

ENGLISH

Unit 16: The Continuous Tenses



Pre-Intermediate English with

THE INSPIRE ACADEMY

Introduction

- The continuous tenses are very frequently used in English, from novels to everyday conversation it is one of the most necessary parts.
- It can be difficult, or confusing, when trying to learn it and understand it, especially if your language does not have anything similar.
- Also, when deciding which tense to use, for example between past simple and past continuous it can be very difficult because they can seem very similar.
- In this unit, then, you will learn each of the main continuous tense forms (present, past, and future) in-depth, and you will learn when and how to use them.
- The perfect continuous tenses will not be learned here, they will be in the perfect tenses unit in the Intermediate English Lessons.
- Let's get started!

Present Continuous



FORM:

The present tense of “to be” (am/is/are)+ verb + ing.

USES:

- Actions happening in the moment – We are learning grammar.
- Fixed arrangements for the future – I’m getting married in December.
- Temporary events – He’s living in New York for the moment.

FURTHER EXAMPLES:

- Nick is going to school. - (At that moment Nick is on his way to school)
- Sasha is staying here this week. - (Sasha will be in that one place for the time period of a week)
- Sam is getting a new car soon. - (In the near future, Sam is getting a new car)

Past Continuous



FORM:

For all verbs, was/were + verb + -ing.

USES:

- Used to describe a past action that hasn't been completed yet.
 - Example:
 - I was trying to fix the car this morning, but I'm not done yet.
- Used for a past action that was interrupted by another action.
 - Example:
 - She was reading a book when the phone rang.
- Used to talk about two actions happening at the same time by using the expression while.
 - Example:
 - I was talking to David while he was driving.

Future Continuous



FORM:

Subject + shall/will + be + verb+ing

USES:

- The future continuous tense is used when an action is promised/thought to be going on at a specific time/context in the future.
- In other words, it is when you think you will be in the process of doing something in the future.

EXAMPLES:

- I will be working in the office while you watch a movie.
- I shall be sleeping at around 6.00 AM tomorrow.
- I think I will be doing my homework by that time tonight.
- I will be finishing my project by this time tomorrow.

EXERCISE

Please state the correct form(s) of the continuous tense:

1.) I am going.

2.) We will be eating.

3.) He will be sleeping.

4.) They were watching.

5.) I am sitting.

6.) You were working.

7.) She was studying, but now she is relaxing.


8.) Right now I'm going to the market, but earlier I was reading.

EXERCISE

Please write 2 sentences with each of the continuous tenses. (6 sentences total)


AUDIO EXERCISE

Listening comprehension! Please choose the appropriate answers to the following questions:



1. What is Peter going to do today?
 - a. Go running
 - b. Go skiing
 - c. Go surfing
 - d. Go biking
2. Where is Vikki going?
 - a. The market
 - b. The beach
 - c. A concert
 - d. Both A and B
3. What are they eating for dinner tonight?
 - a. Fish
 - b. Chicken noodle soup
 - c. Beef stew
 - d. Chicken
4. What does Peter want from the market?
 - a. Eggs
 - b. Cake
 - c. Ham
 - d. None of the above

FRIEND EXERCISE



For this friend exercise you and your friend must each choose 6 different verbs and then write them all out on the following page in a list.

Then you should switch papers with each other and make turn each verb, that your friend wrote, into a continuous tense sentence.

After this you should switch back and correct each others work.

Get creative with it!

Good luck!

FRIEND EXERCISE

You may use this paper for the exercise.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.