

# Continuous tense

## I- Present continuous tense

The present continuous tense (sometimes referred to as the **present progressive tense**) is often used to talk about a continuing action, something **happening now** (or **at the moment of speaking**). It is also used in other situations, such as for temporary events.

The present continuing tense is formed from the present simple tense of the verb **to be** and the present participle (~**ing** form) of the main verb (also called **the gerund**).

### 1) Affirmative statements:

Subject	Be	Base form of the verb + ING
I	Am / 'm	Waiting.
He / She / It	Is / 's	
We / You* / They	Are / 're	

\*You is both singular and plural

Ex: He **is drawing** a picture (to be "is" + verb-ing)

### 2) Negative statements:

Subject	Be	Not	Base form of the verb + ING
I	Am / 'm	Not	Waiting.
He / She / It	Is / 's	Not / n't	
We / You* / They	Are / 're		

\*You is both singular and plural

Ex: We **aren't** *sleeping* (to be "are" + "not" + verb-ing)

3) Wh- questions:

Wh-word	Be	Subject	Base form + ING
Why Where	Am	I	Standing?
	Is	He / She / It	
	Are	We / You* / They	

\*You is both singular and plural

Ex: **What are** you *doing*? (Wh question + to be "are" + verb-ing)

4) Yes/No questions:

Be	Subject	Base form + ING
Am	I	Standing?
Is	He / She / It	
Are	We / You* / They	

\*You is both singular and plural

Ex: **Is** she *playing* tennis? (to be "is" + verb-ing)

5) Short answers:

Positive			Negative		
Yes,	I	Am.	No,	I	Am not / 'm not.
	He / She / It	Is.		He / She / It	Is not / isn't
	We / You* / They	Are.		We / You* / They	Are not / aren't

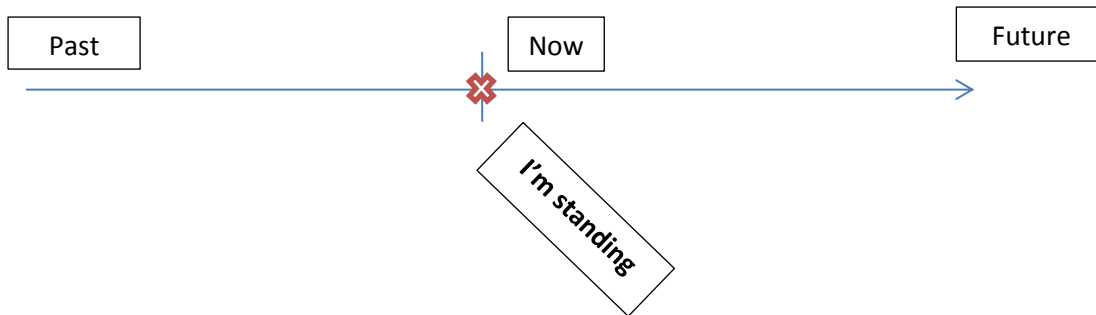
\*You is both singular and plural

## Grammar explanations

- 1- Use the **present continuous** to describe something that is happening now.

Ex: I **am standing** outside the Theatre *right now*.

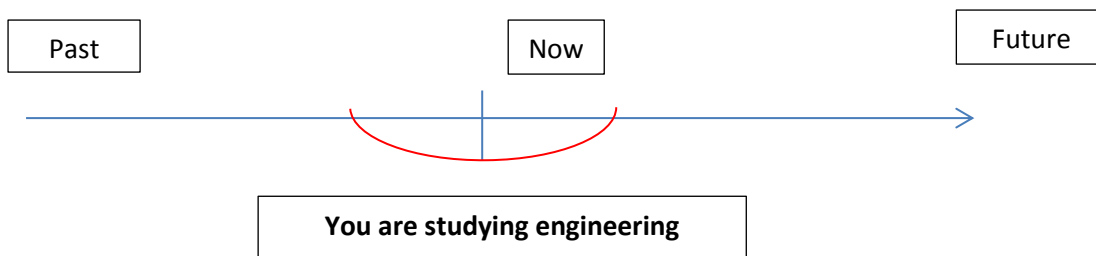
As I'm **talking** to you, the fans **are gathering** in front of the theatre.



- 2- Use the **present continuous** to describe something that is happening these days, even if it's not happening right now.

Ex: Café shops **are closed** in Morocco *these days*.

You **are studying** English *this term*.



- 3- The **contracted form** is usually used in speech and informal writing.

Ex: Bye, Lina, we're **leaving** now.

Wait! I'm **coming** with you.

- 4- **Remember!** Most *stative verbs* are not usually used in the present continuous even when they describe a situation that exists at the moment of speaking.

Ex: Hala **wants** to go home right now. NOT ~~Hala is wanting to go home right now.~~

## II- Past continuous tense

The **past continuous** tense, also known as the **past progressive** tense, refers to a continuing action or state that was happening at some point in the past. The **past continuous** tense is formed by combining the past simple tense of the verb to be (i.e., was/were) with the verb's present participle (-ing word), also called the gerund.

There are many situations in which this verb tense might be used in a sentence. For example, it is often used to describe conditions that existed in the past.

### 1) Affirmative statements:

Subject	Be	Base form of the verb + ING
I / He / She / It	Was	Waiting.
We / You* / They	Were	

\*You is both singular and plural

Ex: He **was drawing** a picture (to be "was" + verb-ing)

### 2) Negative statements:

Subject	Be	Not	Base form of the verb + ING
I / He / She / It	Was	Not / n't	Waiting.
We / You* / They	Were		

\*You is both singular and plural

Ex: We **were not sleeping** (to be "were" + "not" + verb-ing)

### 3) Wh- questions:

Wh-word	Be	Subject	Base form + ING
Why	Was	I / He / She / It	Standing?
Where	Were	We / You* / They	

\*You is both singular and plural

Ex: **What were you doing?** (Wh question + to be "were" + verb-ing)

4) Yes/No questions:

Be	Subject	Base form + ING
Was	I / He / She / It	Standing?
Were	We / You* / They	

\*You is both singular and plural

Ex: **Was she playing tennis?** (to be "was" + verb-ing)

5) Short answers:

Positive			Negative		
Yes,	I / He / She / It	Was.	No,	I / He / She / It	Was not / wasn't.
	We / You* / They	Were.		We / You* / They	Were not / weren't

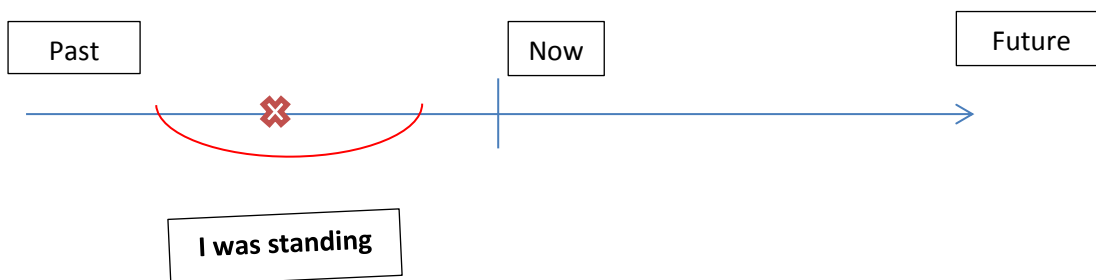
\*You is both singular and plural

### Grammar explanations

1- Use the **past continuous** to describe an action that was in progress at a specific time in the past. The action began before the specific time and may or may not have continued after the specific time.

Ex: What **were** you **doing** at 21:00?

**I was standing** outside the Theatre.

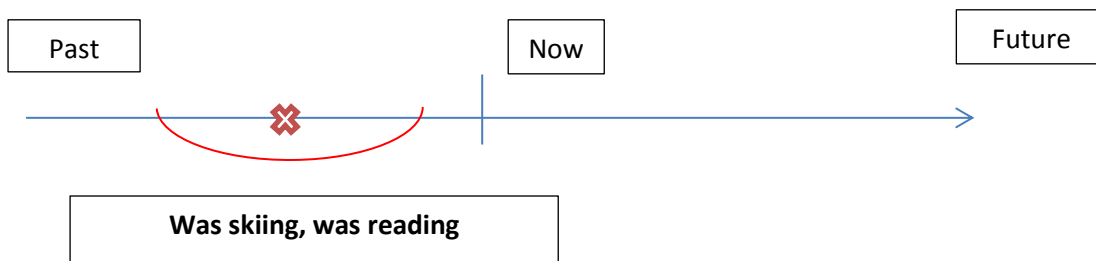


- 2- Use the **past continuous** with while to talk about two actions in progress at the same time in the past. Use the past continuous in both clauses.

Ex: **While** he **was skiing**, I **was reading**.

Or

I **was reading** **while** he **was skiing**.



- 3- Use the **past continuous** to focus on the duration of an action, not its completion. Use the **past simple** to focus on the completion of an action.

Ex: Leila **was reading** a book last night. (we don't know if she finished the book).

Leila **read** a book last night. (She probably finished the book).

- 4- In informal conversation, some people use **when** with the past continuous

Ex: Sorry, I **wasn't listening** **when** you **was talking**.

- 5- **Remember!** Most *stative verbs* are not usually used in the past continuous.

Ex: Hala **had** a headache *last night*. NOT Hala ~~**was having**~~ a headache *last night*.

- 6- **Be careful!** Notice the difference in meaning between these two sentences:

**When** the lights **changed**, I **crossed** the street. (*First the lights changed. Then I crossed the street*).

**When** the lights **changed**, I **was crossing** the street. (*First, I started crossing the street. Then the lights changed while I was still crossing the street*).

III- Future continuous tense

1) Affirmative statements:

Subject	Will	Be	Base form + ING	
I/ You*/ He/ She/ It/ We/ They	Will	Be	working	tomorrow.

\*You is both singular and plural

2) Negative statements:

Subject	Will	Be	Base form + ING	
I/ You*/ He/ She/ It/ We/ They	Will not/ won't	Be	working	tomorrow.

\*You is both singular and plural

3) Wh- questions:

Wh-word	Be/ will	Subject	Be + Base form + ING
Why Where	will	I/ You*/ He/ She/ It/ We/ They	Be standing?

\*You is both singular and plural

4) Yes/No questions:

Will	Subject	Be	Base form + ING	
Will	I/ You*/ He/ She/ It/ We/ They	Be	working	tomorrow?

\*You is both singular and plural

5) Short answers:

Positive			Negative		
Yes,	I/ You*/ He/ She/ It/ We/ They	will.	No,	I/ You*/ He/ She/ It/ We/ They	Will not/ won't.

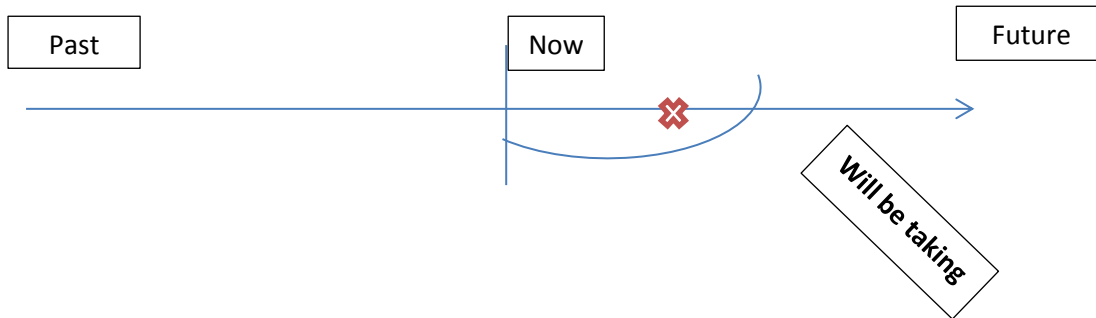
\*You is both singular and plural

## Grammar explanations

- 1-** Use the **future continuous** with **will (not)** and **won't** to talk about things that will be in progress at a specific time in the future.

Ex: Hajar **will be taking** the dog for a walk *at noon*.

He **won't be cleaning** the house.



- 2-** We also use **(not) be going to + be + base form + -ing** but the structure with **will** is more common.

Ex: Hajar **is going to be taking** the dog for a walk *at noon*.

He **isn't going to be cleaning** the house.

- 3- Remember!** Most *stative verbs* are not usually used in the future continuous.

Ex: Hala **will** go home *next week*. NOT ~~Hala **will be** going home *next week*.~~

- 4- Remember** that if the sentence has a **time clause**, use the present simple or the present continuous not the future or the future continuous.

Ex: I'll **be cooking while** you **are cleaning** NOT ~~I'll be cooking while you will be cleaning.~~