Grammar explanation

Stative verbs describe a state rather than an action. They aren't usually used in the present continuous form.

*I don't know the answer. ~~I'm not knowing the answer.~~
She really likes you. ~~She's really liking you.~~
He seems happy at the moment. ~~He's seeming happy at the moment.~~*

Stative verbs often relate to:

* thoughts and opinions: *agree*, *believe*, *doubt*, *guess*, *imagine*, *know*, *mean*, *recognise*, *remember*, *suspect*, *think*, *understand*
* feelings and emotions: *dislike*, *hate*, *like*, *love*, *prefer*, *want*, *wish*
* senses and perceptions: *appear*, *be*, *feel*, *hear*, *look*, *see*, *seem*, *smell*, *taste*
* possession and measurement: *belong*, *have*, *measure*, *own*, *possess*, *weigh.*

Verbs that are sometimes stative

A number of verbs can refer to states or actions, depending on the context.

*think*

*I think it's a good idea.
Wait a moment! I'm thinking.*

The first sentence expresses an **opinion**. It is a **mental state**, so we use present simple. In the second example the speaker is actively **processing thoughts** about something. It is an action in progress, so we use present continuous.

Some other examples are:

*have*

*I have an old car.* (state – possession)
*I'm having a quick break.* (action – having a break is an activity)

*see*

*Do you see any problems with that?* (state – opinion)
*We're seeing Tadanari tomorrow afternoon.* (action – we're meeting him)

*be*

*He's so interesting!* (state – his permanent quality)
*He's being very unhelpful.* (action – he is temporarily behaving this way)

*taste*

*This coffee tastes delicious*. (state – our perception of the coffee)
*Look! The chef is tasting the soup*. (action – tasting the soup is an activity)

Other verbs like this include: *agree*, *appear*, *doubt*, *feel*, *guess*, *hear*, *imagine*, *look*, *measure*, *remember*, *smell*, *weigh*, *wish.*