

## THE CONTINUOUS TENSE

In Spanish the continuous tenses are used only when the action they describe is in progress at the time:

**Está lloviendo** = It's raining (The rain is actually falling)

**está comunicando** = the number you call is busy.

All the continuous tenses are compounded by the appropriate form of **estar** and the present participle of the main verb. The present participles **never** agree in gender or number:

**hablando** = speaking; **comiendo** = eating; **escribiendo** = writing

Most of the present participles are regular. There are only some verbs that change a vowel, e.g.: **decir** = **diciendo**; **pedir** = **pidiendo**; **dormir** = **durmiendo**; **morir** = **muriendo**; etc.

- ¿Qué **estás haciendo** en Madrid?
- Me gano la vida **escribiendo**.
- ¿Para los periódicos?
- No, a mi padre, **pidiendo** dinero.