

*The Continuous  
Aspect*



# 3 aspects of tenses

▶ simple      perfect      continuous

- ▶ The simple aspect emphasises that an action is complete.
- ▶ The perfect aspect is focused on the result and emphasises that an action is completed before another.
- ▶ The continuous aspect focuses on the action and its duration (how long it lasts)

# Verbs NOT used in continuous:

## Stative Verbs:

- ▶ **Thoughts and Opinions:** believe, know, understand, think, doubt, remember, forget, imagine, realize, suppose, mean
- ▶ **Emotions and Feelings:** love, like, hate, prefer, want, wish, dislike, fear, hope, regret
- ▶ **Senses and Perceptions:** see, hear, smell, taste, feel, seem, appear, look (when it means seem)
- ▶ **Possession and Measurement:** have, own, possess, belong, contain, consist of, weigh, measure
- ▶ **Other States:** be, exist, resemble, suit, cost, seem

# Stative Verbs Used in Continuous Tense

- Some verbs can function as both stative and dynamic verbs:

## 1. Think

Stative meaning (not used in continuous):

*"I think you're right."* → opinion

Action meaning (used in continuous):

*"I'm thinking about moving to Japan."* → mental process, temporary action

## 2. Have

Stative: *"I have a car."* → possession (not used in continuous)

Action: *"I'm having lunch."* → activity, used in continuous

## 3. See

Stative: *"I see your point."* → understand

Action: *"I'm seeing the doctor tomorrow."* → planned meeting

## 4. Be

Stative: *"He is nice."* → personality (not used in continuous)

Temporary behavior: *"He's being rude today."* → temporary state, acceptable in continuous

- In some cases, the continuous form is used with stative verbs for emphasis or to express a temporary feeling or opinion:  
e.g. in the McDonald's slogan *"I'm loving it"*.  
e.g. a polite request *"I was hoping"*

# The continuous aspect

- **Actions in progress or happening over a period of time**

- ▶ Everyone is working at the moment.
- ▶ They've been working on the project since morning.
- ▶ We were practicing for weeks before the concert.
- ▶ He had been reading before you arrived.

# The continuous aspect

- **Actions in progress when another thing happens**

- ▶ I was driving when the storm started.
- ▶ They were arguing when the manager walked in.
- ▶ She had been cooking when the guests unexpectedly arrived.

# The continuous aspect

## • **Temporary or incomplete situations**

- ▶ He's working part-time for now.
- ▶ I was living abroad at the time.
- ▶ We will be staying at a hotel during the holidays.

# The continuous aspect

- **Repeated actions (often annoying)**

- ▶ He's always borrowing my things without asking.
- ▶ They were forever complaining about everything.
- ▶ My grandparents were always telling stories about their young years.
- ▶ I'm constantly improving my skills.

# The continuous aspect

## • Situations in the process of changing

- ▶ The weather is getting colder.
- ▶ He is becoming more responsible.
- ▶ The situation was improving before the setback.

# The continuous aspect

## •Plans

- ▶ I was planning to call you later.
- ▶ We were thinking of taking a trip.
- ▶ I will be meeting with them tomorrow.
- ▶ They're flying to Paris next week.

# The continuous aspect

## •Tentative ideas (to sound polite or indirect)

- ▶ I was wondering if you could help me.
- ▶ We were hoping you might join us.
- ▶ I was thinking maybe we could reschedule.