **hasn't been able** to play tennis *since* she **broke** her arm. (*rather than ... has broken ...*)

Note, however, that we use the present perfect in the time clause if the two situations described in the main clause and time clause extend until the present:

- Have you met** any of your neighbours *since* you've **lived** here? (*not ... you lived ...*)

C

With time clauses introduced by **after**, **when**, **until**, **as soon as**, **once**, **by the time** and the time expressions **the minute** / **second** / **moment** the past simple refers to past, completed events and the present perfect refers to future events. Compare these examples:

- After* she **left** hospital (past), she had a long holiday. *and*
- After* Lucas **has left** school (future), he will be spending six months in India.
- The minute* I **got** the news about Anna (past) I telephoned my parents. *and*
- I'll contact you *the minute* I've **got** my exam results. (future)

In the time clause in sentences like this it is possible to use the past perfect instead of the past simple (e.g. *After* she **had left** ...) and the present simple instead of the present perfect (e.g. *After* Lucas **leaves** ...) with the same meaning (see also [Unit 5](#)).

D

In news reports, you will often read about or hear recent events introduced with the present perfect, and then the past simple or other past tenses are used to give details:



- A Russian spacecraft **has returned** safely to Earth with its two passengers. US astronaut Scott Keane and Russian cosmonaut Olga Kaleri **landed** in the early hours of Wednesday.

- An American woman **has become** the first person to make 2 million contributions to Wikipedia. Esther Miller **began** editing the site eight years ago.

E

After the pattern **It / This / That is / will be the first time ...** we generally use the present perfect in the next clause:

- That's the first time* I've **seen** Jan look embarrassed. (reporting a past event)
- It won't be the first time* she **has voted** against the government. (talking about a future event)

Note that after **It / This / That was the first time ...** we generally use the *past* perfect (see [Unit 5](#)):

- It was the first time* I'd **talked** to Dimitra outside the office.



## Exercises

**3.1** Complete each sentence with a verb from the box. Use the present perfect or past simple, with a negative form where necessary. **A**

have go oversleep read spend wear

- A: Shall I make us some dinner? It's already eight o'clock.  
 B: No, thanks. I ..... to the dentist this afternoon and my mouth hurts too much to eat anything.
- I ..... three lectures today and I still have two more later this afternoon.
- It was so hot today that I ..... shorts and a T-shirt at work.
- We ..... £200 on food this month and there's another week to go before I get paid.
- A: Do you want a lift home?  
 B: No, I ..... this morning because my alarm clock didn't go off, so I need to work late.
- I ..... much of the report yet, but I have to finish it by the weekend.

**3.2** Complete the sentences with the pairs of verbs from the box. Choose the most appropriate tense — present perfect or past simple. **B**

be able – feel happen – speak improve – be  
 not want – fall rescue – be work – not have

- Maria ..... to go swimming since she ..... in the river.
- Since she ..... at the company she ..... a day off through illness.
- Since he ..... the girl from a house fire, he ..... on TV almost every day.
- A lot ..... since I last ..... to you.
- Since I ..... to drive I ..... much more independent
- Stefan's reading ..... enormously since he ..... at school.

**3.3** One sentence in each pair is wrong. Correct it by replacing the past simple with the present perfect of the italicised verb. **C**

- a Remember that after you *signed* the contract you won't be able to change your mind.  
 b Carlo's injury only became apparent after he *signed* to play for Real Madrid.
- a As soon as I *finished* college I want to travel around Australia.  
 b I didn't have time to check the essay. I handed it in as soon as I *finished* it.
- a By the time Sarah *got* to work the meeting had finished.  
 b I'll probably have finished breakfast by the time the children *got* up.
- a I recognised her the moment I *heard* her laugh.  
 b I'll tell you what time we're coming the moment I *heard* from Emil.

**3.4** Here are some extracts from a television news report. Choose the more appropriate tense – present perfect or past simple – for the verbs in brackets. **D & E**

- When President Nelson ..... *arrives* (arrive) in Paris this evening, it will be the first time she ..... (visit) Europe since her election victory in May.
- The Victoria Hospital in Milltown ..... (close) to new patients after more cases of food poisoning. Three elderly patients ..... (die) last week in the outbreak.
- The rate of inflation ..... (drop) to 4.8%. It's the first time in nearly two years that the rate ..... (fall) below 5%.
- Nearly 600 laptops ..... (steal) from Ministry of Defence staff over the past five years. However, a spokesperson ..... (insist) that there had been no security problems as none of the computers ..... (hold) secret information.

# Unit 4

## Past continuous and past simple

A

When we talk about two events or activities that went on over the same period of past time, we can often use the past continuous or the past simple for both:

- Mia **was reading** to the children while Ben **was washing up**. (or ... **read** ... **washed up**.)

Using the past continuous emphasises that the event or activity ('was reading') was in progress during the past period of time ('while Ben was washing up'). Compare:

- When I **was learning** / **learned** to drive I was living with my parents.

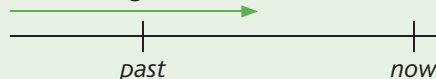
**Was learning** emphasises that the activity was in progress ('I had lessons during this time') and **learned** emphasises completion ('I passed my test during this time').

When we talk about two or more past completed events that followed one another, we use the past simple, not the past continuous, for both (see also [Unit 5C](#)):

- She **got** up when the alarm clock **went** off.

Reminder → A6–A8, A13

was reading / read



was washing up / washed up

B

We usually use the past simple rather than the past continuous to talk about repeated past actions:

- We **went** to Spain three times last year.  
 **Did** you **drive** past her house every day?

However, we can use the past continuous, particularly in spoken English, when we want to emphasise that repeated actions went on for a limited and temporary period of past time:

- When Kata was in hospital, we **were visiting** her twice a day. (or ... we **visited** ...)  
 To lose weight before the race, I **wasn't eating** any biscuits for weeks. (or ... I **didn't eat** ...)

or to talk about something that happened surprisingly often:

- Last week I **was having to** bring work home every night to get it all done. (or ... **had** ...)  
 When the builders were here I **was making** them cups of tea all the time. (or ... **made** ...)

C

We often use the past simple in a narrative (e.g. a report or a story) to talk about a single complete past event and the past continuous to describe the situation that existed at the time. The event might have interrupted the situation, or happened while the situation was in progress:

- Erika **dropped** her bag while she **was getting** into her car.  
 She **was shaking** with anger as she **left** the hotel.

D

We can use either the past continuous or past simple (or past perfect; see [Unit 5E](#)) with some verbs to talk about things we intended to do but didn't:

- We **were meaning** to call in and see you, but Marc wasn't feeling well. (or We **meant** ...)

Also: **consider + -ing, expect to, hope to, intend to, plan to / on + -ing, think about / of + -ing, want to**

These verbs (with the exception of **mean** and **expect**) and **wonder about** can also be used with the present and past continuous to report what we might do in the future. The past continuous is less definite than the present continuous:

- I **was thinking of** going to China next year, but it depends how much money I've got. (*less definite than I'm thinking of going ...*)  
 We **were wondering about** inviting Eva over tomorrow. (*less definite than We're wondering about ...*)



## Exercises

- 4.1** Complete the sentences using these pairs of verbs. Use the past simple in one gap and the past continuous in the other. **A–D**

come – show    ~~get – go~~    hope – give    live – spend  
 look – see    play – break    start – check in

- Just as I *was getting* into the bath all the lights *went* off.
- I ..... to go away this weekend, but my boss ..... me some work that I have to finish by Monday.
- When I ..... in Paris, I ..... three hours a day travelling to and from work.
- A friendly American couple ..... chatting to him as he ..... at the hotel reception.
- I bumped into Lena last week. She ..... a lot better than when I last ..... her.
- My boss ..... into the office just as I ..... everyone my holiday photos.
- I ..... badminton four times a week before I ..... my ankle.



This time, use the *same* tense, either past simple or past continuous, in both spaces.

add – taste    go off – light    not listen – explain    push – run    not watch – dream

- The smoke alarm ..... when he ..... a candle underneath it.
- I can't remember how to answer this question. I must confess that I ..... while the teacher ..... it to us.
- She ..... more salt to the soup, and then it ..... much better.
- Although the television was on, I ..... it. Instead I ..... about my holidays.
- She ..... open the door and ..... into the room.

- 4.2** Look again at numbers 1, 4, 7 and 11 in 4.1. Which of these sentences could have both verbs in the past simple? What difference in meaning, if any, would there be?

- 4.3** Complete this email with either the past simple or the past continuous form of the verbs in brackets. Where alternatives are possible, think about any difference in meaning. **A–C**

I (1) ..... (*buy*) a new alarm clock the other day in Taylor's the jewellers, when I actually (2) ..... (*see*) somebody shoplifting. I'd just finished paying for my clock and as I (3) ..... (*turn*) round, an elderly woman (4) ..... (*slowly put*) a silver plate into a bag that she (5) ..... (*carry*). Then she (6) ..... (*walk*) over to another part of the shop and (7) ..... (*pick up*) an expensive-looking watch a number of times. When she (8) ..... (*think*) that nobody (9) ..... (*look*), she (10) ..... (*drop*) it into the bag. Before I (11) ..... (*have*) a chance to tell the staff in the shop, she (12) ..... (*notice*) that I (13) ..... (*watch*) her and (14) ..... (*hurry*) out. Unfortunately for her, two police officers (15) ..... (*walk*) past just at that moment and she (16) ..... (*run*) straight into them.

# Unit 5

## Past perfect and past simple

A

When we give an account of a sequence of past events we usually put these events in chronological order using the past simple. If we want to refer to an event out of order – that is, an event which happened *before* the last event in the sequence we have written or spoken about – we can use the past perfect. Study the use of the past perfect and past simple in the text on the right:

Reminder → A6–A8, A14–A15

Order of events:	1 gave present 2 wrote email 3 made mistake 4 realised mistake
Order events are mentioned:	1 wrote email 2 <b>had given</b> present ( <i>out of order</i> ) 3 realised mistake 4 <b>had made</b> mistake ( <i>out of order</i> )

I **wrote** Clara an email to thank her for the present she **had given** me for my birthday last week. But as soon as I pressed the 'send' button, I **realised** that I **had made** a mistake and sent it to her sister instead.

B

When we understand that we are talking about events before another past event, we don't have to continue using the past perfect:

- We **bought** a new car last month. We'd **driven** my parents' old car for ages, but it **started** (*or had started*) to fall apart. We **put** (*or had put*) a new engine in it, but that **didn't solve** (*or hadn't solved*) the problems we were having.

C

If the order of past events is clear from the context (for example, if time expressions make the order clear) we can often use either the past perfect or the past simple:

- After* Ivan **had finished** reading, he put out the light. (*or ... Ivan finished ...*)
- The two leaders agreed to meet, even though *earlier* talks **had failed** to reach an agreement. (*or ... talks failed ...*)

D

The past perfect is often used in reporting what was originally said or thought in the present perfect or past simple (see also [Unit 35](#)):

Talking about a past event	Reporting this past event
<input type="checkbox"/> 'I <b>have met</b> him before.'	<input type="checkbox"/> I was sure that I <b>had met</b> him before. ( <i>not ... I met him ...</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> 'The village <b>hasn't changed</b> much.'	<input type="checkbox"/> I found that the village <b>hadn't changed</b> much. ( <i>not ... the village didn't change ...</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> '225 people <b>drowned</b> in the recent floods.'	<input type="checkbox"/> Police said that 225 people <b>had drowned</b> in the recent floods. ( <i>or ... drowned ...</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> 'I <b>stole</b> the watch.'	<input type="checkbox"/> She admitted that she <b>had stolen</b> the watch. ( <i>or ... stole ...</i> )

E

We can use either the past perfect or past simple (and often past continuous and past perfect continuous; see [Units 4 and 7](#)) when we talk about things that we intended to do, but didn't or won't now do in the future:

- I **had hoped** to visit the gallery before I left Florence, but it's closed on Mondays. (*or I hoped ..., I was hoping ..., I had been hoping ...*)
- Aron **planned** to retire at 60, but we have persuaded him to stay for a few more years. (*or Aron had planned ..., Aron was planning ..., Aron had been planning ...*)