

Lesson 7: Te-form + います

The sentence pattern “Te-form + います” expresses:

- (1) An action in progress (ongoing action)
- (2) Repeated activities
- (3) Continuous state (the resulting state)

(1) An action in progress (on-going action)

Examples: メアリーさんは、今、テレビを見ています。
 Mary is watching TV right now.

きのうのごご三時ごろ、メアリーさんはべんきょうしていました。
 At around 3:00 p.m. yesterday, Mary was studying.

★ NOTE ★

This sentence pattern, “Te-form + います”, does NOT indicate an action in the future. It only expresses an action that someone is currently doing or was doing (but NOT “will be doing”).

So, if you are to answer the question こんにちは、なにをしますか, which asks about your tonight’s (=future) plan, which response is appropriate?

- A. テレビを見ています。 or
 B. テレビを見ます。

“I will be watching TV.” = {present or future?} → _____

“Are you going to Japan in June?” = {present or future?} → _____

Please keep in mind that English ~ing is NOT equivalent to “te-form + います”.

(2) Repeated activities

The Te-form + います is also used to express a habitual action, **one that takes place repeatedly** such as taking a class, working part-time or full-time and studying kanji regularly.

Examples: 私はアルバイトをしています。 *I work part-time.*
 私はアルバイトをします。 *I will work part-time. (in the future)*

 れきしのクラスをとっています。 *I'm taking a history class.*
 れきしのクラスをとります。 *I'll take a history class. (in the future)*

The question 「なにをしていますか。」 means “What are you doing (right now)?” or “What do you do (for living)? [as a repeated activity]” depending on the contexts.

(3) Continuous state (the resulting state)

The Te-form + います is also used to describe **a current state resulting from a past action**.

For example, 知る means to come to know something (to gain some knowledge), and 知っています means that you have come to know something and **you are still in that state**. Similarly, けっこんする means to get married, which happens once, and けっこんしています means that one is married (because the person is in that state resulting from having gotten married).

Other verbs of this type:

- かぶる／かける／きる／はく (to put on) → かぶって／かけて／きて／はいて + います
(wear/is wearing ~)
- ふとる (to gain weight) ふとりました → (今) ふとっています (is overweight)
やせる (to lose weight) やせました → (今) やせています (is thin)
- Ownership ~**を**もっています (own/have ~) cf. ~**が**あります
- Residence ~にすんでいます (live in ~ = continuous state) すむ (= will live)
- ~につとめています (work for ~ = continuous state) つとめる (= will work for ~)

Negative forms:

けっこんしていません (is not married.)
~をもっていない (don't have/own ~.)
~をかぶっていません (is not wearing ~.)
やせていません (is not thin.)

★Exception

Negative form of しっています is **しりません**
(I don't know.)

しっていない is ungrammatical and NEVER used. (WRONG!)

★NOTE★

You CAN NOT use motion verbs such as 行く, くる, and かえる in the Te-form + います construction to express that someone is going/coming/returning (on the way to a place). When these motion verbs appear in this construction, it describes **a current state resulting from the movement**.

Examples:

母はスーパーに行っています。 ← It doesn't mean that your mom is on the way to the supermarket.
(My mother has gone to the supermarket and **she is still there now**.)

ともだちがきています。 (My friend came and **is still here now**.) ← It doesn't mean he is coming.

VERY IMPORTANT!

Be able to explain the differences! Translate the following into English.

田中さんはけっこんします。 →

田中さんはけっこんしています。 →

田中さんはけっこんしました。 →

田中さんはけっこんしていました。 →

ひとみさんはやせます。 →

ひとみさんはやせました。 →

ひとみさんはやせています。 →

ひとみさんはやせていました。 →

Write the following in Japanese.

I know that person (over there). →

I knew this song. →

I don't know that person's name. →

I didn't know Japanese Language (when I was a child).

→