

6 Put each verb in brackets into either the present simple or the present continuous.

Dear Aunt Jean,

I (1) *am just writing* (just write) to tell you how much I
 (2) (appreciate) the money you sent me, and to tell you
 how I (3) (get on) in my first term at university. Actually, I
 (4) (really enjoy) myself! I (5) (study)
 quite hard as well, but at the moment I (6) (spend) a lot of
 time just making friends. I (7) (still stay) with my friend
 Sue, and I (8) (look for) somewhere of my own to live. Only
 a few of the first-year students (9) (live) in college here,
 and I (10) (seem) to be spending a lot of time travelling
 backwards and forwards. I (11) (go) to lectures every
 morning, and most afternoons I (12) (study) in the library.
 In fact I (13) (write) this letter instead of an essay on
Hamlet! I (14) (think) I'll buy some new clothes with the
 money you sent. Everything (15) (cost) a lot here, and I
 (16) (save) to buy a winter coat. It
 (17) (get) really cold here in the evenings. I now
 (18) (know) some other students and generally speaking
 we (19) (have) quite a good time socially! I
 (20) (also learn) to drive. See you soon.

Katherine

Key points

- 1 The present simple describes facts and habitual actions. The present continuous describes actions which are still in progress at the time of speaking.
- 2 Many verbs which describe states rather than momentary events can only be used in the simple form. Many verbs describing mental activities (*understand, know*) are of this kind.
- 3 Some verbs have both state and event meanings, but the meanings are not the same.
- 4 When describing a photograph, we usually describe the scene as if it is happening now, and use the present continuous.
- 5 Present tense forms are also used to refer to future time. See Grammar 3.
- 6 Where some languages use present tenses, English uses the present perfect. See Grammar 2.

I've lived in Milan all my life.

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 3: Future time
Grammar 5: Consolidation 1

1 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given.

- a) There's a party at Mary's house next week.
having
 Next week *Mary's having a* party at her house.
- b) When you phoned me, it was my lunch time.
I
 When you phoned me lunch.
- c) I started working here three years ago.
for
 I've three years.
- d) Our meeting is tomorrow.
a
 We tomorrow.
- e) I haven't had a Chinese meal for ages.
since
 It's a Chinese meal.
- f) David went home before we arrived.
had
 When we home.
- g) The arrival time of Helen's flight is 8.00.
at
 Helen's flight 8.00.
- h) Hurry up! We'll get to the theatre after the beginning of the play.
will
 By the time we get to the theatre, the play begun.
- i) Oh no! My wallet is missing.
lost
 Oh no! I wallet.
- j) I've only recently started wearing glasses.
wear
 I recently.

2 Put each word in brackets into a suitable verb form.

Moving house

I come from a very large family, and recently my parents (1) *decided* (decide) that they (2) (spend) long enough living in an overcrowded house in Birmingham. 'We (3) (move) to the country', my father (4) (announce) one evening. 'I (5) (sell) this house, and we (6) (live) on a farm.' So last week we (7) (load) all our possessions into two hired vans, and for the last few days we (8) (try) to organize ourselves in our new home. Yesterday, for example, my three brothers and I (9) (start) painting the downstairs rooms. Unfortunately while I (10) (mix) the paint, one of my sisters (11) (open) the door. Nobody (12) (tell) her that we (13) (be) in the room, you see. So instead of painting the walls, we (14) (spend) all morning cleaning the paint off the floor. But worse things (15) (happen) since then. This morning when I (16) (wake up), water (17) (drip) through the ceiling next to my bed. We (18) (spend) today so far repairing the roof. It's not all bad news, though. The school in the village nearby (19) (close down) two years ago, and my parents (20) (not find) another school for us yet.

3 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given.

- a) Jack left the office before I arrived there.
already
When I arrived at the office *Jack had already* left.
- b) Do you know how to drive this kind of car?
ever
Have this kind of car before?
- c) This is my first visit to Scotland.
I
This is the first time Scotland.
- d) During dinner, the phone rang.
I
While phone rang.

- e) Do you have any plans for Saturday evening?
doing
What Saturday evening?
- f) I started this job five years ago.
been
I have five years.
- g) Is this car yours?
you
Do car?
- h) Look at those black clouds! There's rain on the way!
to
Look at those black clouds! It's rain.
- i) Our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary is in June next year.
for
By June next year we twenty-five years.
- j) I haven't been to the cinema for two months.
time
The the cinema was two months ago.

4 Put each verb in brackets into a suitable verb form.

At the dentist's

I was on time for my dentist's appointment, but the dentist was still busy with another patient, so I (1) *sat* (sit) in the waiting room and (2) (read) some of the old magazines lying there. While I (3) (wonder) whether to leave and come back another day, I (4) (notice) a magazine article about teeth. It (5) (begin): 'How long is it since you last (6) (go) to the dentist? (7) (you go) regularly every six months? Or (8) (you put off) your visit for the last six years?' Next to the article was a cartoon of a man in a dentist's chair. The dentist (9) (say): 'I'm afraid this (10) (hurt).' I (11) (suddenly realise) that my tooth (12) (stop) aching. But just as I (13) (open) the door to leave, the dentist's door (14) (open). 'Next please,' he (15) (call), as the previous patient (16) (push) past me. 'Actually I'm not here to see you, I (17) (wait) for my friend,' I (18) (shout), leaving as rapidly as I could. (19) (you ever do) this kind of thing? Surely I can't be the only person who (20) (hate) the dentist!

5 Look carefully at each line. Some of the lines are correct, and some have a word which should not be there. Tick each correct line. If a line has a word which should not be there, write the word in the space.

Meeting again

Dear Harry,

Do you remember me?

We have met last year when you were on holiday in Brighton. I'm sorry I haven't been written to you since by then. I have been working abroad and I have only just come back home to England. Next week I am planning is to be in Bristol, and I was thinking about that we could meet.

Do you remember Shirley, the girl we have met in Brighton? We are getting married next month, and we are want you to come to the wedding.

I have lost your phone number, but when I have get to Bristol I'll try to contact you.

It will be great to see you again. Are you still studying, or I have you found a job?

You won't recognise me when you will see me!

I had my hair cut last week, and now I look at completely different. Shirley doesn't like men with long hair, you see!

Best wishes,

Graham Norris

-
have
- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)
- 9)
- 10)
- 11)
- 12)
- 13)
- 14)
- 15)

6 Decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each space.

The latest news

Dear Linda,

I'm sorry I (1) **B** to you for so long, but I (2) very busy lately. All last month I (3) exams, and I (4) anything else but study for ages. Anyway, I (5) studying now, and I (6) for my exam results.

As you can see from this letter, I (7) my address and (8) in Croydon now. I (9) that I wanted a change from central London because it (10) so expensive. A friend of mine (11) me about this flat, and I (12) here about two months ago. When you (13) to London this summer, please visit me. I (14) here until the middle of August. Then I (15) on holiday to Scotland.

Please write soon,

Margaret

- 1) A don't write B haven't written C am not writing D wasn't writing
- 2) A was being B had been C am D have been
- 3) A had B was having C had had D have had
- 4) A haven't done B don't do C wasn't doing D am not doing
- 5) A stop B will have stopped C have stopped D was stopping
- 6) A wait B am waiting C have waited D was waiting
- 7) A am changing B had changed C will change D have changed
- 8) A will live B have been living C live D have lived
- 9) A decided B have decided C was deciding D decide
- 10) A will become B becomes C has become D will have become
- 11) A tells B told C was telling D will tell
- 12) A have moved B had moved C was moving D moved
- 13) A will come B came C come D were coming
- 14) A am staying B stayed C stay D have stayed
- 15) A have gone B went C am going D will have gone