



Tense Comparison: Present Simple vs Present Continuous

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- I usually ___ coffee in the morning, but today I ___ tea.
a) drink / am drinking
b) drink / drink
c) am drinking / drink
d) am drinking / am drinking
- Look! The children ___ in the garden.
a) are playing
b) play
c) plays
d) playing
- Water ___ at 100 degrees Celsius.
a) are boiling
b) boils
c) boil
d) is boiling
- She ___ to the gym three times a week.
a) go
b) is going
c) goes
d) going
- What ___ you ___ at the moment?
a) do / doing
b) are / do
c) do / do
d) are / doing
- The sun ___ in the east.
a) rise
b) is rising
c) are rising
d) rises
- Be quiet! The baby _____.
a) is sleeping
b) sleeps
c) sleep
d) sleeping
- My brother ___ in London, but this month he ___ in Paris.
a) is living / is staying
b) is living / stays
c) lives / is staying
d) lives / stays
- I ___ what you mean.
a) am understanding
b) understands
c) understanding
d) understand
- The train ___ at 9:00 every morning.
a) leaving
b) is leaving
c) leave
d) leaves
- She ___ very hard these days for her exams.
a) works
b) work
c) is working
d) working



Answers

1. a) drink / am drinking
2. a) are playing
3. b) boils
4. c) goes
5. d) are / doing
6. d) rises
7. a) is sleeping
8. c) lives / is staying
9. d) understand
10. d) leaves
11. c) is working
12. d) think
13. b) is knocking
14. d) eats
15. b) am listening
16. c) tastes
17. b) does / live / lives
18. b) am thinking
19. a) help
20. d) are / looking



Explanations

1. “drink / am drinking” (a)

Use Present Simple 'drink' for habits (usually) and Present Continuous 'am drinking' for what's happening now (today).

2. “are playing” (a)

'Look!' signals something happening right now, so we use Present Continuous 'are playing'.

3. “boils” (b)

Scientific facts use Present Simple. 'Boils' describes a permanent truth about water.

4. “goes” (c)

'Three times a week' indicates a regular routine, so we use Present Simple 'goes'.

5. “are / doing” (d)

'At the moment' signals present time, requiring Present Continuous 'are...doing'.

6. “rises” (d)

General truths and facts use Present Simple. The sun rising in the east is a permanent fact.

7. “is sleeping” (a)

'Be quiet!' suggests an action happening right now, so we use Present Continuous 'is sleeping'.

8. “lives / is staying” (c)

Use Present Simple 'lives' for permanent situations and Present Continuous 'is staying' for temporary situations (this month).

9. “understand” (d)

'Understand' is a stative verb and is not normally used in the continuous form.

10. “leaves” (d)

Timetables and schedules use Present Simple, even for future events.

11. “is working” (c)

'These days' indicates a temporary situation around now, requiring Present Continuous.

12. “think” (d)

'Think' meaning 'believe/have an opinion' is a stative verb and uses Present Simple.

13. “is knocking” (b)

'Listen!' signals something happening right now, so we use Present Continuous.

14. “eats” (d)

'Never' indicates a habit or routine, requiring Present Simple 'eats'.

15. “am listening” (b)

'Right now' indicates present time, requiring Present Continuous 'am listening'.

16. “tastes” (c)

'Taste' as a perception verb (describing how something tastes) is stative and uses Present Simple.

17. “does / live / lives” (b)

Questions about permanent residence use Present Simple: 'Where does she live?' — 'She lives...'

18. “am thinking” (b)

'Think about' meaning 'consider' is an action verb and can use Present Continuous.

19. “help” (a)

'Always' with a general meaning indicates a habit, requiring Present Simple 'help'.

20. “are / looking” (d)

The question asks about what's happening now (like that = in this moment), requiring Present Continuous.