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TECHNIQUES

SPORTS TRAINING & EDUCATION MOVEMENT DIVISION

MASTER 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Lecture 1: Present and Past Continuous

Introduction

In this lesson you will learn how to use present and past continuous tenses in business contexts. To use the continuous tenses, you need know how to form the present participle of verbs. The participle is formed by adding **-ing** to the base form of the **verb**.

E.g. I am working here. (**Work + -ing**)

Many present participle verbs are formed this way, but there are other verbs that have to be changed before the **-ing** can be added. Here are a few examples of how we change some verbs to present participle:

Our customers are **begging** for more queso. (**beg + g + -ing**)

They are closing the deal today. (drop the silent **e + -ing**)

1. Present Continuous

The present continuous tells about an action that is happening now. You can use it to tell about the work you do, the skills you have, the school you attend, etc.

The present continuous is made from **the present tense of the verb *be*** and the ***-ing*** form of a verb:

<i>I am</i>	<i>working</i>
<i>You are</i>	<i>playing</i>
<i>He is</i>	<i>talking</i>
<i>She is</i>	<i>Leaving</i>
<i>It is</i>	<i>eating</i>
<i>We are</i>	<i>staying</i>
<i>They are</i>	<i>sleeping</i>

a. Present continuous questions

We make questions by putting ***am, is*** or ***are*** in front of the **subject**:

Are **you** listening?

Are **they** coming to play football?

When is **she** going home?

What **am I** doing here?

b. Present continuous negatives

We make negatives by putting **not** (or **n't**) after **am**, **is** or **are**:

I'm **not** doing that.

You **aren't** listening. (or You're **not** listening.)

They **aren't** coming to play football. (or They're **not** coming to play football.)

She **isn't** going home until Monday. (or She's **not** going home until Monday.)

We also use the present continuous to talk about:

- something which is happening **before and after a specific time**:

At eight o'clock we **are** usually **having** breakfast.

When I get home the children **are doing** their homework.

- something which **we think is temporary**:

Adam is at university. He's **studying** history.

I'm **working** in Batna for the next two weeks.

- something which is **new** and **contrasts** with a previous state:

These days most people **are using** email instead of writing letters.

What sort of clothes **are** teenagers **wearing** nowadays?

What sort of music **are** they **listening** to?

- something which is changing, growing or developing:

The children **are growing up** quickly.

The climate **is changing** rapidly.

Your English **is improving**.

- something which happens **again and again**:

The sun is **always shining** in Biskra.

They **are always arguing**.

Adam is great. He's **always laughing**.

2. Past Continuous

The past continuous is used to describe a time when an action happened in the past. It can also tell about an action that happened when something else in happening. It is formed by using the past tense of *to be* (**was**, **were**) with a present participle verb.

E.g. Hadjer and Aymen **were going** to dinner (were + going)

Now, let's learn how to use past continuous to explain an action that happened during a longer event. To do that, use the words **while** or **when**, plus past continuous to describe the longer event. Then use simple past to describe the action that happened during the long event.

E.g. **While** Hatem was working in London, he **learned** English. (**was** + **working**)

In the above example, we know that when Hatem worked in London (long event – use past continuous), he learned English (short event –use simple past)

Other Examples:

Three years ago, I **was studying** Architecture at my local college

I **was working** as a taxi driver two months ago

While I **was living** in Biskra, I **worked** as a teacher

When I **was playing** football with my friends, I **studied** at night

- Remember, past continuous tense can help you describe when something happened in the past, or tell about an action that happened in the past during a longer event.