

# Advanced Grammar

## **LESSON 2:**

# **Present Continuous and Present Simple 2**

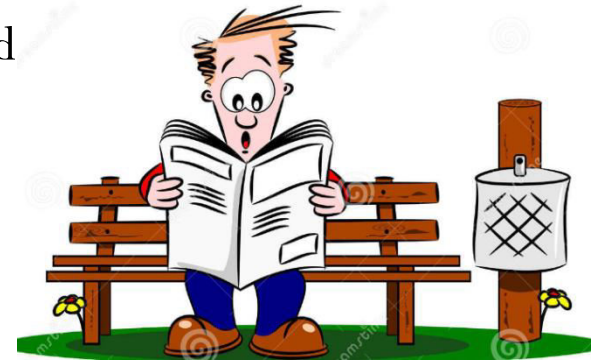
# STORIES AND JOKES

We often use the present simple and present continuous in stories and jokes in informal spoken English to create the impression that events are happening now. This can make them more direct and exciting and hold people's attention.

➔ She **goes** up to this man and **looks** straight into his eyes. He's not **wearing** his glasses, and he **doesn't recognize** her. ....

The main events are usually described in sequence using the present simple and longer background events are described using the present continuous.

In narratives and anecdotes the present simple can be used to highlight an event. Often it is used after the past tenses and with a phrase such as **suddenly** or **all of a sudden**.



➔ I was sitting at the park, reading newspaper, when **all of a sudden** this dog **jumps** at me.

# Exercise 1 – A Joke

## Arrange the story

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. a student asked, "What's the matter, Mrs. Sheridan?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. "What was the matter? What will be the matter? What has been the matter? What might have been the matter...?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. An English teacher spent a lot of time marking grammatical errors in her students' written work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. After a slight pause the student tried again,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. "Tense," she replied, describing her emotional state.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. She wasn't sure how much impact she was having until one overly busy day when she sat at her desk rubbing her temples



We also use the present simple and present continuous in the live commentaries (for example, on sports events) when the report takes place at the same time as the action:

- ➔ King **serves** to the left-hand court and Adams **makes** a wonderful return. She's **playing** magnificent tennis in this match....



We can use the present simple in phrases such as:

**It says here, I hear, I gather, I see, I understand and They say, (Someone) says, (Someone) tells me** to introduce news that we heard, read, and seen (e.g. on television), or been told. We can also use past tense (e.g. **It said here, I heard**):

- ➔ **I gather** you're worried about Pedro.
- ➔ Sophia **tells me** you're thinking of emigrating.
- ➔ Professor Hendriks is at the conference and **I hear** that she's an excellent speaker.



# Exercise 2 – Gap Fill

Nick Pike runs with the ball (sorry strolls with the ball) and \_\_\_\_\_ the ball stolen off him by Chris Brown, he \_\_\_\_\_ it to Bristol Rovers answer to Cliff Richard who passes it to Matt Dark. It gets intercepted by Lardy (Rich Massey), he gets a shout from Feet, but Chris read the game, ran into space and got the ball, he passes it to Jap but he \_\_\_\_\_ it to Tony. Jap \_\_\_\_\_ for the ball he lost and \_\_\_\_\_ it back he then knocks the ball to me, I lose it to Feet. Feet has a shot which our keeper collected with ease. Ger \_\_\_\_\_ the ball out to me, I get closed down by Foxy, he \_\_\_\_\_ for the ball, I knock it on to Martin Bryant, he has a little run \_\_\_\_\_ the ball to other side to find Matt who \_\_\_\_\_ the ball to Pugsy, who is in the 18 yard box and Clemco (Martin Clemmence) puts a good foot in. Chris Brown \_\_\_\_\_ well, he turns with the ball, he has a shot but it never troubled the keeper.

tackles	gets	challenges	battles	loses	wins
knocks	throws	passes	switches	crosses	runs

# NEWS HEADLINES and CONTENTS

The present simple is often used in news headlines to talk about events that have recently happened”:

**SECOND QUAKE HITS JAPAN**

**FIRE BREAKS OUT IN HOTEL ROOM**

**SCIENTISTS *FIND* ICE ON THE MOON**

**FOREIGN MINISTER *RESIGNS***

We could use the present simple to refer to the contents of books, films, newspapers, etc:

- ➔ Thompson **gives** a list of the largest European companies in Chapter 6.
- ➔ At the beginning of the book, three men **find** \$4 million in a crashed plane.
- ➔ In the film, Loni Baranski **takes** the role of a private detective.




# Exercise 3

Complete what each person says about the news they have read or heard using the present tenses phrases.

1 **Government gives health service billions**

2 **Vegecorp to sack 1,000 workers.**


3 President Cartman announced a new public holiday on his birthday, August 6th. He made the announcement ...

4  Did you hear that Bruno's crashed his car again?

Ed

5  I've got a new job.

Julia

6  A team of researchers claims to have identified a gene which causes some people to overeat.

1. I see the government's giving the health service a lot of money.

2. .... Vegecorp are going to .....

3. .... we're going to have .....

4. .... Bruno's .....

5. .... she's .....

6. .... They've identified .....

# ADVERBS

We can use the present continuous with adverbs such as **always**, **constantly**, **continually** or **forever** to emphasize that something is done so often that it is characteristic of a person, group or thing:

➔ a. I think, I'll stay here after all.    b. You're **constantly** changing your mind.

➔ Jacob is a really kind person. He's always **offering** to help me with my homework.

We often use this pattern to indicate disapproval. The past continuous is used in a similar way with these adverbs. (e.g. **Was** Olivia always **asking** you for money, too?).

We can use the present continuous to describe something we regularly do at a certain time:

➔ At eight o'clock I'm usually **driving** to work, so phone me on my mobile.

➔ Seven o'clock is a bit early. We're generally **eating** then.



# Exercise 4

Expand one of the sets of notes below to complete each dialogue.

continually/change/mind      forever/moan/work      forever/ask me/money  
constantly/criticise/driving      always/complain/handwriting

1. A. Shall I phone at six?      B. No, we usually ..... dinner at that time?  
I ..... Lamb, thanks. I'm a vegetarian.
2. a. Gielman ..... Henry V in the latest production at the Royal Theater.  
b. They constantly ..... loud music until the early hours of the morning.
3. a. I normally ..... the children to school at 8:30. Perhaps we could meet at 9:00.  
b. In his 2007 book, Wall ..... a controversial view of Britain's role in the war.

# The End

Next: Lesson 3  
Past Simple and  
Present Perfect