

But really they aren't as difficult or as complicated as you may think.

The most important reason you need to know about these is because stative verbs can't usually be used in the progressive form. But more about that later!

Firstly, what do the words "dynamic" and "stative" mean?

They aren't very common words in everyday English, but they are grammar terms you will need to know to understand this subject.

Dynamic

"Dynamic" is an adjective which means something is moving or changing.

In English grammar a "dynamic verb" means that the verb **describes an action** rather than a state. Dynamic verbs are sometimes known as "action verbs."

"Joe **is chasing** the bus."



Stative

"Stative" is an adjective which describes something as having a state, or existing (this is a very uncommon adjective).

In English grammar a "stative verb" means that the verb **describes a state** rather than an action.

Stative verbs are sometimes known as "state verbs."

"Kevin **wants** some ice-cream."



So now you know the meaning of the terms, let's look at some **examples!**

First, here is a list of some dynamic verbs. You can see that they are all used to describe an action, change, or process. Most of them are used to describe an activity which has a start and an end.

Examples of dynamic verbs:

- eat
- walk
- learn
- grow
- sleep
- talk
- write
- run
- read
- become
- go

These words can all be used in the progressive form.

Example sentences with dynamic verbs:

- "I can't talk right now, I'm eating dinner."
Present progressive used to describe an action happening now.
- "Sorry, I'm out of breath because I've been running."
Present perfect progressive used to describe an action that started in the past, continued for some time and has results now.

- "I didn't steal the necklace! I was sleeping when someone broke into the shop!"
Past progressive used to talk about an action that was happening at a particular time in the past.

Here is a list of some of the stative verbs. Some of these describe relationships between things or people (for example, own) and some describe emotions or states of mind.

Examples of stative verbs:

- love
- hate
- like
- prefer
- doubt
- seem
- know
- own
- understand

Here are some examples, showing that these words cannot be used in the progressive form.

Correct: "I like chocolate, but I prefer cake."

Incorrect: "I'm liking chocolate but I'm preferring cake."

Correct: "I don't understand you when you speak quickly."

Incorrect: "I'm not understanding you when you speak quickly."

There are also some verbs that can be either dynamic or stative, depending on their meaning and context in the sentence. I'm sure you know by now that there are many words in English that can have more than one meaning!

Examples of verbs that can be either dynamic or stative:

- think
- mind
- have
- smell
- sound

Let's look at some examples of how these verbs are used differently.

Example sentences:

- "I think it is wrong to hit children."
Here, *think* is a stative verb. It means "to have an opinion" and it cannot be used in the progressive form in this case.

BUT

"I'm thinking about buying a new car."

Here, *thinking* is describing a process, or an action. This is something that is happening, rather than simply being. So here we can use the progressive form.

- "I don't mind if we watch a movie tonight."
Here, *mind* means "be bothered by", which is a state of mind, not an action. Therefore, it is stative.

BUT

"I'm not being nosy. I'm minding my own business!"

Here, *minding* means "looking after" and is therefore a process and a dynamic verb.

- "I have three brothers."
Have here talks about the family relationship the speaker has with her brothers and is therefore stative.

BUT

"I'm having a bad day today. I'll call you when things are better."

Having in this sentence means the speaker is going through the process of a bad day. It is therefore dynamic.

All this may seem complicated, but if you read and listen to as much English as you can, you will soon start to know which verbs sound right in the progressive. If you keep the basic idea of dynamic verbs vs. static verbs in the back of your mind, it will help you greatly.

Now, let's practice!

