Subject: economic English

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**Present continuous and Past continuous**

The **Present Continuous tense** is one of the most commonly used tenses in English. It is used to describe actions happening at the moment of speaking or actions that are temporary.

**1. Structure of the Present Continuous**

The Present Continuous is formed using:

* **Subject** + **am/is/are** + **base verb + -ing**

**Affirmative Form**

* I **am** working.
* He/She/It **is** studying.
* You/We/They **are** playing.

**Negative Form**

* I **am not** working.
* He/She/It **is not (isn’t)** studying.
* You/We/They **are not (aren’t)** playing.

**Question Form**

* **Am** I working?
* **Is** he/she/it studying?
* **Are** you/we/they playing?

**Short Answers**

* Yes, I am. / No, I’m not.
* Yes, he is. / No, he isn’t.
* Yes, we are. / No, we aren’t.

**2. Uses of the Present Continuous**

**A. Actions Happening Now**

To describe actions occurring at the moment of speaking:

* She **is talking** on the phone right now.
* They **are waiting** for the bus.

**B. Temporary Actions**

To describe actions happening around the current period but not necessarily at the exact moment:

* I **am taking** a French class this month.
* He **is working** on a new project these days.

**C. Future Plans**

To talk about planned or scheduled future events:

* We **are meeting** them tomorrow.
* She **is traveling** to Paris next week.

**D. Repeated Actions (with 'always')**

To express annoyance or habitual actions that happen too frequently:

* He **is always complaining** about the weather.
* They **are always leaving** the door open.

**E. Gradual Changes**

To describe actions or situations that are developing or changing:

* The weather **is getting** colder.
* Technology **is advancing** rapidly.

**3. How to Form the -ing Form**

1. **For most verbs:** Add **-ing** to the base verb:
   * work → working
   * play → playing
2. **For verbs ending in -e:** Drop the **-e** and add **-ing**:
   * make → making
   * write → writing
3. **For one-syllable verbs ending with a single vowel + consonant:** Double the final consonant and add **-ing**:
   * run → running
   * sit → sitting
4. **For verbs ending in -ie:** Change **-ie** to **-y** and add **-ing**:
   * lie → lying
   * die → dying

**4. Time Expressions Used with Present Continuous**

Certain time expressions often indicate the use of Present Continuous:

* **Now**: She **is reading** now.
* **At the moment**: I **am cooking** at the moment.
* **Currently**: They **are working** currently.
* **This week/month/year**: He **is studying** hard this month.
* **Today**: We **are meeting** later today.

The **Past Continuous tense** is used to describe actions that were ongoing at a specific time in the past.

**Structure of the Past Continuous Tense**

The Past Continuous tense is formed using:

* **Subject** + **was/were** + **base verb + -ing**

**Affirmative Form**

* I **was working**.
* He/She/It **was studying**.
* You/We/They **were playing**.

**Negative Form**

* I **was not (wasn’t)** working.
* He/She/It **was not (wasn’t)** studying.
* You/We/They **were not (weren’t)** playing.

**Question Form**

* **Was** I working?
* **Was** he/she/it studying?
* **Were** you/we/they playing?

**Short Answers**

* Yes, I was. / No, I wasn’t.
* Yes, they were. / No, they weren’t.

**2. Uses of the Past Continuous Tense**

**A. Action in Progress at a Specific Time in the Past**

To describe an action that was happening at a particular time in the past:

* Example: "At 8 PM last night, I **was watching** TV."

**B. Interrupted Actions**

To describe an ongoing action that was interrupted by another action (usually in the Past Simple tense):

* Example: "I **was reading** a book when the phone **rang**."

**C. Simultaneous Past Actions**

To describe two or more actions happening at the same time in the past:

* Example: "While I **was cooking**, he **was setting** the table."

**D. Background Information in Stories**

To set the scene or describe the atmosphere in a narrative:

* Example: "The sun **was shining**, and the birds **were singing** as we walked through the park."

**E. Repeated Actions (Often Annoying)**

To describe repeated or habitual actions in the past, often with a sense of annoyance (similar to the Present Continuous):

* Example: "She **was always complaining** about the weather."

**3. How to Form the -ing Verb**

Rules for adding **-ing** to the base verb:

1. **For most verbs:** Add **-ing**:
   * work → working
   * play → playing
2. **For verbs ending in -e:** Drop the **-e** and add **-ing**:
   * make → making
   * write → writing
3. **For one-syllable verbs ending in a single vowel + consonant:** Double the final consonant and add **-ing**:
   * run → running
   * sit → sitting
4. **For verbs ending in -ie:** Change **-ie** to **-y** and add **-ing**:
   * lie → lying
   * die → dying

**4. Time Expressions with the Past Continuous**

Certain time expressions often indicate the Past Continuous:

* At [specific time]: "At 9 PM, I **was watching** TV."
* While: "While he **was reading**, she **was cooking**."
* When: "I **was sleeping** when the alarm **went off**."
* All day/night/week: "They **were working** all night."

**Examples of Past Continuous in Context**

**A. Action in Progress**

* "At 10 AM, they **were swimming** in the pool."

**B. Interrupted Action**

* "I **was studying** when the electricity **went out**."

**C. Simultaneous Actions**

* "While she **was cooking**, I **was cleaning** the house."

**D. Background Information**

* "It **was raining** heavily, and the streets **were flooding** as we drove home."

**E. Repeated Action with Annoyance**

* "He **was always forgetting** his keys."