

Grammar Lesson:

Some verbs are “stative verbs”. That is a fancy way of saying they describe states of being or conditions that exist. Stative verbs are not used in the progressive tenses (to be verb + ing verb-- is showing, are going, was happening).

The best way to understand stative verbs is to look at these examples.

I know how to ride a bike.	NOT: I am knowing how to ride a bike.
I believe in Santa Claus.	NOT: I am believing in Santa Claus.
I hate boiled okra.	NOT: I am hating boiled okra.
I forget your name.	NOT: I am forgetting your name.
You astonish me.	NOT: You are astonishing me.
I smell smoke.	NOT: I am smelling smoke.
You resemble your father.	NOT: You are resembling your father.
This sweater costs \$25.00.	NOT: This sweater is costing \$25.00
I hear birds singing.	NOT: I am hearing birds singing.

There are some static verbs (like, taste) that can be used in the progressive tense. It depends upon how they are used. For example: We do not say, “I am tasting garlic in this sauce.” Instead, we say, “I taste garlic in this sauce.” But if the chef is trying the sauce, we would say, “The chef is tasting the sauce.”

The same holds true for “like”. We don’t say, “I am liking this garlic sauce.” We say, “I like this garlic sauce.” Only rarely do we use like in the progressive sense. In answer to the question, “Are you still liking your job?”, you could say, “I am liking it.” But it would also be correct to say, “Yes, I still like it.”

“See” is usually a stative verb. For example, we say, “I see an eagle.” NOT “I am seeing an eagle.” However, we can say, “She is seeing someone.” It has a different meaning than seeing an eagle. If we say, “I am seeing someone.”, we mean we are going out with someone. In other words, we are dating someone.

Which of these sentences are correct?

Hiroki is smelling the flowers.

Hiroki is smelling good.

Hiroki smells good.

I think Roberto is a kind man.

I am thinking Roberto is a kind man.

Kathy looks cold.

Kathy is looking cold.

Kathy is looking out the window.

Sue is feeling the cat’s fur. (Hint-This is like the chef tasting the sauce.)

The cat’s fur is feeling soft.

The cat’s fur feels soft.

This box is weighing a lot.

This box weighs a lot.

The grocer is weighing the vegetables on the scale.

Animals in the News

'Amok' cow shot

A cow that escaped from a cattle market on Thursday enjoyed only a brief taste of freedom before it was shot dead by police who said they had no choice but to target the runaway animal as it bolted through Chippenham in southern England. "The animal was running amok and a decision was made to dispatch an armed response unit to try to contain it," a police spokesman said. "It was obvious the animal could not be captured and posed a significant danger to human life." Police tried to drive the cow into a field but it turned and charged officers. — AP

1. What does "run amok" mean?
2. What is a "brief taste of freedom"?
3. Target is frequently used as a noun meaning something you shoot at. Here it is used as a verb. If the police targeted you, would you be afraid?
4. What is an armed response unit? In England the police do not carry guns, so they have to send a special unit. In the U.S. all police carry guns, so no special unit would be needed. Do the police carry guns in your country? How do you feel about police carrying guns?
5. What kind of danger do you think a cow might pose?
6. What did the cow do to the officers that made them shoot it?
7. How does this article make you feel?

Pandas in Canada

FedExed all the way from China, two giant pandas make their way to Canada for the start of a ten-year loan in their own personalized plane. Er Shun and Da Mao also earned a personal welcome from Prime Minister Stephen Harper who confirmed their safe delivery.

"Well, that was quite a moment. It's not every day in your life you get to sign for pandas."

Officials hope they'll mate during their five years in Toronto and subsequent five years in Calgary to produce the first Canadian-born panda cubs.

And the work doesn't end here for this very special delivery. FedEx will also fly in up to 900 kilos of bamboo each week from a zoo in Tennessee.

1. Is breeding Chinese pandas in Canada a good idea? What problems do you see with it?
2. Is this expense justified to increase the panda population or are there better ways for Canada to spend their money?
3. Is this something you can see your home country doing?
4. How important are zoos? Do you like to visit zoos? How do you feel about capturing and caging wild animals? Is this controversial in your country?