

Useful Grammar Constructions



“STARE + GERUNDIO” & “STARE PER + VERBO INFINITO”

STARE + GERUNDIO

In English it looks like this: I **am** running, she **is** reading, we **are** eating. The “ing” form of the verb is called the *gerund* – in Italian, **gerundio**.

In English the construction is **To Be** (am-is-are / was-were) + **Gerund** (verb + ing)

In Italian it's **Stare** (in present or imperfect) + **Gerundio**(verb + ando or endo)

The Italian gerundio or “ing” form is “**ando**” (for “-are” verbs), and “**endo**” (for “-ere” & “-ire” verbs)

It is used in Italian just like in English to express an action happening *in the moment* (vs. a routine action... I am eating dinner (implies right now) vs. I usually eat dinner at 6 pm (a regular habit)).

That same phrase in Italian **Sto mangiando la cena** (right now).

However, the use of this construction is much less frequent in Italian because the present indicative tense (non-gerund) is used for both routine actions **and** action happening in the moment. The difference is understood through context.

So, “Sto mangiando la cena” and “Mangio la cena” can both be translated as I am eating dinner. Adding information to the mix can change the meaning “Mangio la cena di solito alle 6 di sera” makes it clear this is not describing an action currently happening.

STARE PER + VERBO INFINITO

In English: To Be About To + Infinite Verb You are not doing the action yet, but you are about to do it

The verb **Stare** (To Be) can be in present tense and past/imperfect.

Examples, English / Italian: I am about to eat dinner. / **Sto per mangiare la cena.**

I was about to eat dinner. / **Stavo per mangiare la cena.**

You are/were about to leave. / **Tu tai/stavi per uscire.**

They are/were about watch a movie. / **Loro stanno/stavano per guardare un film.**