

Introduction to the Progressive tenses

The Progressive or continuous tenses are used to portray actions that are in progress or that are continuing through time. There is a full range of forms used, based on the tense you are using: Present, Past, or Future Progressive.

In this section we are going to study the **Present Progressive**. It is formed by combining the Present tense of the verb 'estar' and the gerund (-ing form).

Estoy estudiando. = I am studying.
Estoy hablando. = I am speaking.

Caution: English speaking learners constantly overuse the Progressive tenses. In most cases the Spanish Present Progressive refers to actions that are or were actually in progress when spoken. Here are four other uses of the Progressive:

1. The Preterite Progressive is used to express an action that was prolonged during a specific period of time and is perceived as completed:

Estuve buscando a Juan durante la fiesta. = I was looking for Juan during the party.

Estuvimos hablando por dos horas. = We were talking for two hours.

This is different from the Preterite:

Busqué a Juan anoche. = I looked for Juan last night.

Hablamos por dos hours. = We spoke for two hours.

The Preterite Progressive portrays a sense of prolonged action during the time given.

2. The Imperfect Progressive is used to express action that was prolonged for a long time and still may be occurring:

Ella siempre estaba trabajando. = She was always working.

This can also be said by using the Imperfect tense, but with less emphasis on the continuous time:

Ella siempre trabajaba. = She always worked.

The differences between the Preterite and Imperfect Progressive are subtle and depend on the speaker's choice of words to essentially express the same meaning.

3. The Imperfect Progressive is most commonly used to "set the stage" for "interrupted past action" as taught on pages 16 and 17:

Yo estaba tocando la guitarra cuando ella entró. = I was playing the guitar when she entered.

4. The Future Progressive portrays events that will be occurring at some certain future time:

¿Qué estarás haciendo a las ocho? = What will you be doing at eight o'clock?

Estaré trabajando. = I will be working.

The Future Progressive can also express conjecture about what may actually be happening now:

¿Qué estará haciendo José ahora? = What will Jose be doing now?

Estará comiendo. = He is probably eating.

The Spanish Progressive is rarely used with verbs of motion. With verbs of motion, instead of the Progressive, we use the Present tense to indicate that the action is occurring:

ir: Voy. = I am going. Not: *Estoy yendo.*

venir: Vengo. = I am coming. Not: *Estoy viniendo.*

regresar: Él regresa ahora. = He is returning now. Not: *Él está regresando ahora.*

traer: Ella trae la fruta. = She is bringing the fruit. Not: *Ella está trayendo la fruta.*

The Progressive is rarely used with tener, saber, or poder.

Notice that the Object Pronouns can be added to the Present Participle (Gerund): *Estoy estudiándolo.* = I am studying it.

Carefully study the chart on the next page and continue with the exercises.

Present Progressive

I am speaking, I am eating, I am living

The Present Progressive describes an action that is in the process of taking place. In particular, in Spanish it emphasizes **what is going on in the moment**.

- It is formed by combining the auxiliary verb *estar* “to be” with the present participle ‘-ing’ form of the main verb.

***Estoy hablando* = I am speaking**

The “-ing” form, when used with the verb *estar* is called the present participle:

*Estoy **HABLANDO** español.*

When the “-ing” form stands alone, it is called the gerund:

HABLANDO español es fácil.

ESTAR	
yo ESTOY	nosotros ESTAMOS
tú ESTÁS	
él, ella Ud. ESTÁ	ellos, ellas Uds. ESTÁN

The present participle is formed by adding

-ANDO to **-AR** stems = **HABLANDO**

-IENDO to **-ER -IR** stems = **COMIENDO, VIVIENDO**

I AM..... SPEAKING

estoy hablando

estás hablando

está hablando

estamos hablando

están hablando

I AM..... EATING

estoy comiendo

estás comiendo

está comiendo

estamos comiendo

están comiendo

I AM..... LIVING

estoy viviendo

estás viviendo

está viviendo

estamos viviendo

están viviendo

NOTE that the present participle *-ando -iendo* does not change.

COMMON IRREGULAR GERUNDS or PRESENT PARTICIPLES

dormir = **durmiendo**

pedir = **pidiendo**

decir = **diciendo**

seguir = **siguiendo**

conseguir = **consiguiendo**

leer = **leyendo**

oir = **oyendo**

creer = **creyendo**

Some irregulars are not listed here because they are not used in common speech. Refer to the introduction.

Ir = **yendo**, venir = **viniendo**, traer = **trayendo**

- The object pronouns can be and usually are added to the present participle.

Estoy haciéndolo = I am doing it.

¿Estás comprandomelo? = Are you buying it for me?

estar	
estoy	estamos
estás	
está	están

-ando
-iendo

Write the Present Progressive form corresponding to the subject indicated.

Answers on bottom of page.

				IRREGULARS
1. YO	pagar <i>estoy pagando</i>	decidir	trabajar	dormir
2. TÚ	escribir	comer	manejar	pedir
3. ÉL	comenzar	preparar	correr	seguir
4. ELLOS	tocar	usar	salir	conseguir
5. UD.	gastar	aprender	terminar	leer
6. NSTRS.	terminar	recibir	ser	oir
7. ELLA	pagar	pasar	conocer	creer
8. UDS.	cantar	comprar	dar	decir

Change the following verbs in the Present to the Present Progressive using the same person, then translate into English. **Answers on bottom of page.**

1. Ud. come	<i>está comiendo</i>	<i>You are eating</i>
2. ellos toman		
3. ntrs. cantamos		
4. Uds. salen		
5. yo vivo		
6. él termina		
7. ellas prueban		
8. ntrs. decimos		
9. yo aprendo		
10. tú corres		



1. yo	estoy pagando	estoy decidiendo	estoy trabajando	estoy durmiendo
2. tú	estás escribiendo	estás comiendo	estás manejando	estás pidiendo
3. él	está comenzando	está preparando	está corriendo	está siguiendo
4. ellos	están tocando	están usando	están saliendo	están consigiendo
5. Ud.	está gastando	está aprendiendo	está terminando	está leyendo
6. nstros.	estamos terminando	estamos recibiendo	estamos siendo	estamos oyendo
7. ella	está pagando	está pasando	está conociendo	está creyendo
8. Uds.	están cantando	están comprando	están dando	están diciendo

1. está comiendo	you are eating	6. está terminando	he is finishing
2. están tomando	they are drinking	7. están probando	they are trying
3. estamos cantando	we are singing	8. estamos diciendo	we are saying
4. están saliendo	you all are leaving	9. estoy aprendiendo	I am learning
5. estoy viviendo	I am living	10. estás corriendo	you are running

In the negative answer the 'no' comes between the subject and verb form:

Yo no estoy pagando = I'm not paying.

Él no está hablándome. = He isn't speaking to me.

Cover the column on the right, and translate into Spanish in the space given.

All its are *lo*. The subject comes after the verb in the questions.

Check your answers and translate orally from English to Spanish.

- | | | |
|--|-------|-----------------------------|
| 1. I am paying. | _____ | Estoy pagando. |
| 2. They (<i>m</i>) are leaving. | _____ | Ellos están saliendo. |
| 3. We are trying. <i>tratar</i> | _____ | Estamos tratando. |
| 4. We aren't working. | _____ | No estamos trabajando. |
| 5. I am listening. | _____ | Estoy escuchando. |
| 6. Are you all returning? | _____ | ¿Están regresando Uds.? |
| 7. Are you (<i>Ud.</i>) eating? | _____ | ¿Está comiendo Ud.? |
| 8. I am asking. <i>preguntar</i> | _____ | Estoy preguntando. |
| 9. Jose is traveling. | _____ | José está viajando. |
| 10. Are you all finishing? | _____ | ¿Están terminando Uds.? |
| 11. We are arriving. | _____ | Estamos llegando. |
| 12. Are you (<i>tú</i>) sleeping? | _____ | ¿Estás durmiendo? |
| 13. I am leaving. | _____ | Estoy saliendo. |
| 14. She is writing. | _____ | Ella está escribiendo. |
| 15. He is washing it. | _____ | Él está lavándolo. |
| 16. Are you (<i>Ud.</i>) opening it? | _____ | ¿Está abriéndolo Ud.? |
| 17. They (<i>f</i>) are getting it. | _____ | Ellas están consiguiéndolo. |
| 18. Are you (<i>tú</i>) moving it? | _____ | ¿Estás moviéndolo? |
| 19. He isn't buying it. | _____ | Él no está comprándolo. |
| 20. We are receiving it. | _____ | Estamos recibiendo. |
| 21. They (<i>m</i>) aren't filling it. | _____ | Ellos no están llenándolo. |
| 22. Maria isn't using it. | _____ | María no está usándolo. |
| 23. I am not doing it. | _____ | No estoy haciéndolo. |
| 24. Are you (<i>Ud.</i>) seeing it? | _____ | ¿Está viéndolo Ud.? |
| 25. They (<i>f</i>) are starting it. | _____ | Ellas están empezándolo. |
| 26. I am introducing him. | _____ | Estoy presentándolo. |
| 27. What are you (<i>tú</i>) doing? | _____ | ¿Qué estás haciendo? |
| 28. Are you (<i>tú</i>) doing it? | _____ | ¿Estás haciéndolo? |
| 29. Are you all selling it? | _____ | ¿Están vendiéndolo Uds.? |
| 30. She isn't cooking it. | _____ | Ella no está cocinándolo. |