

Present Continuous: Question Sentences

Grammar Lesson, Examples & 30 Practice Questions

Present Continuous: Question Sentences

Do you want to ask what someone is doing right now? We use the **present continuous** to talk about things that are happening **at this moment**. In this lesson, you will learn how to make **present continuous question sentences**.

Look at these simple examples:

- *Is she sleeping?*
- *Are you eating lunch?*
- *What is he doing?*

These are all **present continuous question sentences**. Let us learn how to make them, step by step.

What Is the Present Continuous?

The **present continuous** uses two parts:

Part 1: A form of the verb **to be** → *am, is, are*

Part 2: A verb with **-ing** at the end → *eating, sleeping, running, playing*

In a normal sentence, it looks like this:

- *She **is** eating.*
- *They **are** playing.*
- *I **am** reading.*

But in a **question sentence**, we change the word order. Let us see how.

A Simple Story to Start

Meet **Tom** and **Lucy**. Tom is at home. Lucy phones Tom and asks:

"Are you watching TV?"

Tom says: *"No, I am cooking dinner."*

Lucy asks: *"Is your mum helping you?"*

Tom says: *"No, she is reading a book."*

In this story, Lucy uses **present continuous question sentences** to ask about right now. Notice: she puts **are** and **is** at the **beginning** of the question. This is the key rule!

Rule Breakdown: How to Make a Present Continuous Question

Step 1: Find the Verb "To Be"

First, you need the correct form of **to be**. Here is a simple guide:

Subject (Who?)	Form of "To Be"
I	am
You	are
He / She / It	is
We	are
They	are

Note: A **subject** is the person or thing doing the action. For example, in "*She is sleeping*," the subject is *she*.

Step 2: Move "To Be" to the Front

In a normal sentence, the verb *to be* comes **after** the subject. In a question, we move it to the **beginning**.

Normal sentence: *She **is** eating.*

Question: ***Is** she eating?*

Normal sentence: *They **are** playing football.*

Question: ***Are** they playing football?*

Step 3: The Question Pattern

Use this simple pattern for **yes/no questions** (questions with a yes or no answer):

Am / Is / Are + subject + verb + ing + ?

Here are more examples:

- **Am** I doing this correctly?
- **Are** you listening?
- **Is** he working?
- **Is** she laughing?
- **Is** it raining?
- **Are** we sitting here?
- **Are** they dancing?

Full Table: Present Continuous Yes/No Questions

Subject	To Be	Verb + ing	Full Question
I	Am	talking	<i>Am I talking too much?</i>
You	Are	eating	<i>Are you eating breakfast?</i>
He	Is	sleeping	<i>Is he sleeping?</i>
She	Is	reading	<i>Is she reading a book?</i>
It	Is	raining	<i>Is it raining outside?</i>
We	Are	waiting	<i>Are we waiting here?</i>
They	Are	playing	<i>Are they playing tennis?</i>

Answering Yes/No Questions

When someone asks a present continuous yes/no question, you can give a **short answer**. Use **Yes** or **No** + the subject + the correct form of *to be*.

Are you eating?

✅ **Yes, I am. / No, I am not.**

Is she sleeping?

✅ **Yes, she is. / No, she is not.**

Are they running?

✅ **Yes, they are. / No, they are not.**

Question	Short Yes Answer	Short No Answer
<i>Am I late?</i>	Yes, you are.	No, you are not.
<i>Are you working?</i>	Yes, I am.	No, I am not.
<i>Is he cooking?</i>	Yes, he is.	No, he is not.
<i>Is she watching TV?</i>	Yes, she is.	No, she is not.
<i>Is it working?</i>	Yes, it is.	No, it is not.
<i>Are we going?</i>	Yes, we are.	No, we are not.
<i>Are they coming?</i>	Yes, they are.	No, they are not.

Wh- Questions in the Present Continuous

Sometimes we want more information, not just yes or no. We use **question words** (called *Wh- words*) at the beginning of the question.

Common question words:

- **What** → to ask about a thing or action
- **Where** → to ask about a place
- **Who** → to ask about a person
- **Why** → to ask for a reason

The pattern for a Wh- question is:

Question word + Am / Is / Are + subject + verb + ing + ?

Examples:

- **What** are you doing?
- **Where** is she going?
- **What** is he eating?
- **Why** are they laughing?
- **Where** are we sitting?

Full Table: Present Continuous Wh- Questions

Question Word	To Be	Subject	Verb + ing	Full Question
What	are	you	doing	<i>What are you doing?</i>
Where	is	he	going	<i>Where is he going?</i>
What	is	she	cooking	<i>What is she cooking?</i>
Why	are	they	running	<i>Why are they running?</i>
Where	are	we	waiting	<i>Where are we waiting?</i>
What	is	it	doing	<i>What is it doing?</i>

Contractions in Present Continuous Questions

In spoken English and informal writing, we often use **contractions**. A contraction is when we make two words shorter and join them together with an apostrophe (').

is not → **isn't**

are not → **aren't**

am not → there is no common contraction for this in questions

We use contractions most often in **negative short answers**:

- *Is she sleeping?* → **No, she isn't.**
- *Are they working?* → **No, they aren't.**
- *Are you listening?* → **No, I'm not.** (We say *I'm not*, not *I amn't*.)

Important: In the **question itself**, we do NOT usually use a contraction with the subject. We say *Is she...?* not *She's...?* in a question.

Important Differences: Yes/No Questions vs. Wh- Questions

Yes/No Questions

These questions begin with **Am / Is / Are**. The answer is *yes* or *no*.

- **Are** you sleeping? → Yes, I am. / No, I am not.
- **Is** she eating? → Yes, she is. / No, she is not.

Wh- Questions

These questions begin with a **question word** (*What, Where, Why, Who*). The answer gives more information.

- **What** are you doing? → I am reading a book.
- **Where** is she going? → She is going to the shops.

Adding -ing to Verbs: Quick Reminder

To make the **-ing** form of a verb, follow these simple rules:

Rule	Base Verb	Verb + ing
Most verbs: just add -ing	eat, read, sleep, play	eating, reading, sleeping, playing
Verb ends in -e : remove e, add -ing	come, write, dance	coming, writing, dancing
Short verb ends in consonant + vowel + consonant: double the last letter, add -ing	run, sit, swim	running, sitting, swimming

Common Mistakes

Here are mistakes that beginners often make with **present continuous question sentences**. Look carefully at the correct forms.

- ✗ *She is eating?*
- ✓ **Is she eating?** — Move *is* to the front to make a question.
- ✗ *Are she eating?*
- ✓ **Is she eating?** — Use *is* with *he / she / it*, not *are*.

✗ *Is they playing?*

✓ **Are they playing?** — Use *are* with *they / we / you*.

✗ *Are you eat?*

✓ **Are you eating?** — Always add *-ing* to the verb.

✗ *What you are doing?*

✓ **What are you doing?** — The verb *to be* comes before the subject in a question.

✗ *Is he run?*

✓ **Is he running?** — Remember to double the consonant and add *-ing* for short verbs like *run*.

✗ *Where she is going?*

✓ **Where is she going?** — The verb *to be* comes before the subject, even after a question word.

Present Continuous Question Sentences: Quick Summary

Here is what you have learned in this lesson:

- We use the **present continuous** to talk about things happening **right now**.
- To make a **yes/no question**, put **Am / Is / Are** at the beginning: *Is she sleeping?*
- To make a **Wh- question**, put the question word first, then **Am / Is / Are**, then the subject: *What are you doing?*
- Always use the **verb + ing** form: *eating, sleeping, running*.
- Use **is** with *he / she / it* and **are** with *you / we / they*.
- For short answers: *Yes, I am. / No, she isn't.*

Question Type	Pattern	Example
Yes/No Question	Am/Is/Are + subject + verb-ing + ?	<i>Are they eating?</i>
Wh- Question	Question word + Am/Is/Are + subject + verb-ing + ?	<i>What is she doing?</i>

Now practise **present continuous question sentences** in the exercises below.

Present Continuous: Question Sentences – Practice Test

A1 | 30 Questions: Multiple Choice, Fill-in-the-Gap & Fill-in-the-Blank

Part 1: Multiple Choice (Questions 1–10)

1 Choose the correct question: ____ you eating lunch now?

- A** Do
- B** Does
- C** Are
- D** Is

2 Choose the correct question: ____ she sleeping?

- A** Are
- B** Do
- C** Is
- D** Does

3 Which sentence is correct?

- A** Is they playing?
- B** Are they playing?
- C** Do they playing?
- D** Does they playing?

4 ____ he running in the park?

- A** Are
- B** Do
- C** Does
- D** Is

5 Choose the correct question: ____ I doing this right?

- A** Is
- B** Are
- C** Do
- D** Does

6 What is the correct word order? (the dog / is / running)

- A** The dog running is?
- B** Is the dog running?
- C** Running is the dog?
- D** Does the dog running?

7 ____ your mom cooking dinner?

- A** Do
- B** Are
- C** Is
- D** Does

8 Which question uses the Present Continuous correctly?

- A** Are the children dance?
- B** Is the children dancing?
- C** Are the children dancing?
- D** Do the children dancing?

9 Choose the correct question: What ____ you doing?

- A** do
- B** does
- C** is
- D** are

10 Which answer correctly completes the question: ____ it raining outside?

- A** Are
- B** Do
- C** Is
- D** Does

Part 2: Fill in the Gap (Questions 11–20)

11 ____ you reading a book right now?

- A** Are
- B** Is
- C** Am

12 ____ she wearing a red dress today?

- A** Is
- B** Are
- C** Am

13 ____ they playing football in the park?

- A** Are
- B** Is
- C** Am

14 ____ I doing this exercise correctly?

- A** Am
- B** Is
- C** Are

15 ____ he eating lunch at school today?

- A** Is
- B** Are
- C** Am

16 What ____ you doing right now?

- A** are
- B** is
- C** am

17 Where ____ the children going?

- A** are
- B** is
- C** am

18 ____ the dog sleeping on the sofa?

- A** Is
- B** Are
- C** Am

19 Why ____ she crying?

- A** is
- B** are
- C** am

20 ____ we having dinner now?

- A** Are
- B** Is
- C** Am

Part 3: Fill in the Blank (Questions 21–30)

21 _____ you eating lunch right now?

22 _____ she sleeping at the moment?

23 What are they _____ right now?

24 Is he _____ football in the park?

25 Are _____ watching TV now?

26 Is your mother _____ dinner?

27 What _____ the dog doing?

28 Are you _____ to music?

29 _____ the baby crying?

30 Where are you _____ now?

Answer Key & Explanations

Present Continuous: Question Sentences | A1

Part 1: Multiple Choice

1. **C** Correct Answer: Are ☒ Explanation: We use Are with you in Present Continuous questions. The structure is Are + you + verb-ing. Are you eating lunch now?
2. **C** Correct Answer: Is ☒ Explanation: We use Is with she in Present Continuous questions. The structure is Is + she + verb-ing. Is she sleeping?
3. **B** Correct Answer: Are they playing? ☒ Explanation: We use Are with they in Present Continuous questions. The structure is Are + they + verb-ing. Are they playing?
4. **D** Correct Answer: Is ☒ Explanation: We use Is with he in Present Continuous questions. The structure is Is + he + verb-ing. Is he running in the park?
5. **B** Correct Answer: Are ☒ Explanation: We use Are with I in Present Continuous questions. The structure is Am/Are + I + verb-ing. Are/Am I doing this right? Both Am and Are can be used, but here Are is the correct option given.
6. **B** Correct Answer: Is the dog running? ☒ Explanation: In Present Continuous questions, we put is/are before the subject. The structure is Is + subject + verb-ing. Is the dog running?
7. **C** Correct Answer: Is ☒ Explanation: We use Is with a singular subject like your mom. The structure is Is + singular subject + verb-ing. Is your mom cooking dinner?
8. **C** Correct Answer: Are the children dancing? ☒ Explanation: We use Are with a plural subject like the children. We also need verb-ing. Are the children dancing?
9. **D** Correct Answer: are ☒ Explanation: We use are with you in Present Continuous questions. The structure is What + are + you + verb-ing. What are you doing?
10. **C** Correct Answer: Is ☒ Explanation: We use Is with it in Present Continuous questions. The structure is Is + it + verb-ing. Is it raining outside?

Part 2: Fill in the Gap

11. **A** Correct Answer: Are ☒ Explanation: With the subject you, we always use Are to form a present continuous question. Are you reading a book right now?
12. **A** Correct Answer: Is ☒ Explanation: With the subject she (singular), we use Is to form a present continuous question. Is she wearing a red dress today?

13. **A** Correct Answer: Are ✓ Explanation: With the subject they (plural), we use Are to form a present continuous question. Are they playing football in the park?
14. **A** Correct Answer: Am ✓ Explanation: With the subject I, we always use Am to form a present continuous question. Am I doing this exercise correctly?
15. **A** Correct Answer: Is ✓ Explanation: With the subject he (singular), we use Is to form a present continuous question. Is he eating lunch at school today?
16. **A** Correct Answer: are ✓ Explanation: With the subject you, we use are after a question word like What. What are you doing right now?
17. **A** Correct Answer: are ✓ Explanation: The children is a plural subject, so we use are in a present continuous question. Where are the children going?
18. **A** Correct Answer: Is ✓ Explanation: The dog is singular, so we use Is to form a present continuous question. Is the dog sleeping on the sofa?
19. **A** Correct Answer: is ✓ Explanation: With the subject she (singular), we use is after a question word like Why. Why is she crying?
20. **A** Correct Answer: Are ✓ Explanation: With the subject we (plural), we use Are to form a present continuous question. Are we having dinner now?

Part 3: Fill in the Blank

21. **Are** Correct Answer: Are ✓ Explanation: We use Are at the start of a Present Continuous question with you. The structure is Are + you + verb-ing. Are you eating?
22. **Is** Correct Answer: Is ✓ Explanation: We use Is at the start of a Present Continuous question with she. The structure is Is + she + verb-ing. Is she sleeping?
23. **doing** Correct Answer: doing ✓ Explanation: In Present Continuous questions, we use verb + -ing. do → doing. What are they doing?
24. **playing|play** Correct Answer: playing ✓ Explanation: In Present Continuous questions, we use verb + -ing after is/are. play → playing. Is he playing football?
25. **they** Correct Answer: they ✓ Explanation: In a Present Continuous question, the subject pronoun comes after are. Are they watching TV?
26. **cooking|cook** Correct Answer: cooking ✓ Explanation: In Present Continuous questions, we use verb + -ing. cook → cooking. Is your mother cooking dinner?
27. **is** Correct Answer: is ✓ Explanation: We use is in Present Continuous questions with a singular subject like the dog. The structure is What + is + subject + verb-ing?

28. **listening|listen** Correct Answer: listening ✔ Explanation: In Present Continuous questions, we use verb + -ing after are. listen → listening. Are you listening to music?
29. **Is|Are** Correct Answer: Is ✔ Explanation: We use Is in Present Continuous questions with a singular subject like the baby. Is the baby crying?
30. **going** Correct Answer: going ✔ Explanation: In Present Continuous questions, we use verb + -ing. go → going. Where are you going?

Score Guide

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 27–30 Correct | Excellent! You have mastered this topic. |
| 23–26 Correct | Very good! Review the rules you missed. |
| 18–22 Correct | Good start. Re-read the lesson and examples. |
| 0–17 Correct | Study the lesson again before retaking the test. |