



PRESENT TENSES

Contrasting use

PRESENT CONTINUOUS/PROGRESSIVE

Used for things happening at or around the time of speaking:

The water is boiling. Can you turn it off?

The action is not complete.

We use present progressive for temporary situations:

He's living with some friends, until he finds a new job.

PRESENT SIMPLE

Used for things in general or things that happen repeatedly:

Water boils at 100 degrees Celcius.

We use present simple for permanent situations:

My parents live in London.

I ALWAYS DO VS I'M ALWAYS DOING

I always go to work by tram. (=I do it every time)

He's always going to work by car. (=he goes too often and I don't like it)

Other examples:

He's always complaining. = He complains too much.

She's always borrowing my mobile phone. = too often, and I don't like it.

PRESENT SIMPLE VS PRESENT PROGRESSIVE

Some verbs **never** use present progressive form (**state verbs**):

Like, want, need, prefer

I don't need your help.

Know, realise, suppose, mean, understand, believe, remember

He doesn't know what to do.

Belong, fit, contain, consist, seem, appear

They seem to be very angry.

THINK

PRESENT SIMPLE

I **think** he's right. (= I believe, this is my opinion)

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

I'm **thinking** about what happened. (=that's what I'm doing now)

She's **thinking** of leaving the States. (=she's considering this)

SEE, SMELL, HEAR, TASTE

We usually use PRESENT SIMPLE

The soup tastes good!

I hear some strange noise.

The roses smell wonderful!

But:

The cook is tasting the soup (=that's what he's doing now)

His girlfriend is smelling the roses. (=that's what she's doing now)

LOOK, FEEL

Both tenses are OK

You **look** well today. = You're **looking** well today.

How **do** you **feel** now? = How **are** you **feeling** now?

ONE LAST DIFFERENCE

He's selfish. = all the time, always, that's the way he is

He's **being** selfish. = he's acting, he's behaving in a selfish way at the moment.

Normally, he is not selfish.