

# The Present Progressive

The use of the present progressive is easy to spot in English. The time is in the present, and *-ing* is attached to the verb, e.g., I am *studying* (now). The addition of *-ing* to a verb indicates that the action is *in progress*, hence the label, present progressive.

Before we begin to work with this aspect of the present tense, it is important to note that you will use the present progressive *less* in Spanish than in English. In English, we use the present progressive very broadly, often to describe what is going on in our lives in general: I am *living* in New York; I am *working* in a bank; I am *taking* dance lessons.

In Spanish, however, the use of the present progressive is more restricted, and is used mostly to indicate what a person is doing *right now*. In other words, you will use the present progressive to describe what you are doing or what is happening at the time you report it. The rest of the time you will use the simple present tense: I *live* in New York; I *work* in a bank; I *take* dance lessons.

## Formation of the Present Progressive

As in English, there are two parts to the present progressive: the auxiliary *to be* and the *present participle*, which is the verb with *-ing* attached. In Spanish, the auxiliary is *estar*: *estoy*; *estás*; *está*; *estamos*; *estáis*; *están*. The conjugated *estar* is then followed by the *present participle*.

**Regularly formed present participles:** Nearly all present participles are formed regularly. To form these, do the following:

*-ar verbs:* drop the *-ar* and add *-ando* (*hablando*; *estudiando*; *trabajando*; *pensando*)

*-er verbs:* drop the *-er* and add *-iendo* (*comiendo*; *bebiendo*; *vendiendo*; *poniendo*)

*-ir verbs:* drop the *-ir* and add *-iendo* (*abriendo*; *sufriendo*; *escribiendo*; *viviendo*)

Note that *-er* verbs and *-ir* verbs share the same present participle ending. Also, except for *-ir* stem-changing verbs (see page 77), verb stems will not change: *pensando*; *volando*; *entendiendo*; *almorzando*; *volviendo*, etc.

*examples:*

Estoy **hablando**.

I am *speaking*.

Estás **comiendo**.

You are *eating*.

Él está **abriendo** la puerta.

He is *opening* the door.

Estamos **estudiando**.

We are *studying*.

Estáis **bebiendo** leche.

You are *drinking* milk.

Ellos están **escribiendo** una carta.

They are *writing* a letter.

*In the course of an average day, which of the following things do you do? Put an X by those things.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Estoy trabajando.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Estoy estudiando español.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Estoy practicando el piano.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Estoy vendiendo ropa.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Estoy escribiendo una carta.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Estoy pensando en mi familia.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Estoy comprando comida.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Estoy cocinando.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Estoy contando el dinero.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Estoy confesando un crimen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Estoy moviendo los muebles (*furniture*) en la casa.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Estoy resolviendo mis problemas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Estoy lavando los platos.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Estoy conduciendo (manejando) el coche.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. No estoy haciendo nada.

**ejercicio**

**I-12-1**

1. I am buying a gift for Juan. \_\_\_\_\_
2. You are watching the television. \_\_\_\_\_
3. He is playing the piano. \_\_\_\_\_

4. We are eating pizza and drinking lemonade. \_\_\_\_\_
5. You (*pl. fam.*) are receiving many gifts. \_\_\_\_\_
6. You (*pl. form.*) are covering the furniture. \_\_\_\_\_
7. We are eating lunch. \_\_\_\_\_
8. I am thinking about my best friend. \_\_\_\_\_
9. What are you doing? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What is she eating? \_\_\_\_\_

**Irregularly formed present participles:** *-Er* and *-ir* verbs whose stem ends in a vowel (e.g., *leer* or *influir*) require a slight twist when forming the present participle. With these verbs, the participle ending will be *-yendo* (to avoid having three vowels in a row). Several of these verbs along with their respective present participles are listed below.

<i>-er</i> verbs			<i>-ir</i> verbs		
atraer	to attract	<i>atrayendo</i>	construir	to construct	<i>construyendo</i>
caer	to fall	<i>cayendo</i>	contribuir	to contribute	<i>contribuyendo</i>
contraer	to contract	<i>contrayendo</i>	destruir	to destroy	<i>destruyendo</i>
creer	to believe	<i>creyendo</i>	fluir	to flow	<i>fluyendo</i>
leer	to read	<i>leyendo</i>	huir	to flee	<i>huyendo</i>
poseer	to possess	<i>poseyendo</i>	incluir	to include	<i>incluyendo</i>
raer	to scrape	<i>rayendo</i>	influir	to influence	<i>influyendo</i>
releer	to reread	<i>releyendo</i>	instituir	to institute	<i>instituyendo</i>
retraer	to bring back	<i>retrayendo</i>	ir	to go	<i>yendo</i>
sustraer	to remove	<i>sustrayendo</i>	oír	to hear	<i>oyendo</i>
traer	to bring	<i>trayendo</i>	sustituir	to substitute	<i>sustituyendo</i>

Note that the present participle for the verb *ir* is *yendo*.

Think of one of your friends. Which of the following statements could you conceivably make about him or her in the course of an average day? Put an X by those things he or she might do.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Está leyendo el periódico.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Está contribuyendo dinero a la iglesia.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Está trayendo los libros a la escuela.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Está construyendo una casa.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Está huyendo de la policía.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Está relejendo un buen libro.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Está destruyendo una casa.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Está sustituyendo a un profesor en la escuela.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Está oyendo mucho ruido (*noise*).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Está influyendo mucho a otro/a amigo/a.

## ejercicio

I-12-2

1. The river is flowing to the south. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The client is not believing the car salesman (*vendedor de coches*). \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
3. We are not reading anything. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The President is influencing the people. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
5. Hatred (*el odio*) is destroying our society (*la sociedad*). \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
6. Romeo is fleeing with Juliet. \_\_\_\_\_
7. She isn't hearing anything in the basement (*el sótano*). \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
8. What are you reading? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who is bringing wine to the party? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Why are you (*pl. form.*) constructing a house in the suburbs (*las afueras*)? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Present participles for -ir stem-changing verbs:** For -ir stem-changing verbs, do the following to form the present participle:

*o* → *ue* verbs become *o* → *u*:

dormir → *durmiendo*

sleeping

morir → *muriendo*

dying

*e* → *ie* verbs become *e* → *i*:

advertir → *advirtiendo*

warning

consentir → *consintiendo*

consenting

hervir → *hirviendo*

boiling

mentir → *mintiendo*

lying

preferir → *prefiriendo*

preferring

referir → *refiriendo*

referring

sentir → *sintiendo*

regretting

sugerir → *sugiriendo*

suggesting

*e* → *i* verbs remain *e* → *i*:

competir → <i>compitiendo</i>	competing
conseguir → <i>consiguiendo</i>	getting
decir → <i>diciendo</i>	saying; telling
medir → <i>midiendo</i>	measuring
pedir → <i>pidiendo</i>	requesting
reír → <i>riendo</i>	laughing
repetir → <i>repitiendo</i>	repeating
seguir → <i>siguiendo</i>	following
servir → <i>sirviendo</i>	serving

## ejercicio

I-12-3

Fill in the blank with the appropriate present participle from the preceding list to make a meaningful sentence:

1. El gato está \_\_\_\_\_ en el sofá.
2. Pinocho está \_\_\_\_\_ a Gippetto.
3. Yo estoy \_\_\_\_\_ el agua para preparar el café.
4. La criada (*maid*) está \_\_\_\_\_ la cena.
5. Los niños se están \_\_\_\_\_ del payaso (*clown*).
6. Los Yanquis de Nueva York están \_\_\_\_\_ contra las Medias Blancas de Chicago.
7. El cómico está \_\_\_\_\_ bromas (*jokes*) al público.
8. Después de probar el insecticida, las cucarachas se están \_\_\_\_\_.
9. La policía está \_\_\_\_\_ el carro del criminal.
10. El adolescente está \_\_\_\_\_ a sus padres las llaves del carro.

**Object pronouns with the present progressive:** When the verb in its present progressive form takes an object (or objects), the object(s) will be attached directly to the present participle. When there are two objects, remember the **RID** rule: **R**eflexive; **I**ndirect; **D**irect. This is the *only* order in which object pronouns can go. Note also the accents below, which are necessary to maintain the conjugated verb's original stress.

examples:

Estoy **mirándolo**.  
I am *watching it*.

Estás **escribiéndole**.  
You are *writing to him*.

Él está **duchándose**.  
He is *taking a shower*.

Ella está **comprándose**.  
She is *buying it for herself*.

Estamos **discutiéndolo**.  
We are *discussing it*.

Estáis **cantándonos**.  
You are *singing to us*.

Ellos están **cepillándose los dientes**.  
They are *brushing their teeth*.

Ellos están **haciéndomelos**.  
They are *making them for me*.

In the course of an average morning, which of the following do you do? Put an X before those things.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Estoy duchándome.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Estoy cepillándome los dientes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Estoy acostándome.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Estoy bañándome.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Estoy lavándome el pelo.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Estoy quitándome la ropa.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Estoy durmiéndome.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Estoy contándoles un chiste a mis amigos.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Estoy viéndome en el espejo.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Estoy preocupándome por el peso.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Estoy sentándome para tomar café.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Estoy poniéndome la ropa.

## ejercicio

I-12-4

1. I am studying it (*m.*). \_\_\_\_\_
2. You are singing it (*f.*) to us. \_\_\_\_\_
3. He is writing me a letter. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you writing to them? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why are you (*pl. form.*) telling me this? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Why are you telling it (*m.*) to me? \_\_\_\_\_
7. They are sitting down. \_\_\_\_\_
8. We are reading it (*m.*). \_\_\_\_\_
9. She is lying to me. \_\_\_\_\_
10. What are you giving me? \_\_\_\_\_
11. They are following us. \_\_\_\_\_
12. What is she reading to you? \_\_\_\_\_