Uses of being

The word being is used in several different grammatical structures.

Being + adjective

The structure being + adjective is used to talk about actions and behavior.

- Why are you being so silly?
- You are being cruel when you hurt others with your words or actions.

Note that when the adjective refers to feelings, the continuous form is not possible.

- I was upset when I heard that I had failed the test. (NOT I was being upset when I ... Here we are talking about the speaker’s feelings and hence a continuous form is not possible.)
- I am delighted to hear that you have won the first prize. (NOT I am being delighted ...)

Being + past participle

Being can be followed by a past participle. This structure is used in the passive forms of present and past continuous tenses.

Compare:

- Mother is cooking dinner. (Active)
- Dinner is being cooked by mother. (Passive)
- They are repairing the roof.
- The roof is being repaired.
- I am quite sure that somebody is following me. (Active)
- I am quite sure that I am being followed. (Passive)
Uses of being

Being in participle clauses

Instead of a because /as / since clause, we sometimes use an adverbial participle clause with being. This structure is mainly used in a formal or literary style.

Compare:

Being late, he couldn’t watch the show. (= Because he is late, he couldn’t watch the show.)

Being a friend of the Minister, I am often invited to official parties. (= As I am a friend of the Minister, I am often invited to official parties.)

Being quite slim, I managed to squeeze through the small opening in the wall. (= Since I was quite slim, I managed to squeeze through the small opening in the wall.)