

## Activities are Journeys

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**We can compare activities with journeys.**

**For example:**

I am living = I am on the journey between birth and death.

I am reading a good book at the moment =  
I have started reading the book and I am on the way to the end of the book  
(which is the end of the journey).

**Which of these sentences are about ‘states’ and which about ‘journeys’?**

1. I live in Rome. *(State)*
2. I’m living in Rome *(Journey)*
3. I think too much
4. I’m thinking of buying a new car.
5. I was walking in the park the other day when I saw the biggest dog I’ve ever seen.
6. I’m playing tennis with John at 10am.
7. I love you very much.
8. I’m going on holiday next week – two whole weeks in Greece!
9. I like drinking in beer gardens in the summer – or by a river, yeah water’s good.
10. The road is closed.
11. They’re closing down the local swimming pool.
12. The Blairs usually holiday in Italy but this year they are in France.
13. Really? You’ve been seeing her for months – you kept that quiet!
14. I’m writing a series of ghost stories – just for my own pleasure of course, they’ll never get published.
15. I wrote a novel at university – it was dreadful – I’ve destroyed all the copies.

**A journey has a beginning and an end and so do activities. –ing forms in English tell us that the activity is in progress – that the activity is between the beginning and the end. Below is an analysis of two of the examples above.**

- a. I’m going on holiday next week – two whole weeks in Greece!

In this sentence, the decision to go has already been made and so the activity is in progress. The decision marks the beginning of the whole process.

- b. I’m playing tennis with John at 10am.

This example is the same. John and I have decided to play and agreed a time – from that point on we are on ‘the journey’ to the game. This is why we use the ‘present continuous’ to show this idea.

**Key**

1. I live in Rome. *(State)*
2. I'm living in Rome *(Journey)*
3. I think too much *(State)*
4. I'm thinking of buying a new car. *(Journey)*
5. I was walking in the park the other day when I saw the biggest dog I've ever seen.  
*(Journey)* *(State)*
6. I'm playing tennis with John at 10am. *(Journey)*
7. I love you very much. *(State)*
8. I'm going on holiday next week – two whole weeks in Greece! *(Journey)*
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10. The road is closed. *(State)*
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14. I'm writing a series of ghost stories – just for my own pleasure of course, they'll  
never get published. *(Journey)*
15. I wrote a novel at university – it was dreadful – I've destroyed all the copies. *(State)*