

1

Present simple and present continuous  
I'm holding my breath.

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Friday night

It's midnight and I'm holding my breath.  
I feel so scared that I can't move.  
There it is again – a noise downstairs. I think there's someone in the house.  
'Don't be silly!' I say to myself. (I'm always lying awake at night and listening to noises. Usually I find out it's the fridge or someone next door or ... just nothing.)  
I'm staying at my friend's house. Round here all the houses have got two floors. My friend doesn't live in a safe part of town and sometimes burglars come in through the downstairs windows.  
I've prepared for this moment. This is what you do:  
1 You lock the door as quietly as you can. 2 You phone the police on your mobile. 3 You talk to the police very loudly.  
There's the noise again ... and it's getting closer.  
I don't want to do this. I get slowly out of bed. But then I stop. Two round eyes are looking at me.  
I scream.  
The neighbour's cat runs back the way it came. How did it get in? Probably through the downstairs window.  
But that means the downstairs window is open ...

?

1 Where is the writer of the story?  
2 What is making the noise?

Answers: 1 The writer is at his or her friend's house. The writer is in bed upstairs.  
2 The neighbour's cat

Present simple and present continuous

Present simple

- 3 Add an -s for third person forms in present simple statements.  
All other forms stay the same.  
I / you / we / they run.  
He / she / it runs.
- 2 Make negative forms of regular verbs with don't and doesn't.  
I don't want to do this.  
My friend doesn't live in a safe part of town.  
NOT ... doesn't lives ...
- 3 Use the present simple for things that are always or usually true.  
He doesn't live in a safe part of town.
- 4 Use the present simple for regular or repeated events and habits.  
I visit my friend every month.

- 5 We often use the present simple with adverbs of frequency, e.g. *always, never, usually*.  
*Usually I find out it's the fridge or someone next door ... or just nothing.*
- 6 We often use the present simple to give instructions or directions.  
1 You **lock** the door as quietly as you can.  
2 You **phone** the police on your mobile.
- 7 We often use the present simple to tell a story, or to describe a series of events as they happen.  
*I get slowly out of bed. But then I stop.*
- 8 We often use the present simple for a review (of a book or a film, for example).  
*The film tells the story of a boy who lives in the poorest part of the city. It has an unexpected ending.*

TIP

*Have got* means the same as *have*.  
*Have got* is more common in informal and British English.  
*I've got three brothers.* = *I have three brothers.*  
*I haven't got any sisters.* = *I don't have any sisters.*  
A: *Have you got any children?*  
B: Yes, *I have.* / No, *I haven't.*  
= A: *Do you have any children?* B: Yes, *I do.* / No, *I don't.*

Present continuous

- 9 Make present continuous sentences with *am / is / are + verb + -ing*.  
*I'm always lying awake.*  
*It's getting closer.*  
*Two round eyes are looking at me.*
- 10 Use the present continuous to describe an activity in progress now or around now.  
*Two round eyes are looking at me.*  
*I'm studying two languages: English and Spanish.*
- 11 Use the present continuous to talk about unfinished or temporary actions.  
*I'm staying at my friend's.*

TIP

Note the difference:  
*He lives in a beautiful flat.* (The speaker doesn't think this situation will change soon.)  
*He's living in the north of the city at the moment.* (The speaker thinks this is a temporary situation.)

- 12 Use the present continuous with *always, constantly* or *forever* to criticise.  
*I'm always hearing noises.*
- 13 Use the present continuous to talk about situations which are gradually changing.  
*The noise is getting louder.*
- 14 We often use the present continuous to describe the background to a story. We use the present simple to describe the events.  
*It's midnight and I'm holding my breath.*  
*'Don't be silly!' I say to myself.*
- 15 We don't usually use the present continuous with state verbs (which describe states, not actions), e.g. *want, sound, believe, mean, promise*.  
*I don't want to do this.*  
*That means the downstairs window is open.*
- 16 We can use some state verbs in the continuous form to describe actions. The verb then has a different meaning. Some common verbs we use like this are: *appear, expect, feel, have, imagine, look, think, see, smell, taste, weigh*.  
*I think there's someone there.*  
(*think* = talking about a belief)  
*I'm thinking what to do next.*  
(*think* = talking about a process)

TIP

We often use the present simple in formal letters and emails.  
*I write to inform you that ...*  
*I look forward to meeting you.*

We often use the present continuous in more informal letters and emails.  
*I'm writing to let you know that ...*  
*I'm looking forward to seeing you.*

► See Unit 8 for the present simple and present continuous with future meaning.

Practice

A Underline the correct option.

It's the middle of the afternoon. In a quiet neighbourhood a burglar <sup>1</sup>*tries / is trying* to break into a house. He <sup>2</sup>*creeps / is creeping* round the house when he <sup>3</sup>*hears / is hearing* a voice. 'Spider-Man <sup>4</sup>*watches / is watching* you!' The burglar <sup>5</sup>*turns / is turning* round quickly but he <sup>6</sup>*doesn't see / isn't seeing* anything. So he <sup>7</sup>*starts / is starting* creeping across the garden again. 'Spider-Man <sup>8</sup>*watches / is watching* you!' The burglar <sup>9</sup>*hears / is hearing* the voice again and this time he <sup>10</sup>*sees / is seeing* a parrot. The parrot <sup>11</sup>*sits / is sitting* by the side of the house. <sup>12</sup>*Do you talk / Are you talking* to me?' <sup>13</sup>*asks / is asking* the burglar. 'Yes,' <sup>14</sup>*says / is saying* the parrot. 'How do you do? I'm Batman.' 'That's a silly name,' <sup>15</sup>*laughs / is laughing* the burglar. 'Why <sup>16</sup>*does your owner call / is your owner calling* you that?' 'I have no idea,' <sup>17</sup>*replies / is replying* the parrot, 'and <sup>18</sup>*I don't know / I'm not knowing* why the **rottweiler's** name is Spider-Man.' 'I <sup>19</sup>*don't want / am not wanting* to find out!' the burglar <sup>20</sup>*says / is saying*. And he <sup>21</sup>*runs / is running* away!

B Match each text 1–5 to a description a–e. Then complete the texts using the words in brackets and either the present simple or the present continuous.

1 ☐ c  
You go (go) along this street and you turn (turn) left at the end. The shop is on your right.

2 ☐  
As oil prices rise, the cost of air travel (increase). Reports show that as a result more and more people (stay) at home for their holidays and (not travel) abroad.









4 ☐  
I (work) at the garage until September.

C Match the pairs.

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 At last the sun             | a is coming out.                            |
| 2 The sun                     | b always comes after rain.                  |
| 3 They're not staying         | a at home in the evenings.                  |
| 4 They don't usually stay     | b in the country for very long.             |
| 5 The sea level on Earth      | a is rising.                                |
| 6 The sun                     | b rises early.                              |
| 7 In the mountains            | a it's getting cold.                        |
| 8 Come and have your dinner – | b it gets cold.                             |
| 9 I'm looking forward         | a to meeting you at the interview tomorrow. |
| 10 We look forward            | b to seeing you in town tomorrow.           |

D Complete the sentences using the verbs from the box in the present simple or present continuous. Each verb is used twice.

not have not look think weigh

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
- 1 The child weighs 21 kilos.  
2 He weighs all the ingredients for a cake.  
3 They look any pets.  
4 Alex looks breakfast this morning.  
5 What looks about?  
6 What looks of this photo?  
7 You look very happy.  
8 You won't find it. You look in the right place.

3 ☐  
What annoys me about my sister? Well, she (always talk) to her friends on the phone! And she (always lose) things.

- 5 ☐  
I enjoyed this. It's about a guy who (go) round the world and (travel) on as many different forms of transport as possible.
- |                           |
|---------------------------|
| a a description of change |
| b a book review           |
| c directions              |
| d criticism               |
| e temporary situation     |

E Complete the questions using the verbs in brackets in either the present simple or present continuous.

- 1 A: *Do you know* ..... that woman? (know)

2 A: When ..... ? (get home)

3 A: Where ..... she ..... ? (go)

4 A: ..... you ..... ? (agree)

5 A: Why ..... ? (laugh)

6 A: ..... his name ? (remember)

7 A: What ..... ? (read)

8 A: Why ..... ? (cry)
- B: No, I've never met her before.

B: Usually at about 4.

B: To the shop, I think.

B: Yes, I think you are right.

B: I just heard a funny joke.

B: I think it began with B.

B: It's a novel by a new young writer.

B: It's a really sad film.

F Complete the sentences in an appropriate way.

- 1 First of all, the oven has to be hot *and then you put the cake in for 20 minutes* .....

2 ..... because he's a vegetarian.

3 On Saturday I work in a café all day but .....
- 4 ..... but she wants to be a doctor one day.

5 Hurry up - .....

6 Look - .....

7 I'm an only child - .....

8 He makes me angry - .....

MY TURN!

Complete the descriptions by inventing answers to the questions.

- 1 Where are you? And what are you doing?  
*I'm in bed and I'm sleeping.*

What happens next? *The alarm rings. I turn it off and go back to sleep.*

How do you feel? *I feel tired.*
- 2 When is it? And where are you?

What happens next? *I see my brother.*

How do you feel?
- 3 When is it? And where are you?

What happens next? *The lights go out.*

How do you feel?

- 4 Where are you? And what are you doing?

What happens next? *I see someone famous and I go up to her.*

How do you feel?
- 5 When is it? And what are you doing?

What happens next? *The car breaks down.*

How do you feel?
- 6 When is it? And what are you doing?

What happens next? *A stranger comes up to me.*

How do you feel?

MY TEST!

Circle the correct option.

- 1 The Pyrenees ..... on the border between France and Spain.    a lie   b lies   c are lying

2 This bag ..... to me.    a doesn't belongs   b doesn't belong   c isn't belonging

3 We sometimes ..... the car racing in the holidays.    a watch   b watches   c are watching

4 It's Sunday and I'm bored. It ..... heavily.    a rain   b rains   c is raining

5 This film is great - I ..... it!    a really like   b am really like   d am really liking

My Test answers: 1a 2b 3a 4c 5a



2

Past simple and past continuous

He was driving on a dark night.



Casey Jones (1863–1900) **was** an American railway driver. He **became** a **hero** when he **died** because he **saved** the lives of many **passengers** in a terrible accident.

On 30 April 1900 Casey **was driving** his train back to the station during a dark and wet night. He was with another driver, his friend Webb. The train **was going** fast because Casey **wanted** to get back quickly but this **wasn't** the problem. There **was** another train on the same railway. Casey and Webb **didn't know** about this train.

As Casey was coming around a bend, he saw the other train. Casey realised the danger. 'Jump!' he shouted to his friend. Webb **jumped** from the train while Casey **was trying** to stop. Webb **fell** 100 metres but he **didn't die**. While **he was falling**, he **heard** Casey. Casey **was shouting**, 'Help!' The train **was going** fast, so it **couldn't stop** quickly. Casey **slowed** the train down but it still **crashed**. Casey **was killed** but the passengers **didn't die**.

Casey **became** very famous after this and his friend **wrote** a very popular song, *The Ballad of Casey Jones*, about him.



- Underline the correct options:
- 1 Casey is a hero because he *saved many lives* / *wrote a song*.
  - 2 Webb was a *driver* / *passenger*.

Answers: 1 saved many lives 2 driver

Past simple and past continuous

Past simple

- 1 Add *-ed* to make the past simple (regular) for all persons. Use *did not* with the infinitive without *to* to make the negative and use *did* to make a question.

	statement ✓	negative ✗
I / You / He / She / It / We / They	started.	did not (didn't) start.

question ?	short answer ✓✗
Did I / you / he / she / it / we / they start?	Yes, (I) did. No, (I) did not (didn't).



Practice

A Write the past simple forms of these verbs.

- 1 drive – drove

3 have – .....

5 open – .....

7 swim – .....

9 fall – .....

11 know – .....
- 2 do – .....

4 get – .....

6 eat – .....

8 shout – .....

10 try – .....

12 become – .....

B Complete the sentences using the verbs from the box in the past continuous.

cry dream ~~drive~~ have live not play  
not snow wait watch not work

- 1 Max was driving his car to work when it happened.

2 The baby ..... very loudly, so I couldn't hear.

3 ..... you ..... TV all night?

4 I couldn't call you because our phone .....

5 While we ..... for the bus, it started to rain.

6 ..... John ..... in London when you met him?

7 My mum and dad ..... a coffee in the kitchen.

8 It ..... but it was very cold.

9 Did it really happen or ..... I only .....

10 Glenn and Kirsten ..... in the game last Saturday.

C Match the pairs.

- 1 When I got home, .....

2 The bottle smashed .....

3 After the teacher finished, .....

4 What music did you like .....

5 I wasn't working .....

6 Clare was working in Oxford .....

7 We started .....

8 Was Susan wearing the same dress .....
- a I made dinner.

b I was making dinner.

a as it fell on the floor.

b while it was falling on the floor.

a the students asked some questions.

b the students were asking some questions.

a while you were 11 years old?

b when you were 11 years old?

a during two years.

b for two years.

a as Mike studied at night school.

b while Mike was studying at night school.

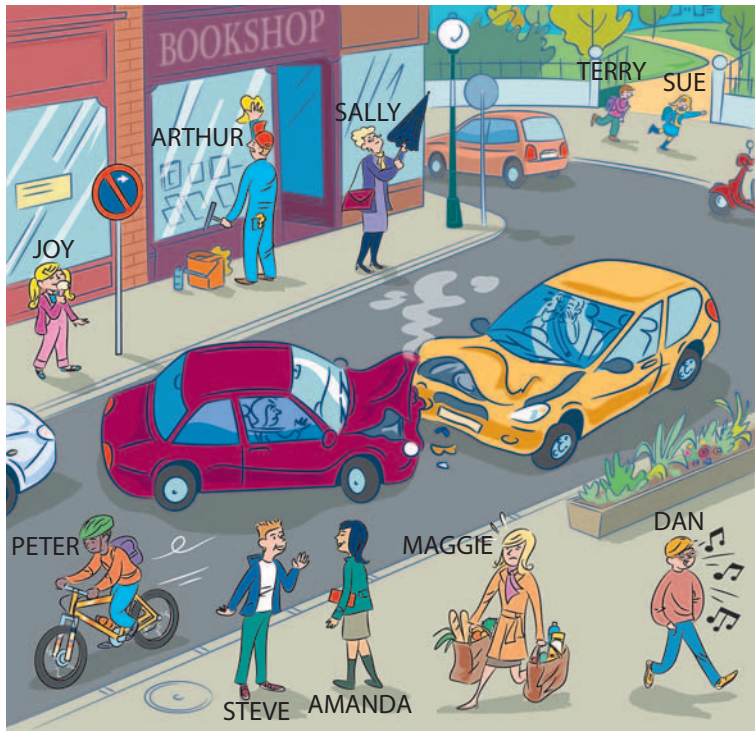
a when everything was ready.

b while everything was ready.

a when she came in?

b when she was coming in?

D This accident happened yesterday. Write what the people were doing at the time of the accident.



When the accident happened ...

- 1 Joy was eating an ice cream.

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

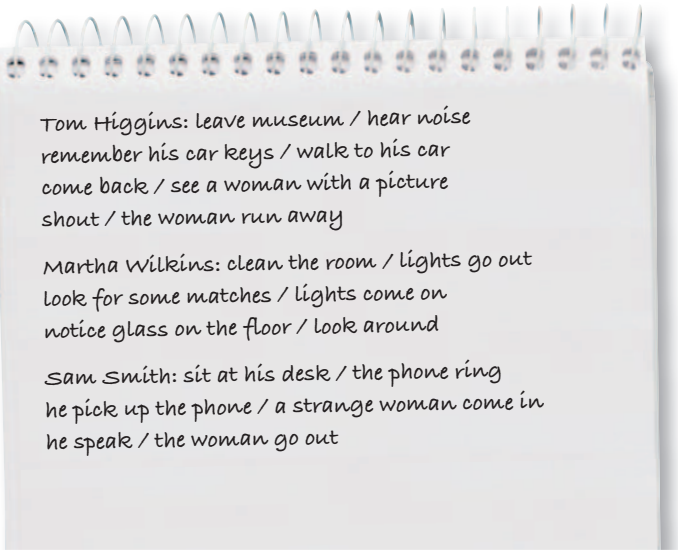
5 .....

6 .....

7 .....

8 .....

E Someone stole a picture from the museum last night. Read the detective's notebook with information from three museum workers, then use the notes to write sentences. Every sentence should have one verb in the past simple and one in the past continuous.





- 1 *Tom was leaving the museum when he heard a noise.*
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

F Circle the correct option.

Dick Whittington (1358–1423) was a famous mayor of London. The story says that Dick was a poor boy who <sup>1</sup>... to London to become rich. Dick <sup>2</sup>... his cat with him for company. Life was very hard in London. Dick worked as a servant <sup>3</sup>... some months but he got very little money and all he had was his cat. Finally, Dick decided to give his cat to a merchant and leave London. As he <sup>4</sup>... down the street, he <sup>5</sup>... a voice in his head. The voice said, ‘Come back, Dick, you will be Mayor of London three times!’ Dick came back. At the same time, the merchant and his men <sup>6</sup>... by ship to another country. It was a good ship but there was a big problem: rats! Rats <sup>7</sup>... everywhere on the ship and no one <sup>8</sup>... them. Luckily, Dick’s cat was very good at catching rats. The merchant was very happy with the cat and gave Dick a nice present when he <sup>9</sup>... home.

Dick now had some money and he started his own business. He also married a rich woman. Dick <sup>10</sup>... mayor of London three times and <sup>11</sup>... he died he left a lot of money. The story does not say what <sup>12</sup>... to his cat.



- 1 a was coming    **b came**    c has come    d comes
- 2 a was taking    b were taking    c took    d taken
- 3 a for    b during    c in    d at
- 4 a walks    b is walking    c has walked  
d was walking
- 5 a hear    b heard    c was hearing  
d were hearing
- 6 a travels    b travelled    c was travelling  
d were travelling
- 7 a is running    b are running    c was running  
d were running
- 8 a has caught    b could catch    c did catch  
d didn’t catch
- 9 a get    b got    c gotten    d was getting
- 10 a did become    b become  
c was becoming    d did becoming
- 11 a as    b while    c when    d since
- 12 a happens    b happened  
c did happen    d was happening

MY TURN!

Complete the sentences to make them true for you.

- 1 When I got home yesterday, *my sister was playing*  
*a computer game*
- 2  
during the summer.
- 3 While I was having breakfast,
- 4 It was very late when
- 5  
as I was going to my friend’s.
- 6 When I was 10,

MY TEST!

Circle the correct option.

- 1 ..... the train stopped, all the passengers got off.    a When    b While    c As
- 2 I didn’t interrupt Casey because he ..... to Webb.    a spoke    b was speaking    c were speaking
- 3 Webb was a driver ..... a long time.    a during    b since    c for
- 4 What ..... Casey’s wife ..... when she heard the news?    a was ... saying    b did ... say    c has ... said
- 5 Casey’s friend never ..... by train again.    a didn’t travel    b travelled    c was travelling

My Test answers: 1a 2b 3c 4b 5b