

Unit 4

Present tenses (I am doing / I do) with a future meaning

- a** *Present continuous* with a future meaning
Study this example situation:

<table border="1"><tr><td>SUN</td><td>THURS</td></tr><tr><td>MON Tennis 2pm</td><td>FRI Dinner with Ann 8pm</td></tr><tr><td>TUES Dentist 10.10</td><td>SAT</td></tr><tr><td>WEN</td><td>NOTES</td></tr></table>	SUN	THURS	MON Tennis 2pm	FRI Dinner with Ann 8pm	TUES Dentist 10.10	SAT	WEN	NOTES	<p>This is Tom's diary for next week.</p> <p>He is playing tennis on Monday afternoon. He is going to the dentist on Tuesday morning. He is having dinner with Ann on Friday.</p> <p>In all these examples, Tom has already decided and arranged to do these things.</p>
SUN	THURS								
MON Tennis 2pm	FRI Dinner with Ann 8pm								
TUES Dentist 10.10	SAT								
WEN	NOTES								

When you are talking about what you have already arranged to do, use the present continuous (**I am doing**). Do *not* use the present simple (**I do**).

- A: What **are you doing** tomorrow evening? (*not* 'what do you do')
- B: **I'm going** to the theatre. (*not* 'I go')
- A: **Are you playing** football tomorrow?
- B: Yes, but Tom **isn't playing**. He has hurt his leg.
- A: Ann **is coming** tomorrow.
- B: Oh, is she? What time **is she arriving**?
- A: At 10.15.
- B: **Are you meeting** her at the station?
- A: I can't. **I'm working** tomorrow morning.

It is also possible to use **going to (do)** in these sentences:

- What **are you going to do** tomorrow evening?
- Tom **is going to play** tennis on Monday afternoon.

But the present continuous is usually more natural when you are talking about arrangements. See also **Unit 5**.

- What **are you doing** this evening? (*not* 'what will you do')
- Alex **is getting** married next month. (*not* 'Alex will get')

- b** *Present simple* with a future meaning

We use the present simple when we are talking about timetables, programmes etc. (for example, for public transport, cinemas):

- What time **does** the film **begin**?
- The train **leaves** Plymouth at 10.30 and **arrives** in London at 13.45.
- The football match **starts** at 8 o'clock.
- Tomorrow **is** Wednesday.

But we do not normally use the present simple for personal arrangements:

- What time **are you meeting** Ann? (*not* 'do you meet')