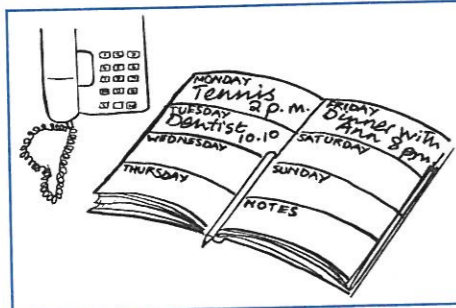


Present tenses (I am doing / I do) for the future

A Present continuous (I am doing) with a future meaning

Study this example situation:



This is Tom's diary for next week.

He is playing tennis on Monday afternoon.
He is going to the dentist on Tuesday morning.
He is having dinner with Ann on Friday.

In all these examples, Tom has already decided and arranged to do these things.

Use the *present continuous* to say what you have already arranged to do. Do not use the present simple (I do):

- A: What are you doing on Saturday evening? (not 'what do you do')
- B: I'm going to the theatre. (not 'I go')
- A: What time is Cathy arriving tomorrow?
- B: At 10.30. I'm meeting her at the station.
- I'm not working tomorrow, so we can go out somewhere.
- Ian isn't playing football on Saturday. He's hurt his leg.

'(I'm) going to (do)' is also possible in these sentences:

- What are you going to do on Saturday evening?

But the present continuous is more natural for arrangements. See also Unit 20B.

Do not use **will** to talk about what you have arranged to do:

- What are you doing this evening? (not 'what will you do')
- Alex is getting married next month. (not 'will get')

B Present simple (I do) with a future meaning

We use the present simple when we talk about timetables, programmes etc. (for example, for public transport, cinemas etc.):

- The train leaves Plymouth at 11.30 and arrives in London at 14.45.
- What time does the film begin?
- It's Wednesday tomorrow.

You can use the present simple for people if their plans are fixed like a timetable:

- I start my new job on Monday.
- What time do you finish work tomorrow?

But the continuous is more usual for personal arrangements:

- What time are you meeting Ann tomorrow? (not 'do you meet')

Compare:

- What time are you leaving tomorrow?

but What time does the train leave tomorrow?

- I'm going to the cinema this evening.

but The film starts at 8.15 (this evening).

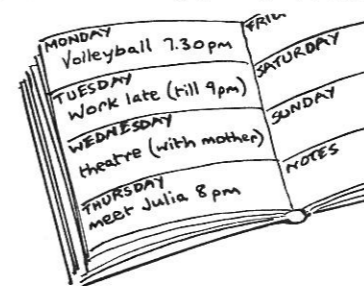
EXERCISES

19.1 A friend of yours is planning to go on holiday soon. You ask her about her plans. Use the words in brackets to make your questions.

- 1 (where/go?) ...Where are you going?
- 2 (how long/stay?)
- 3 (when/go?)
- 4 (go/alone?)
- 5 (travel/by car?)
- 6 (where/stay?)

Scotland.
Ten days.
Next Friday.
No, with a friend of mine.
No, by train.
In a hotel.

19.2 Tom wants you to visit him but you are very busy. Look at your diary for the next few days and explain to him why you can't come.



TOM: Can you come on Monday evening?

YOU: Sorry but ...I'm playing volleyball. (1)

TOM: What about Tuesday evening then?

YOU: No, not Tuesday I (2)

TOM: And Wednesday evening?

YOU: (3)

TOM: Well, are you free on Thursday?

YOU: I'm afraid not. (4)

19.3 Have you arranged to do anything at these times? Write (true) sentences about yourself.

- 1 (this evening) ...I'm going out this evening...
or ...I'm not doing anything this evening... or ...I don't know what I'm doing this evening... ..
- 2 (tomorrow morning) I
- 3 (tomorrow evening)
- 4 (next Sunday)
- 5 (choose another day or time)

19.4 Put the verb into the more suitable form, present continuous or present simple.

- 1 I am going... (go) to the theatre this evening.
- 2 Does the film begin... (the film / begin) at 3.30 or 4.30?
- 3 We (have) a party next Saturday. Would you like to come?
- 4 The art exhibition (open) on 3 May and
(finish) on 15 July.
- 5 I (not/go) out this evening. I (stay) at home.
- 6 '..... (you/do) anything tomorrow morning?' 'No, I'm free. Why?'
- 7 We (go) to a concert tonight. It
(begin) at 7.30.
- 8 You are on the train to London and you ask another passenger:
Excuse me. What time (this train / get) to London?
- 9 You are talking to Ann:
Ann, I (go) to town. (you/come) with me?
- 10 Sue (come) to see us tomorrow. She (travel)
by train and her train (arrive) at 10.15. I
(meet) her at the station.
- 11 I (not/use) the car this evening, so you can have it.
- 12 You and a friend are watching television. You say:
I'm bored with this programme. When (it/finish)?