

Unit 22: PRESENT CONTINUOUS

This formation usually means ‘now — for a limited period of time’. We use the present tense of the auxiliary verb **be** (Unit 17) before the **-ing** form of the lexical verb (Unit 3).

1 Formation (*be + -ing form*)

a STATEMENTS

EXAMPLES: I **am writing** this letter to thank you.
Bus fares **are going** up today.
He **is not taking** the exam this year.
They **aren't having** a lesson at the moment.

b QUESTIONS

EXAMPLES: **Am** I disturbing you?
How much **are** they going up by?
Who **is taking** the exam this year?
Why **aren't** they having a lesson?

NOTICE: For spelling problems with the **-ing** form of the verb, look at Appendix 6.

2 Use

a PRESENT ACTIVITY

EXAMPLES: Be quiet! The Prime Minister **is speaking**.
They **are having** dinner at the moment.
What **are you doing** there?

b TEMPORARY STATE

EXAMPLES: She **is staying** at the Metropolitan Hotel.
He **isn't feeling** very well today.

c CHANGING STATE

EXAMPLES: Quick! The bus **is stopping**.
Pollution in the city **is getting** worse.

d FUTURE PLANS

EXAMPLES: We **are leaving** at ten o'clock tomorrow.

NOTICE: Present continuous or present simple or present perfect? (Unit 39)
Present continuous or **going to** or **will**? (Unit 41)