

Stative Verbs

Stative verbs describe **states**; how is something? A basic example of this would be:

"She is happy."

Stative verbs are normally used in "simple" tenses, *ie.* do not use them in the continuous form:

"She is hungry" and not "~~She is being hungry.~~"

This rule applies no matter how temporary the states they are describing:

~~"At the moment, I am liking Adele's album."~~

It is useful to divide the other examples into four groups; emotional states, mental states, appearance/senses and possession.

| Emotional States | Mental States | Senses | Possession |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| to like/dislike | to believe | to be | to have |
| to love | to think (opinion) | to seem | to own |
| to hate | to know | to look (seem) | to include |
| to hope | to understand | to sound | to depend (on) |
| to want | to imagine | to appear | to belong (to) |
| to wish | to remember | to see | to consist (of) |
| to mean | to realise | to smell | to contain |
| to prefer | to recognise | to taste | to involve |
| to impress | to mean | to hear | to owe |
| to mind | to agree/disagree | | to possess |
| to surprise | to doubt | | to lack |
| to please | to suppose | | |
| to astonish | to promise | | |
| | to deny | | |

Notice how *to have* is in the "possession" column. Be careful with this verb; it is only stative when used to mean "to possess". There are many set expressions using *to have* which can be used in the continuous form:

"We were **having breakfast** when the phone rang..."

"I come tomorrow because I'm **having a dinner party**...."

"Don't stop me now, I'm **having a good time**..."

As you can see above, the rules about stative verbs apply in the **past, present** and **future**.