

Progressive and Emphatic Forms

1 Here's the Idea

- ▶ **The progressive form of a verb expresses an event in progress.**
She **was reading** a book when the lights went out.

Each of the six tenses has a progressive form, made by using a tense of the verb *be* with the present participle.

The Six Progressive Forms

Present Progressive	We are dancing.
Past Progressive	We were dancing.
Future Progressive	We will be dancing.
Present Perfect Progressive	We have been dancing.
Past Perfect Progressive	We had been dancing.
Future Perfect Progressive	We will have been dancing.



The present progressive is often used with an adverb of time to indicate future action: **Rosa is leaving next week.**

- ▶ **The emphatic form gives special force to a verb.** The emphatic form is used only in the present and past tenses. It is commonly used to correct or contradict.

I did finish my homework. I do try to be neat. It does matter.

2 Why It Matters in Writing

The progressive and emphatic forms allow you to stress verbs in particular ways. Notice their effect in this mother's warning.

LITERARY MODEL

Then she began, patiently, to describe to the girl the difficulties of the theater. Thousands of experienced, beautiful, and talented actresses were out of work. Even those who did work, didn't work often. . . . When Mrs. Wilson had finished, Elise said nothing.

"Well, what are you thinking, dear?"

—John Cheever, "The Opportunity"

PAST EMPHATIC

PRESENT PROGRESS