



UNIT 8A · GENERAL A1

What are you doing?

Class Book and Workbook · one complete unit

By the end you will...

- Use the present continuous for actions happening right now
- Form the -ing form correctly, including spelling changes
- Ask and answer 'What are you doing?' in the present moment
- Distinguish present continuous (now) from present simple (routine)
- Describe a picture using present continuous sentences

Warm-up · This moment

Look around the room. Answer with short sentences.

- What are you doing right now?
- What is the teacher doing right now?
- Is anyone in the room smiling or writing?

1. Lead-in · What's happening now?

Read the small scene and predict the best answer with the present continuous.

Rosa is in the kitchen. There is water, pasta and tomatoes on the table. She...

Ben is at the park with his dog. The dog is fast, in front of him. The dog...

Two children have a ball on the grass. They...

It's 11 p.m. Marco is in bed with a book. He...

Look out of the window. Say one sentence: 'Someone is...'

2. Reading · A video call

It's Sunday afternoon. Three friends are on a video call. Rosa is sitting in her kitchen. She's cooking pasta and talking at the same time.

Ben is at the park. He's sitting on a bench. His dog is running near him, and some children are playing football close by. Ben is drinking a coffee and enjoying the sun.

Ana is at home. She's not doing anything special — she's lying on the sofa and watching a film. 'I'm relaxing today,' she says. 'I'm not working, and I'm not studying!'

Comprehension

What is Rosa doing?

Where is Ben?

What is Ana doing?

2b. Words in the text

Match the word with the meaning.

- a video call
talking with someone by video on the phone or computer
- a bench
a long seat, often in a park
- lying (on the sofa)
in a flat position, resting

- relaxing
resting, not working

2c. Talk about the text

Answer in one or two sentences.

- Which friend's Sunday is most like yours today?
Answer key: Model: My Sunday is like Ana's. Right now, I'm relaxing at home.
- What are you doing right now, in this class?
Answer key: Model: I'm sitting in class and I'm listening to my teacher.

Cameras Show City Life in Real Time

Source: Apex English · graded news-style report · Original text written for Apex English (A1 graded reader)

A short report about live cameras that show city life right now.

In some cities, you can watch a live camera on the internet. Right now, you can see people walking, cars moving and, in one city, ducks swimming in a river.

Many people are watching these cameras every day. 'I'm working at home, and I'm watching the camera in my old town,' says one viewer. 'Right now, someone is buying coffee near my old house!'

The cameras are simple, but people love them. 'It's nice to see real life, happening right now, in a place you love,' says a city worker.

1. READ FOR GIST

- What is the text about?
Answer key: Live cameras that show what is happening in a city right now.
- Why do people like the cameras?
Answer key: Because they show real life happening right now, in a place they love.

2. READ FOR DETAIL

- What can you see on the cameras?
Answer key: People walking, cars moving, and ducks swimming in a river.
- What is the viewer doing while she watches?
Answer key: She's working at home.
- What does the city worker say about the cameras?
Answer key: It's nice to see real life happening right now.

3. GLOSSARY

live camera

a camera that shows pictures happening now, in real time

viewer

a person who watches something

duck

a bird that swims on water

in real time

happening exactly now, not before

4. DISCUSS IN PAIRS

- Would you like to watch a live camera of your hometown? Why or why not?
- What is probably happening in your favourite place right now?

3. Vocabulary · Actions in progress

SET A

sit / sitting

be in a chair or on the floor

stand / standing

be on your feet

talk / talking

speak with someone

listen / listening

pay attention to sound

write / writing

put words on paper

wait / waiting

stay until something happens

SET B

What are you doing?

ask about the present moment

I'm just relaxing.

describe a calm activity

Are you busy right now?

check if someone can talk

Hold on, I'm coming.

say you are on your way

Practice

Complete with ONE word (the -ing form).

- Right now, I'm studying English. (study)
- She's reading a book at the moment. (read)
- They're playing football in the park. (play)
- He's cooking in the kitchen. (cook)
- We're waiting for the bus. (wait)

3b. Action and place

Match the action with a typical place.

- cooking
in the kitchen

- swimming
in a pool
- studying
at a desk
- waiting for a bus
at a bus stop
- relaxing
on the sofa

4. Grammar · Present continuous

Form: am/is/are + -ing

I am working. She is working. They are working.

Use: now, at this moment

We use the present continuous for actions happening right now: I'm sitting in class.

Regular -ing spelling

work working, read reading, play playing (just add -ing).

Drop the silent -e

write writing, dance dancing, make making.

Double the consonant

sit sitting, run running, swim swimming (short vowel + one consonant).

Negative and question

Negative: I'm not working. Question: Are you working? Is she working?

Present continuous vs present simple

Present simple = routine: I work every day. Present continuous = now: I'm working now.

4a. Write the -ing form

Write the correct -ing form of the verb.

- run
Answer key: running
- write
Answer key: writing
- play
Answer key: playing
- sit
Answer key: sitting
- make
Answer key: making
- swim
Answer key: swimming

4b. Complete with am/is/are + -ing

Complete each sentence with the correct present continuous form.

- I ___ (study) English right now.
Answer key: am studying
- She ___ (cook) pasta at the moment.
Answer key: is cooking
- They ___ (play) in the park.
Answer key: are playing
- He ___ (not work) today.
Answer key: isn't working
- ___ you ___ (listen) to me?
Answer key: Are you listening
- We ___ (wait) for the bus.
Answer key: are waiting

4c. Present simple or present continuous?

Choose the correct form for the sentence.

- I usually ___ (work) at 9am, but right now I ___ (relax).
Answer key: work / am relaxing
- She ___ (not drink) coffee every day, but she ___ (drink) coffee now.
Answer key: doesn't drink / is drinking
- They ___ (play) football every Sunday. Today they ___ (play) in the park.
Answer key: play / are playing
- Look! It ___ (rain).
Answer key: is raining

Look at the picture and use the grammar you just studied

Look at the picture. Write 4–5 sentences using the present continuous to describe what people are doing.

5. Listening · A phone call

David calls his sister, Laura, to ask what she is doing. She's busy with something unexpected.

Two voices — no narrator introduction.

Before you listen

- What do you usually ask when you call a family member?
- What are you doing right now?

First listen — gist

- Why does David call Laura?
Answer key: To ask what she's doing and invite her out.
- Can Laura go out right now?
Answer key: No, she's busy — she's fixing something in the kitchen.

Second listen — detail

- What is Laura doing when David calls?
Answer key: She's cleaning the kitchen and fixing a leak.

- What is David doing?
Answer key: He's walking to the café.
- Why can't Laura talk for long?
Answer key: Because water is coming out and she needs to stop it.
- What do they decide to do?
Answer key: Meet later, at six o'clock, at the café.

5b. Useful language

Match the phrase with the use.

- What are you doing?
ask about the present moment
- I'm in the middle of something.
say you are busy right now
- Can I call you back?
ask to talk later
- See you at six!
arrange a time to meet

6. Speaking · What's happening?

Work in pairs. Describe actions and guess, or call a partner and describe what you are doing.

- Phone call
A: Call your partner and ask 'What are you doing?'.
B: Answer with a real or invented activity, using present continuous.
- Guess the action
A: Mime an action (cooking, swimming, reading).
B: Guess: 'Are you cooking?' 'Are you swimming?'.

6b. Talk together

Ask and answer in pairs.

- What are you doing this week that is different from usual?
- Is anyone in your family doing something interesting right now?
- What are you wearing today?
- What is the weather doing right now — is it raining or is the sun shining?

6c. Mini presentation · Right now in my life

Talk for 1 minute about what is happening in your life at the moment.

- Say what you are doing this week
- Say one thing you are learning right now
- Say one thing you are not doing this month
- Compare with what you usually do
- Finish with one plan for later today

7. Writing · A busy moment

Write 40–50 words describing a busy place right now (a park, a station, a café). Use the present continuous at least four times.

WORKBOOK · HOME PRACTICE

Unit 8A Workbook

Do this after class. Answers are marked for your teacher.

1. Vocabulary gap-fill

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box (use the -ing form).

- She's reading a book on the sofa.
- He's cooking pasta in the kitchen.
- We're waiting for the bus.
- They're playing football in the park.
- I'm writing an email right now.
- She's running in the park this morning.
- He's sitting next to me in class.

2. Present simple or present continuous?

Choose the correct form.

- I usually ___ (work) at 9am.
Answer key: work
- Right now, I ___ (study) English.
Answer key: am studying
- She ___ (not drink) coffee every day.
Answer key: doesn't drink
- Look! It ___ (rain).
Answer key: is raining
- They ___ (play) football every Sunday.
Answer key: play
- He ___ (write) an email at the moment.
Answer key: is writing
- We ___ (not work) today — it's a holiday.
Answer key: aren't working

3. Choose the correct -ing form

Choose the correct spelling.

The -ing form of 'run' is ___.

The -ing form of 'write' is ___.

The -ing form of 'sit' is ___.

The -ing form of 'make' is ___.

The -ing form of 'play' is ___.

The -ing form of 'swim' is ___.

4. Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake. Write it correctly.

- I am study English now.
Answer key: I am studying English now.
- She is cook dinner right now.
Answer key: She is cooking dinner right now.

- They is playing football.
Answer key: They are playing football.
- What you are doing?
Answer key: What are you doing?
- He isn't studing today.
Answer key: He isn't studying today.
- We are runing in the park.
Answer key: We are running in the park.

5. Listening · Three phone calls

Three people answer the phone and say what they are doing. Listen for the activity.

- Speaker 1: what is he doing?
Answer key: He's cooking dinner in the kitchen.
- Speaker 2: what is she doing?
Answer key: She's sitting in the park and reading a book.
- Speaker 3: what are they doing?
Answer key: They're waiting for the bus in the rain.

6. Writing · Right now

Write 40–50 words about what is happening around you right now. Use the present continuous at least four times.

7. Reflection

Answer in one or two sentences.

- Which -ing spelling rule is difficult for you? Give an example.
Answer key: Model: Doubling the consonant is difficult. I forget the second 't' in 'sitting'.
- Write two things you are doing this week that are different from usual.
Answer key: Model: I'm preparing for a trip and I'm reading a new book.