

LESSON 4

the grammar you need

The exercises are to be done and corrected in class.

USING *THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE* TO EXPRESS FUTURE TIME

You know that we can express future time with **going to**, as in this example.

“We’re **going to have** fried chicken for dinner tomorrow, honey.”

“Mm! My favorite, Dad!”



Now let’s look at another way to express future time. Look at the example again.

“We’re **having** fried chicken for dinner tomorrow, honey.”

“Mm! My favorite, Dad!”

Here, we used the **present continuous** tense to describe a situation that is going to happen in the future (tomorrow).

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Here's an example from the video clip *At the Burger Palace Drive-Thru*. The father is talking about the food he is going to get.

Look, I'm just **getting** a burger with everything and a Coke®, OK?



It's clear from this sentence that the father isn't getting the food at the moment he's speaking, but that he'll probably get it in the very near future. (Remember that he could also say, "Look, I'm just **going to get** a burger with everything and a Coke®, OK?")



REMEMBER THIS:

We can use the **present continuous** tense to express future time.

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Now look at some more examples with the **present continuous** tense used to express future time.

“Are you **going** to Pattie’s party *tonight*?”

“No, I’m **going** to Sam’s party instead.”

“What are you **wearing** to Fred and Emma’s wedding *next month*?”

“A gorgeous red dress. You know, red is my color.”



“Mary’s **taking** a math class with Mr. Johnson *next semester*.”

“He’s a great teacher. I’m sure she’ll really enjoy the class.”



REMEMBER THIS:

It’s common to use time words and expressions such as *later*, *soon*, *tomorrow*, *in five minutes*, etc., with the **present continuous** tense to express the future. Those words and expressions can make the reference to time clearer.

e.g., I’m **going** to the movies with Jim *soon*, so I have to get ready.

Tricia’s **having** a big party for her birthday *tomorrow*.

The play’s **starting** *in five minutes*. Let’s find our seats!

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I. Complete the sentences with the *present continuous* tense to express future time. The first one is done for you.

1. My boss and her husband are going to Spain on vacation next month.

- | | |
|---------|--------------|
| a. went | c. will go |
| b. go | d. are going |

2. _____ your girlfriend with her garage sale tomorrow?

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| a. Did you help | c. Are you helping |
| b. Will you help | d. Do you help |

3. Let's hurry and find our seats. The movie _____ in ten minutes!

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| a. started | c. will start |
| b. start | d. is starting |

4. My son _____ physics and economics next year. He can't wait.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. studied | c. will study |
| b. is studying | d. studies |

5. "What are your plans for lunch tomorrow?"

"We _____ our manager out to lunch for his birthday at a nice restaurant near the office."

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| a. will take | c. take |
| b. took | d. are taking |

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USING THE -ING FORM AS A NOUN

You are used to seeing the -ing form as a verb. Let's take a look at some examples.

Jim is **talking** to his friends on the phone right now.

I was **taking** a shower when Alice called.

My sister has been **living** abroad for almost two years.

But the -ing form can also act as a noun when it is used to describe an activity, state, or idea. In the following examples, the -ing forms **swimming**, **being**, and **learning** act as nouns.

Swimming is Simon's favorite activity.

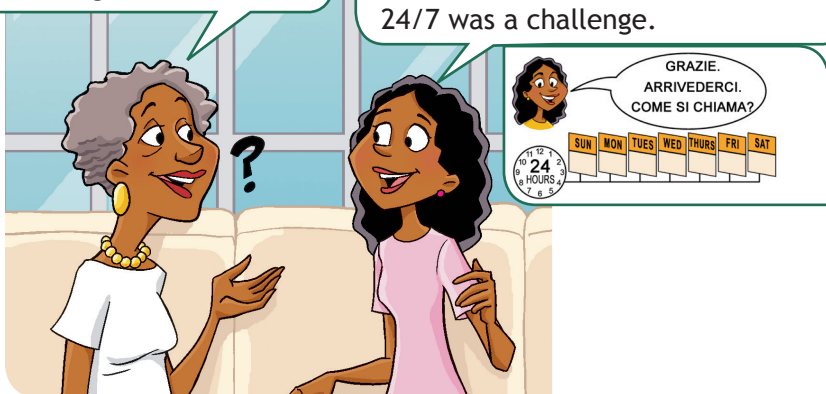
Mr. Taylor enjoys **being** a teacher.

Eddie is interested in **learning** a second language.

Now here are two examples from the lesson. Notice that both the grandmother and the granddaughter use -ing forms (**living** and **speaking**) as nouns.

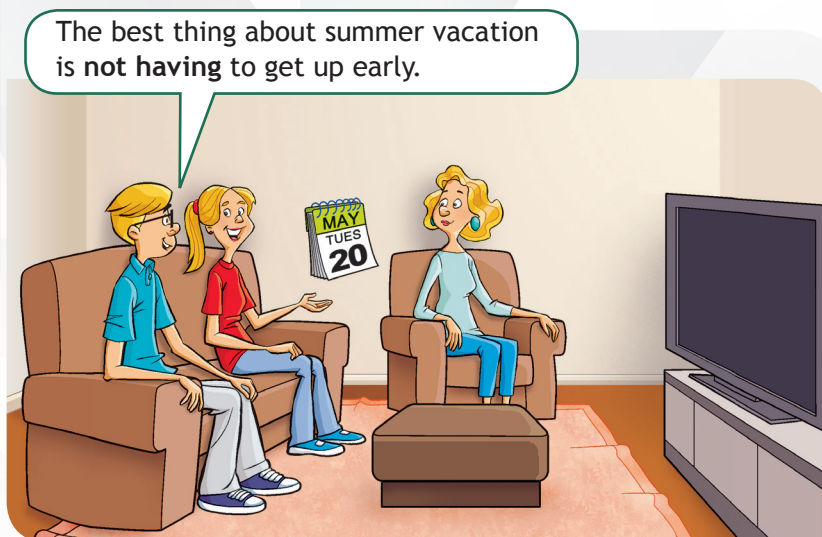
What was the hardest thing about **living** abroad?

Well, **speaking** a foreign language 24/7 was a challenge.



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Now let's look at another example from the lesson.



Notice that, when used as a noun, the **-ing** form can be made negative by putting *not* before it. Look at some more examples.

Not knowing any Japanese when I visited Tokyo wasn't a problem.
A lot of people there speak English.

Not being able to access the Internet makes Danny nervous.

Not going to Debbie's party was a mistake. The party was a huge success, and everybody enjoyed it.

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II. Use the information in parentheses to complete the sentences. Remember that we can use the **-ing** form as a noun to describe an activity, state, or idea. The first two are done for you.

1. I like the idea of living alone; I'm a very independent person. (to live)

2. Not knowing anyone at the party last night made me feel really nervous. (not; to know)

3. _____ abroad for a few years can be a great opportunity to learn about other languages and cultures. (to live)

4. _____ any English can be a serious problem when _____ for a job. (not; to speak—to apply)

5. _____ an excellent student made it easy for me to get into the college of my choice. (to be)

6. By _____ sugary or fried foods, Clara was able to lose 10 pounds. (not; to eat)

7. _____ late the night before the first day at my new job was a terrible idea. (to stay up)

8. Dean works from home. He loves _____ to spend hours in traffic every day. (not; to have)