

Unit 1.

Stative verbs



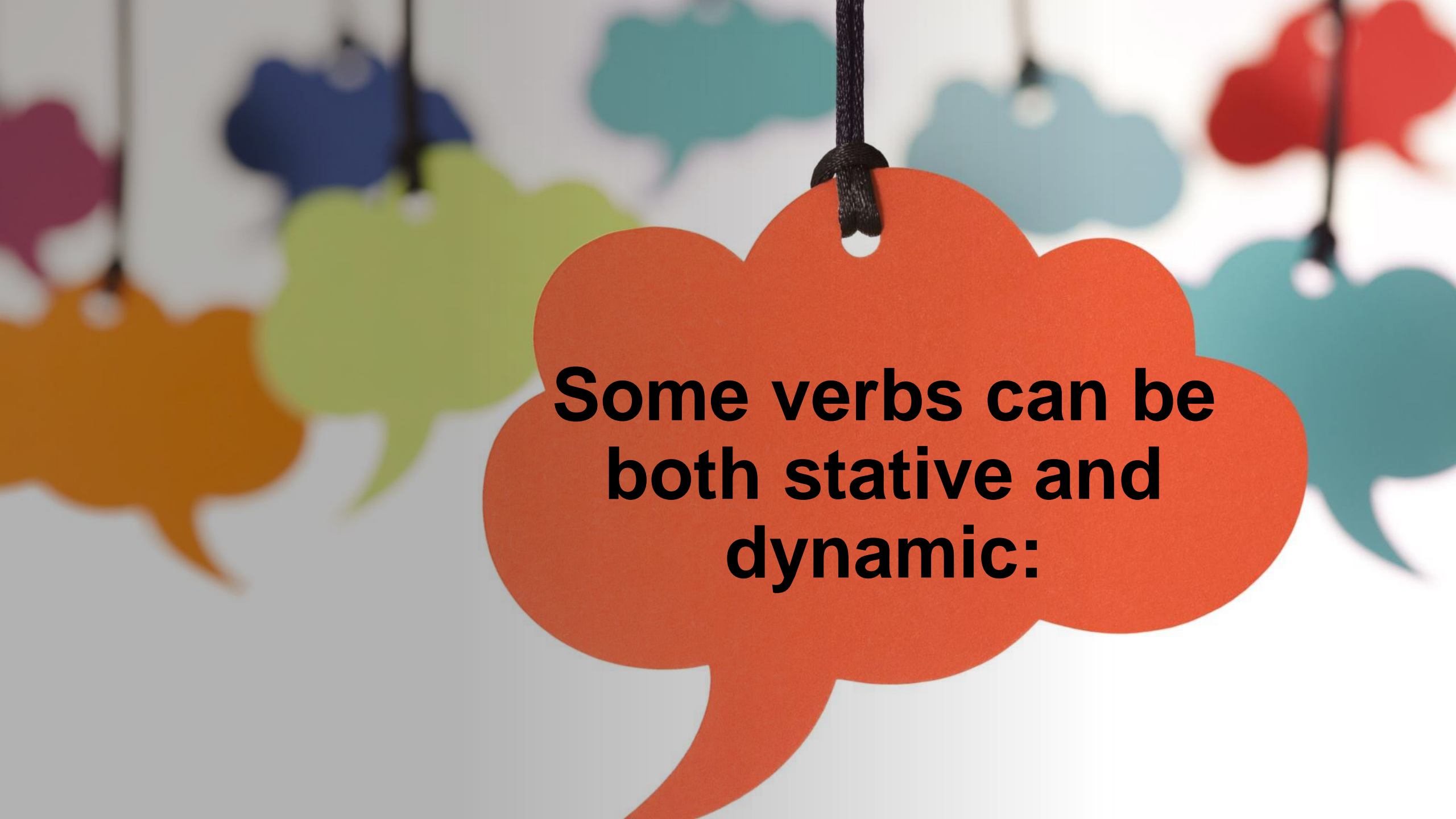


What is a stative verb?

- Stative verbs describe a state rather than an action. They aren't usually used in the present continuous form. A verb which isn't stative is called a dynamic verb and is usually an action. Often stative verbs are about liking or disliking something, or about a mental state, not about an action.

Stative verbs often relate to:

- thoughts and opinions: *agree, believe, doubt, guess, imagine, know, mean, recognise, remember, suspect, think, understand*
- feelings and emotions: *dislike, hate, like, love, prefer, want, wish*
- senses and perceptions: *appear, be, feel, hear, look, see, seem, smell, taste*
- possession and measurement: *belong, have, measure, own, possess, weigh.*



**Some verbs can be
both stative and
dynamic:**

A number of verbs can refer to states or actions, depending on the context.

I think it's a good idea.

Wait a moment! I'm thinking.

The first sentence expresses an opinion. It is a mental state, so we use present simple. In the second example the speaker is actively processing thoughts about something. It is an action in progress, so we use present continuous.

Some other examples are:

have

I have an old car. (state – possession)

I'm having a quick break. (action – having a break is an activity)

see

Do you see any problems with that? (state – opinion)

We're seeing John tomorrow afternoon. (action – we're meeting him)

Some other examples are:

be

He's so interesting! (state – his permanent quality)

He's being very unhelpful. (action – he is temporarily behaving this way)

taste

This coffee tastes delicious. (state – our perception of the coffee)

Look! The chef is tasting the soup. (action – tasting the soup is an activity)

Examples:

Be

be is usually a stative verb, but when it is used in the continuous it means 'behaving' or 'acting'

- you are stupid = it's part of your personality
- you are being stupid = only now, not usually

Think

- think (stative) = have an opinion
I think that coffee is great
- think (dynamic) = consider, have in my head
what are you thinking about? I'm thinking about my next holiday

Examples:

Have

- have (stative) = own
I have a car
- have (dynamic) = part of an expression
I'm having a party / a picnic / a bath / a good time / a break

See

- see (stative) = see with your eyes / understand
I see what you mean
I see her now, she's just coming along the road
- see (dynamic) = meet / have a relationship with
I've been seeing my boyfriend for three years
I'm seeing Robert tomorrow

Present Simple

She is very polite. (= character - permanent state)

I think his car is fantastic. (= I believe)

*They **have (got)** a sailing boat. (= they possess)*

*Your mother **looks** very young. (= she appears to be)*

I can see a flock of birds in the sky. (= I use my eyes)

I see what you mean. (= I understand)

*This scarf **feels** like silk. (= it has the texture of)*

*This sandwich **tastes** delicious. (= it has a delicious flavour)*

*Your hair **smells** nice. (= it has a nice smell)*

*She **appears to be** very upset. (= she seems)*

*Those trousers **fit** you perfectly. (= they are the right size)*

Present Continuous

*He **is being** very nice. (= he is behaving)*

*I'm **thinking** about going to Scotland. (= I am considering)*

*They're **having** a good time. (= they are enjoying themselves)*

*The mechanic **is looking at** my motorcycle. (= he is checking/examining)*

***Are you seeing** your brother tomorrow? (= are you meeting?)*

*You're **seeing** things. There's no one in the house. (= you are imagining)*

*Mum **is feeling** Jo's forehead. (= she is touching)*

*She's **tasting** the sauce to see if it's OK. (= she is testing the flavour)*

*She's **smelling** the roses. (= she is sniffing)*

*My brother's band **is appearing** at the Great Pallas. (= they are performing)*

*Sue **is fitting** new cupboards in her kitchen. (= she is putting)*

Stative Verbs

are NOT used in Continuous Tenses

Feelings:	Thoughts, opinions:	Senses:	Possession:	Measure, cost, Others:
LIKE	KNOW	FEEL	BELONG	COST
DISLIKE	THINK	HEAR	OWN	MEASURE
LOVE	UNDERSTAND	SEE	HAVE	WEIGH
HATE	BELIEVE	SMELL		OWE
PREFER	GUESS	SOUND		SEEM
WANT	MEAN	TASTE		BE
NEED	SUPPOSE	TOUCH		APPEAR
MIND	DOUBT	LOOK		CONSIST
CARE	REALIZE			
	REMEMBER			
	FORGET			
	AGREE			

But some of them can sometimes be “Dynamic/ action” verbs
and go in a Continuous Tense:

***Do the exercises
5-8.***

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