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we regularly publish fresh contentEnglishLevel: Lower-Intermediate, IntermediateLanguage focus: Progressive verb tenses andstate verbsJump to:ExercisesIntroduction: Action Verbs & State (Stative) VerbsMost verbs are action verbs.John kicked the ball.Chefs cook food.People speak languages.To kick, to cook, to speak -- these are all actions that we do with our bodies and we can see the actions happen.Some verbs, however, are not actions. They describe a condition or a state.I understand you.She knows the answer.He has a job.Verbs like this -- understand, know, have -- are notations that people do. They are states(conditions), sothey are calledstateverbs.Okay, but why is this important? State Verbs Are Not Used in the Progressive (Continuous) TenseThat's right. We do say the following:I'm understanding you. (wrong) I understand you.(wrong) She was knowing the answer. (wrong) She knew the answer(He is having a job. (wrong) - He has a job.)We cannot use the Present Progressive (is having), Past Progressive (was having), or Future Progressive (will be having) with state verbs. Progressive tenses describe actions happening at a certain time, but because state verbs are not actions, we do not use progressive tenses with them.What Are Some Common State Verbs?agreebelievebelongcare (about)consistcontaindependdeservedisagreedislikedoubthateheartimagineincludeinvolveknowlikelovemeanmindneedoweownpreferpromiserealizerecognizere-memberseemunderstandwantwishThere are more, of course, but these are the most common verbs.Special Cases: Sense VerbsMost of theverbs for the senses -see, smell, taste, feel, look -- can be used as both a state verb and an action verbbecause they each have two different meanings. Let's look at some examples.I feel sick. (This is a state verb that means 'I am sick / I think I am sick.' There is no action here.)I am feeling the top of the desk. (This is an action verb that means 'I am using my hands to touch the desk to see how it feels.' This is an action.)Thissmells bad. (=State verb that means 'thishas a bad smell' - there is no action here.)I am smelling the flower. (=Action verbthat means 'I am sucking in air through my nose to get the smell of the flower.'This tastes salty. (=State verbthat means 'it has a salty taste'.)I am tasting the strawberry. (=Action verb that means 'I am using my mouth and tongue to learn how something tastes.'Can you see the difference? It is obvious when you look at an example like The cake tastes delicious.If 'taste' were an action, that would mean that thecake(the subject of the sentence) would be tasting something! (That would beimpossible!)People taste cakes (which is an action). When we say 'the cake tastes delicious', the verb tastesa state verb that describes the cake.Another Case: The Verb 'Think'The verb think hasa state meaning and an action meaning as well. Let's look at two examples.I think blue is a nice color. (State verb: I believe blue is nice / In my opinion, blue is nice.)I am thinking of the answer. (Action verb: I am using my brain to try to find theanswer.)So, think is a state verb when we use it to give an opinion, but it is an action verb when we describe our brain in action.Another Case: BE Verb + adjective (Dynamic Adjectives)You cannot say: 'I am being tall.' or 'The car is being red'.However, some adjectives can be expressed as an action. These adjectives are called dynamic adjectives. For example, it's possible to say, 'You are being annoying' or 'He's being silly' in the present continuous to describe how someone is acting right now. Some dynamic adjectives include the following:silly/ridiculous/stupidannoying/irritating/bothersome/disruptivecalm/carefulmean/cruelfriendly/kindpatient/impatientpolite/rude(Note that all of these adjectives can also be expressed as imperatives with the BE verb: 'Be calm! / 'Be careful!')---There are a few other exceptions as well such as idioms with the verb have. Whenhave means to possess something, e.g. I have a pen, we can never use the verb in an -ing (progressive form). But there are some idioms with have that are actions. For example:She's having a baby. (to have a baby = to give birth)'I'm having a party/picnic tomorrow. (to have a party/picnic = to hosta party/picnic)We're having trouble. (to have trouble = to do something with difficulty)'I'm having fun / I'm having a good time.. (to have fun / have a good time= to enjoy yourself)These idioms are all actions.What About McDonald's 'I'm Lovin' It?'(I don't love it.)The Mcdonald's slogan is grammatically incorrect because 'love' is a state verb. It should be 'I love it.' However, this non-traditional use of the verb 'love' has now become part of our language.Practice: State Verbs & Action Verb ExercisesPut the below verbs into the Present Simple or Present Progressive tense.Exercise #2: Verbs That Are BothState &Action VerbsExercise #3: More Practice withState &Action VerbsQuestions? Find a Mistake? Leave a comment below.- Written by Matthew Barton (copyright) / Creator of Englishcurrent.comRelated Lessons:Present Simple & Present Progressive Review & Exercises English Exercises > verb tenses exercises Welcome to today's Lunchtime Lessons post. This week we are looking at state and action verbs. Our Lunchtime Lessons are free Online English classes where we look at areas of English which are often difficult for students. If you want to take an exam or use your English in a formal context, stick to the official grammar rule and don't say 'Im loving it.Important: there are some verbs which can be both, action and state verb depending on the context. An example: I think education is important. AND Im thinking about buying a car.If you analyse those two sentences, youll notice that think in these sentences has different meanings. In the first sentence, Im expressing my opinion. And in the second one, Im considering doing something. My opinion is my belief, its something established, which doesnt change suddenly. So, in that context, think is a state verb. However, in the second sentence where think means considering, it is an action in progress, something thats developing, thats changing. For those reasons think in the second sentence is an action verb. But dont worry, there arent that many verbs which are both.One last thing, please dont confuse state and action verbs with gerunds. Gerunds are not a tense structure, they are verbs functioning as a noun e.g. I love cooking. Being and cooking arent verbs in that context, they are nouns. But this only as a side note. If you want to brush up your knowledge about gerunds you can do this here.OK, back to our verb lists. Try to organize them into action verbs (kick kicking), state verbs (love), or both (think) where the meaning of the verb changes depending on the context. Welcome to our first blog post in our Lunchtime Lessons series. These are free Online Welcome to today's Lunchtime Lessons post. This week we are looking at how to use Download full-size image from PinterestStative or non-action verbs are verbs that describe a state or condition rather than an action. As a state has no real beginning or end, stative verbs are only used with simple and perfect tenses. They cannot be used with continuous tenses. These are some of the most common verbs that refer to states or conditions, so they are stative verbs.Possession and size.Examples: belong, own, have (meaning possess), possess, weigh, measure.All owns three cars. All is owning three cars. OpinionExamples: know, believe, agree, think (meaning believe or have an opinion), imagine, understand.I know what the answer is. I am knowing what the answer is. Likes and dislikes, feelings and emotions.Examples: like, love, want, need, wish, prefer, dislike.Sam likes vegetables. Sam is liking vegetables. Perception and the senses.Examples: sound, hear, seem, see*, appear*, look*, taste*, smell*, feel*.Yousound sad. You are sounding sad. * Although they are usually used as stative verbs, these verbs can also be dynamic when they are used to describe voluntary actions, not perceptions.Dynamic VerbsDynamic verbs describe an action, change, or process with a beginning and an end. They are the most common type of verb and can be used in all tenses and aspects. When referring to an action that is or was in progress, we use dynamic verbs with a continuous tense.I am eating breakfast now.However, when referring to habits or things that are always true, we use them with a simple tense.I eat breakfast at the same time each day.Here are some common verbs that refer to actions, not states, so they are dynamic and can be used in both simple and continuous tenses: eat, run, swim, speak, talk, walk, sleep, make, cook, come, go, buy, sit, watch, listen, do, play, say, read, write, stand, bring, take, give, jump, drive, ride, climb, fly, fall, cry, drink, send, kiss, wear, smell*, taste*, feel*, look*.* These are often stative verbs, but they can be used in continuous forms when they are voluntary actions.Verbs which are both stative and dynamicSome verbs can be both stative and dynamic. Here are some common examples.HaveHave, meaning to possess, describes a state, so it is a stative verb. But when have doesnt mean to possess, it describes an action, so it is a dynamic verb.They are having a party on Saturday.I was having dinner when someone knocked at the door.BeThe verbbeis normally used to describe a state, so it is a stative verb. But whenbe means to act or behave, it describes an action, so it is a dynamic verb.He is being very kind to us.ThinkThink, meaning to believe or to have an opinion, describes a state, so it is a stative verb.I think it is a good idea.Think, meaning to use your brain to reflect, is an action, so it is a dynamic verbSara is thinking about her boyfriend.LookLook, meaning to appear, is a state, so it is a stative verb.Tom looks like his sister.Look, meaning to focus the eyes on something, is an action, so it is a dynamic verb.Peter is looking out the window.Taste, see, smell, feelAlthough they are usually classified as stative, some verbs of the senses (e.g., taste, see, smell, feel) can also be dynamic when they refer to voluntary actions and not perceptions.This soup tastes horrible. (=Perception, not voluntary)I am tasting the soup. (=Voluntary action meaning to put food in your mouth to see how it tastes.)I saw a man looking through a window. (=Not voluntary)Tom is seeing Katie this afternoon. (Voluntary action meaning to meet or visit someone)Page 2 Download full-size image from PinterestStative or non-action verbs are verbs that describe a state or condition rather than an action. As a state has no real beginning or end, stative verbs are only used with simple and perfect tenses. They cannot be used with continuous tenses. These are some of the most common verbs that refer to states or conditions, so they are stative verbs.Possession and size.Examples: belong, own, have (meaning possess), possess, weigh, measure.All owns three cars. All is owning three cars. OpinionExamples: know, believe, agree, think (meaning believe or have an opinion), imagine, understand.I know what the answer is. I am knowing what the answer is. Likes and dislikes, feelings and emotions.Examples: like, love, want, need, wish, prefer, dislike.Sam likes vegetables. Sam is liking vegetables. 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(=Not voluntary)Tom is seeing Katie this afternoon. (Voluntary action meaning to meet or visit someone)0 ratings0% found this document useful (0 votes)1K viewsState verbs describe a state by being rather than an action. Common state verbs fall into categories like emotion, possession, sense, and thought. Some verbs can be either state or action veSaveSave Action & State Verbs Exercises For Later0%0% found this document useful, undefined b. Senses: see, hear, smell, taste, feelExamples:I see a beautiful sunset painting the sky in shades of orange and pink.He hears the sound of waves crashing against the shore as he walks along the beach.They smell the aroma of freshly baked bread wafting from the bakery.She tastes the sweetness of ripe strawberries picked fresh from the garden.We feel the warmth of the sun on our skin during a summer afternoon.I see the twinkling stars in the night sky on clear evenings.He hears the laughter of children playing in the park nearby.They smell the fragrance of blooming flowers in the springtime.She tastes the bitterness of black coffee with each sip.We feel the softness of a fluffy blanket wrapped around us on a chilly day.c. Thoughts and Opinions: believe, doubt, know, understand, thinkExamples:She believes in the importance of kindness and empathy.He doubts the reliability of the information presented in the news.They know the value of hard work and perseverance.She understands the challenges faced by marginalized communities.We think that education is the key to a better future.He believes in the power of positivity to overcome obstacles.They doubt the sincerity of his apology.She knows that honesty is the best policy in all situations.We understand the importance of teamwork in achieving goals.He thinks that laughter is the best medicine for the soul.d. States of Being: be, seem, appear, exist, belong, have (when indicating possession)Examples:She is a talented musician with a passion for playing the piano.He seems tired after a long day at work.The old castle appears majestic against the backdrop of the mountains.They exist in harmony with nature, living off the land.She belongs to a close-knit community that supports one another. He has a loving family who always stands by his side.The truth is, life can be unpredictable at times.They seem lost in thought, pondering the mysteries of the universe.She appears confident, but inside, she harbors doubts and insecurities.We exist in a world filled with endless possibilities and opportunities.e. Relationships: belong, contain, include, consist (when used to describe composition)Examples:The bookcase belongs in the corner of the living room.The box contains a variety of treasures collected over the years.Our family includes grandparents, parents, siblings, and cousins.The recipe consists of flour, sugar, eggs, and butter.The package contains all the necessary components for assembly.The team consists of players from different countries.The friendship includes laughter, support, and shared memories.The music playlist contains songs from various genres and eras.The curriculum includes math, science, language arts, and history.The festival lineup consists of musicians, artists, and performers from around the world.2. Action Verbs:Action verbs, on the other hand, describe actions, processes, or activities that someone or something does. They convey a sense of movement or change and often describe actions that can be observed or measured.Examples of Action Verbs: Physical Actions: run, jump, swim, dance, walk, eatExamples:She runs five miles every morning to stay fit.He lifts weights at the gym to build muscle.They swim laps in the pool for exercise.She jumps rope as part of her cardio routine.He practices yoga to improve flexibility and balance.They play soccer with friends at the park on weekends.She dances salsa with grace and precision.He hikes through the mountains to enjoy nature.They ride bicycles along the scenic trail by the river.She practices martial arts for self-defense and discipline.B. Verbs of Creation: build, create, design, write, composeExamples:She paints vibrant landscapes on large canvases.He sculpts intricate statues out of marble.They compose beautiful melodies on the piano.She writes captivating stories filled with adventure and romance.He designs stunning buildings with modern architecture.They craft handmade jewelry using precious gemstones.She bakes delicious cakes decorated with intricate designs.He invents innovative gadgets to solve everyday problems.They build sturdy furniture from reclaimed wood.She stitches intricate patterns into colorful quilts.c. Verbs of Communication: speak, talk, write, communicate, discussExamples:She speaks fluent French and English.He writes thoughtful emails to his colleagues.They discuss important matters during weekly meetings.She listens attentively to her friend's problems.He gives informative presentations to clients.They negotiate business deals with suppliers.She teaches Spanish to students at the local language school.He interviews candidates for job positions.They chat casually with friends over coffee.She debates current events with classmates in the university.d. Verbs of Change: grow, evolve, develop, transformExamples:Certainly, here are 10 sentences with verbs of change:The weather changes frequently in the spring.He grows taller every year.They adapt quickly to new environments.She evolves into a more confident person over time.He transforms his diet to improve his health.They shift their focus from one project to another.She matures into a responsible adult.He switches careers to pursue his passion.They adjust their plans based on new information.She develops new skills to advance in her career.3. Key Differences between action verbs and state verbs:a. Nature of Expression: State verbs describe a state of being or condition, while action verbs describe actions or activities.b. Duration and Progression: State verbs typically do not have a duration or a sense of progression, whereas action verbs often imply ongoing or completed actions.c. Dynamic vs. Static: Action verbs are dynamic and represent change or movement, while state verbs are static and represent a fixed state or condition.d. Observability: Action verbs often describe observable actions, while state verbs describe internal states or conditions that may not be observable.4. Using State and Action Verbs Correctly:It's important to choose the appropriate verb based on the context and the intended meaning.State verbs are generally not used in the continuous (progressive) tenses, while action verbs can be used in both simple and continuous tenses depending on the context.5. Examples:"She knows the answer." (State verb)"He runs every morning." (Action verb)"She has three children." (State verb)"He is running in the park." (Action verb in continuous tense)6. Verbs That Can Function as Both State and Action Verbs:Some verbs have multiple meanings or can express both a state of being and an action, depending on the context in which they are used. These verbs are often referred to as "dynamic stative verbs" or "activity verbs."Examples of Verbs That Can Be Both State and Action Verbs:Have:State Verb: "She has three children." (Possession)Action Verb: "She is having lunch." (Action of eating)Think:State Verb: "I think you're right." (Opinion)Action Verb: "I am thinking about the problem." (Mental activity)See:State Verb: "She sees the painting." (Perception)Action Verb: "She is seeing her doctor tomorrow." (Appointment)Feel:State Verb: "He feels tired." (Physical sensation)Action Verb: "He is feeling the fabric." (Physical action of touching)Be:State Verb: "She is happy." (State of being)Action Verb: "She is being silly." (Temporary behavior)Key Considerations whether state or action verbs:a. Context: The meaning of these verbs can change depending on the context in which they are used. Consider the context and intended meaning when determining whether the verb functions as a state verb or an action verb.b. Aspect: Verbs like "have," "think," "see," "feel," and "be" can take on different aspects, indicating ongoing action (continuous tense) or completed action (simple tense).Examples: "She has a new car." (State verb - possession)"She is having lunch." (Action verb - activity of eating)"I think you're talented." (State verb - opinion)"I am thinking about the problem." (Action verb - mental activity)"She sees the sunset." (State verb - perception)"She is seeing her friend tomorrow." (Action verb - appointment)"He feels cold." (State verb - physical sensation)"He is feeling the texture." (Action verb - physical action of touching)"She is a teacher." (State verb - identity)"She is being unreasonable." (Action verb - temporary behavior) Fill in all the gaps, then press "Check" to check your answers. Use the "Hint" button to get a free letter if an answer is giving you trouble. You can also click on the "[?]" button to get a clue. Note that you will lose points if you ask for hints or clues! Choose the best option, A or B. If both options are possible, choose both. a. Oh, no! Last week i . 50 kilos. This week it's 56! A weighed B was weighingb. Onaugh . a letter when I called in to see her. A wrote B was writingc. These kids . too much noise. A make B are makingd. Why on earth . at me like that? Is there something on my face? A do you look B are you lookinge. Billy . a word his teacher said this morning. A wasn't understanding B didnt understandf. Jo . a house in Lucca. A has B is havingg. Anthony . amazed when I told him the news. A looked B was lookingh. I . this headline! Man bites dog it sounds absurd. A m not believing B dont believei. We . someone to love. A are all needing B all needj. Sarah says she . a bit sick this morning. A feels B s feeling Write the correct form of the verbs in brackets. a. I (know) you love me really.b. Karen (admire) Richard.c. Now I (taste) the soup to see if its got enough salt in it.d. (you / want) anything or are you OK?e. The party's great, Mark. We (have) a fantastic time.f. Natasha (not / mean) to be rude to me yesterday.g. I (belong) to a bird-watching club and I love it.h. You look sad. What (you / think) about?i. The judge (feel) that the appropriate sentence is ten years in jail.j. Louise (not / understand) what you said. Complete the dialogues. Use the simple or continuous forms of the verbs. If both forms are possible, write both. Kim: What a . (you / do)?Nick: I b . (measure) the staircase. We c . (need) a new carpet for it.Boy: Can you come upstairs? My head d . (hurt). I e . (think) Im ill.Mother: OK. If f . (come), dont worry. g . (you / want) an aspirin?Boss: So, Mr Jones, I h . (understand) you i . (not / like) working for us any more. Is that right?Employee: Well, yes. I j . (feel) its time I changed my career.Andy: What k . (we / have) for lunch? Im starving.Kate: I m not sure any more. This ham I bought yesterday l . (taste) a bit funny to me. Here, you try it. a. This can is containing/contains paraffin so be careful with it.b. Hi, Monica. Im admiring/admire your garden. Whats that rose called? Im thinking/think we should go and live somewhere hot. How about you'd? We have/re having a lovely time in Switzerland. I wish you were here.e. We went to a terrible restaurant. The soup was tasting/tasted like water.f. You seem/are seeming very worried. Is everything OK?g. It really isnt mattering/doesnt matter what I think.h. That motorbike costs/is costing too much. Ill take the other one.i. Poor Debbie. Shes feeling/feels she made the wrong decision.j. You strongly resemble/are strongly resembling an old boyfriend of mine. Read the note to find out why.1.a A -> C f A -> C b B -> A g A -> C c A, B -> A h B -> B d B -> D i B -> B e B -> B j A, B -> E 2.a know -> B b admires -> C c m tasting -> D d Do you want -> B e re having -> D f didnt mean -> B g belong -> B h are you thinking -> D i feels -> C j didnt understand -> B 3.a are you doing g Do you wantb Im measuring h understandc need i dont liked hurts/is hurtingj feele think k are we havingf m coming l tastes 4.a contains f seemb m admiring g doesnt matterc think h costsd re having i feeelse tasted j strongly resemble AUse action verbs in the simple or continuous form, depending on the situation. Follow the usual rules.BUse the simple form (not the continuous) with most state verbs, e.g. believe, belong, know, mean, need, understand and want.CUse the simple form (not the continuous) when certain verbs, e.g. admire, feel, have, look, weigh, etc., have stative meanings.DUse the continuous form (not the simple) when certain verbs, e.g. have, look, taste and think, have active meanings.EUse the simple or continuous form with a few state verbs, e.g. feel, when theres no difference in meaning. Action and state verbsVerbs can express either states or actions. An action means that something happens. Some typical action verbs are decide, go, jump, listen, run, speak and work.A state means that something remains the same. Some typical state verbs are like, love, hate, know, believe and understand.You use action and state verbs differently in English. Here are some rules to help you decide whether to use the simple or continuous form with certain verbs.Action verbs You use action verbs in the simple or continuous form, depending on the situation. I often go to the cinema. Where are you going? Stan read fifteen books last month. Yesterday, I was reading a book by Duncan Forbes.State verbs You use the simple form (not the continuous) with most state verbs. This medication contains caffeine. NOT This medication is containing caffeine. Do you need anything? NOT Are you needing anything? You use the simple or continuous form with a few state verbs when there is no difference in meaning. These verbs are feel, ache and hurt. Im feeling a bit depressed. OR I feel a bit depressed. My heads aching. OR My headaches. My tummys hurting. OR My tummy hurts.Note: Its possible that youll hear native speakers using other state verbs in the continuous form. However, if you want to be sure you dont make mistakes, its probably best to follow these rules.State and action verbs Some verbs can have both a state and an action meaning. You use the simple form (not the continuous) when they have stative meanings.Note: With verbs of perception (feel, hear, see, smell, taste) you often use can/cant and could/couldnt.I could hear the waves crashing down on the beach.I can taste curry in this dish. Can you smell burning?

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