

# 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.*