

# Present continuous (I am doing)

A

Study this example situation:

Ann is in her car. She is on her way to work.  
She is **driving** to work.

This means: she is driving *now*, at the time of speaking. The action is not finished.

**Am/is/are -ing** is the *present continuous*:

I	am	(= I'm)	driving
he/she/it	is	(= he's etc.)	working
we/you/they	are	(= we're etc.)	doing etc.



B

**I am doing** something = I'm in the middle of doing something; I've started doing it and I haven't finished yet.

Often the action is happening at the time of speaking:

- Please don't make so much noise. I'm **working**. (*not* 'I work')
- 'Where's Margaret?' 'She's **having** a bath.' (*not* 'she has a bath')
- Let's go out now. It **isn't raining** any more. (*not* 'it doesn't rain')
- (*at a party*) Hello, Jane. **Are you enjoying** the party? (*not* 'do you enjoy')
- I'm tired. I'm **going** to bed now. Goodnight!

But the action is not necessarily happening at the time of speaking. For example:

Tom and Ann are talking in a café. Tom says:



I'm **reading** an interesting book at the moment.  
I'll lend it to you when I've finished it.

Tom is *not* reading the book at the time of speaking.  
He means that he has started it but not finished it yet.  
He is in the middle of reading it.

Some more examples:

- Catherine wants to work in Italy, so she is **learning** Italian. (but perhaps she isn't learning Italian exactly at the time of speaking)
- Some friends of mine **are building** their own house. They hope it will be finished before next summer.

C

We use the present continuous when we talk about things happening in a period around now (for example, *today / this week / this evening* etc.):

- 'You're **working** hard today.' 'Yes, I have a lot to do.' (*not* 'you work hard today')
- 'Is Susan **working** this week?' 'No, she's on holiday.'

We use the present continuous when we talk about changes happening around now:

- The population of the world is **rising** very fast. (*not* 'rises')
- Is your English **getting** better? (*not* 'does your English get better')

## EXERCISES

1.1 Complete the sentences with one of the following verbs in the correct form:

come get happen look make start stay try ~~work~~

- 1 'You ~~are working~~... hard today.' 'Yes, I have a lot to do.'
- 2 I ..... for Christine. Do you know where she is?
- 3 It ..... dark. Shall I turn on the light?
- 4 They haven't got anywhere to live at the moment. They ..... with friends until they find somewhere.
- 5 'Are you ready, Ann?' 'Yes, I .....
- 6 Have you got an umbrella? It ..... to rain.
- 7 You ..... a lot of noise. Could you be quieter? I ..... to concentrate.
- 8 Why are all these people here? What .....

1.2 Use the words in brackets to complete the questions.

- 1 '...~~is Colin working~~... this week?' 'No, he's on holiday.' (Colin/work)
- 2 Why ..... at me like that? What's the matter? (you/look)
- 3 'Jenny is a student at university.' 'Is she? What .....?' (she/study)
- 4 ..... to the radio or can I turn it off? (anybody/listen)
- 5 How is your English? ..... better? (it/get)

1.3 Put the verb into the correct form. Sometimes you need the negative (I'm not doing etc.).

- 1 I'm tired. I ~~am going~~... (go) to bed now. Goodnight!
- 2 We can go out now. It ~~isn't raining~~... (rain) any more.
- 3 'How is your new job?' 'Not so good at the moment. I ..... (enjoy) it very much.'
- 4 Catherine phoned me last night. She's on holiday in France. She ..... (have) a great time and doesn't want to come back.
- 5 I want to lose weight, so this week I ..... (eat) lunch.
- 6 Angela has just started evening classes. She ..... (learn) German.
- 7 I think Paul and Ann have had an argument. They ..... (speak) to each other.

1.4 Read this conversation between Brian and Sarah. Put the verbs into the correct form.

SARAH: Brian! How nice to see you! What (1) ..... (you/do) these days?

BRIAN: I (2) ..... (train) to be a supermarket manager.

SARAH: Really? What's it like? (3) ..... (you/enjoy) it?

BRIAN: It's all right. What about you?

SARAH: Well, actually I (4) ..... (not/work) at the moment.

I (5) ..... (try) to find a job but it's not easy.

But I'm very busy. I (6) ..... (decorate) my flat.

BRIAN: (7) ..... (you/do) it alone?

SARAH: No, some friends of mine (8) ..... (help) me.

1.5 Complete the sentences using one of these verbs: get change rise fall increase


You don't have to use all the verbs and you can use a verb more than once.

- 1 The population of the world ~~is rising~~... very fast.
- 2 Ken is still ill but he ..... better slowly.
- 3 The world ..... Things never stay the same.
- 4 The cost of living ..... Every year things are more expensive.
- 5 The economic situation is already very bad and it ..... worse.

# Present simple (I do)

A

Study this example situation:



Alex is a bus driver, but now he is in bed asleep. So:  
He is *not* driving a bus. (He is asleep.)  
*but* He **drives** a bus. (He is a bus driver.)

Drive(s)/work(s)/do(es) etc. is the *present simple*:

I/we/you/they	<b>drive/work/do</b> etc.
he/she/it	<b>drives/works/does</b> etc.

B

We use the present simple to talk about things in general. We are not thinking only about now. We use it to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly, or that something is true in general. It is not important whether the action is happening at the time of speaking:

- Nurses look after patients in hospitals.
- I usually go away at weekends.
- The earth goes round the sun.

Remember that we say: **he/she/it -s**. Don't forget the **s**:

- I work... *but* He works... They teach... *but* My sister teaches...

For spelling (-s or -es), see Appendix 6.

C

We use **do/does** to make questions and negative sentences:

do	I/we/you/they	work?	I/we/you/they	don't	work
does	he/she/it	come?	he/she/it	doesn't	come
		do?			do

- I come from Canada. Where **do** you come from?
- 'Would you like a cigarette?' 'No, thanks. I **don't** smoke.'
- What **does** this word mean? (*not* 'What means this word?')
- Rice **doesn't** grow in cold climates.

In the following examples **do** is also the main verb:

- 'What **do** you do?' (= What's your job?) 'I work in a shop.'
- He's so lazy. He **doesn't** do anything to help me. (*not* 'He doesn't anything')

D

We use the present simple when we say how often we do things:

- I get up at 8 o'clock **every morning**. (*not* 'I'm getting')
- **How often** do you go to the dentist? (*not* 'How often are you going?')
- Ann **doesn't** drink tea very often.
- In summer John **usually** plays tennis once or twice a week.

E

**I promise / I apologise** etc.

Sometimes we do things by saying something. For example, when you *promise* to do something, you can say 'I **promise**...'; when you suggest something, you can say 'I **suggest**...'. We use the present simple (**promise/suggest** etc.) in sentences like this:

- I **promise** I won't be late. (*not* 'I'm promising')
- 'What **do** you **suggest** I do?' 'I **suggest** that you...'

In the same way we say: I **apologise**... / I **advise**... / I **insist**... / I **agree**... / I **refuse**... etc.

EXERCISES

2.1 Complete the sentences using one of the following:

cause(s) close(s) drink(s) live(s) open(s) ~~speaks~~ take(s) place

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Ann <del>speaks</del> German very well.                            | 4 Bad driving ..... many accidents.         |
| 2 I never ..... coffee.  | 5 My parents ..... in a very small flat.    |
| 3 The swimming pool ..... at 9 o'clock and ..... at 18.30 every day. | 6 The Olympic Games ..... every four years. |

2.2 Put the verb into the correct form.

- Jane ~~doesn't drink~~ (not/drink) tea very often.
- What time ..... (the banks / close) in Britain?
- 'Where ..... (Martin/come) from?' 'He's Scottish.'
- 'What ..... (you/do)?' 'I'm an electrical engineer.'
- It ..... (take) me an hour to get to work. How long ..... (it/take) you?
- I ..... (play) the piano but I ..... (not/play) very well.
- I don't understand this sentence. What ..... (this word/mean)?

2.3 Use one of the following verbs to complete these sentences. Sometimes you need the negative:

believe eat flow ~~go~~ ~~grow~~ make rise tell translate

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 The earth <del>goes</del> round the sun. | 7 An interpreter ..... from one language into another. |
| 2 Rice <del>doesn't grow</del> in Britain. | 8 A liar is someone who ..... the truth.               |
| 3 The sun ..... in the east.               | 9 The River Amazon ..... into the Atlantic Ocean.      |
| 4 Bees ..... honey.                        |  |
| 5 Vegetarians ..... meat.                  |  |
| 6 An atheist ..... in God.                 |  |

2.4 Ask Liz questions about herself and her family.

- You know that Liz plays tennis. You want to know how often. Ask her.  
How often ~~do you play tennis?~~
- Perhaps Liz's sister plays tennis too. You want to know. Ask Liz.  
..... your sister .....
- You know that Liz reads a newspaper every day. You want to know which one. Ask her.  
.....
- You know that Liz's brother works. You want to know what he does. Ask Liz.  
.....
- You know that Liz goes to the cinema a lot. You want to know how often. Ask her.  
.....
- You don't know where Liz's mother lives. Ask Liz.  
.....

2.5 Complete using one of the following:

I apologise I insist I promise I recommend ~~I suggest~~

- It's a nice day. ~~I suggest~~ we go out for a walk.
- I won't tell anybody what you said. ....
- (in a restaurant) You must let me pay for the meal. ....
- ..... for what I said about you. It wasn't true and I shouldn't have said it.
- The new restaurant in Hill Street is very good. .... it.

# Present continuous and present simple (1)

## (I am doing and I do)

A

Study the explanations and compare the examples:

<b>I am doing</b>	<b>I do</b>
<p>Use the continuous for something that is happening at or around the time of speaking. The action is not finished.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">←----- past                      now                      future -----&gt;</p>	<p>Use the simple for things in general or things that happen repeatedly.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">←----- past                      now                      future -----&gt;</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The water is <b>boiling</b>. Can you turn it off?</li> <li>• Listen to those people. What language <b>are they speaking</b>?</li> <li>• Let's go out. It <b>isn't raining</b> now.</li> <li>• 'Don't disturb me. I'm busy.' 'Why? What are you <b>doing</b>?'</li> <li>• I'm <b>going</b> to bed now. Goodnight!</li> <li>• Maria is in Britain at the moment. She's <b>learning</b> English.</li> </ul> <p>Use the continuous for a <i>temporary</i> situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'm <b>living</b> with some friends until I find a flat.</li> <li>• 'You're <b>working</b> hard today.' 'Yes, I've got a lot to do.'</li> </ul> <p>See Unit 1 for more information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water <b>boils</b> at 100 degrees celsius.</li> <li>• Excuse me, <b>do you speak</b> English?</li> <li>• It <b>doesn't rain</b> very much in summer.</li> <li>• What <b>do</b> you usually do at weekends?</li> <li>• What <b>do</b> you do? (= What's your job?)</li> <li>• I always <b>go</b> to bed before midnight.</li> <li>• Most people <b>learn</b> to swim when they are children.</li> </ul> <p>Use the simple for a <i>permanent</i> situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My parents <b>live</b> in London. They have lived there all their lives.</li> <li>• John <b>isn't</b> lazy. He <b>works</b> very hard most of the time.</li> </ul> <p>See Unit 2 for more information.</p>

B


### I always do and I'm always doing

Usually we say 'I **always do** something' (= I do it every time):

- I **always go** to work by car. (*not* 'I'm always going')

You can also say 'I'm **always doing** something', but this has a different meaning. For example:

I've lost my key again. I'm always losing things.



'I'm **always losing** things' does *not* mean that I lose things every time. It means that I lose things *too often, more often than normal*.

'You're **always -ing**' means that you do something very often, more often than the speaker thinks is normal or reasonable.

- You're **always watching** television. You should do something more active.
- John is never satisfied. He's **always complaining**.

## EXERCISES

3.1 Are the underlined verbs right or wrong? Correct the verbs that are wrong.

- 1 Water boils at 100 degrees celsius. .... **RIGHT** .....
- 2 The water boils. Can you turn it off? .... **WRONG: is boiling** .....
- 3 Look! That man tries to open the door of your car. ....
- 4 Can you hear those people? What do they talk about? ....
- 5 The moon goes round the earth. ....
- 6 I must go now. It gets late. ....
- 7 I usually go to work by car. ....
- 8 'Hurry up! It's time to leave.' 'OK, I come.' ....
- 9 I hear you've got a new job. How do you get on? ....

3.2 Put the verb in the correct form, present continuous or present simple.

- 1 Let's go out. It isn't raining... (not/rain) now.
- 2 Julia is very good at languages. She speaks... (speak) four languages very well.
- 3 Hurry up! Everybody ..... (wait) for you.
- 4 '..... (you/listen) to the radio?' 'No, you can turn it off.'
- 5 '..... (you/listen) to the radio every day?' 'No, just occasionally.'
- 6 The River Nile ..... (flow) into the Mediterranean.
- 7 Look at the river. It ..... (flow) very fast today – much faster than usual.
- 8 We usually ..... (grow) vegetables in our garden but this year we ..... (not/grow) any.
- 9 'How is your English?' 'Not bad. It ..... (improve) slowly.'
- 10 Ron is in London at the moment. He ..... (stay) at the Park Hotel. He ..... (always/stay) there when he's in London.
- 11 Can we stop walking soon? I ..... (start) to feel tired.
- 12 'Can you drive?' 'I ..... (learn). My father ..... (teach) me.'
- 13 Normally I ..... (finish) work at 5.00, but this week I ..... (work) until 6.00 to earn a bit more money.
- 14 My parents ..... (live) in Bristol. They were born there and have never lived anywhere else. Where ..... (your parents/live)?
- 15 Sonia ..... (look) for a place to live. She ..... (stay) with her sister until she finds somewhere.
- 16 'What ..... (your father/do)?' 'He's an architect but he ..... (not/work) at the moment.'
- 17 (at a party) Usually I ..... (enjoy) parties but I ..... (not/enjoy) this one very much.
- 18 The train is never late. It ..... (always/leave) on time.
- 19 Jim is very untidy. He ..... (always/leave) his things all over the place.

3.3 Finish B's sentences. Use always -ing (see Section B).

- 1 A: I'm afraid I've lost my key again.  
B: Not again! You're always losing your key.
- 2 A: The car has broken down again.  
B: That car is useless! It .....
- 3 A: Look! You've made the same mistake again.  
B: Oh no, not again! I .....
- 4 A: Oh, I've left the lights on again.  
B: Typical! You .....

## Present continuous and present simple (2) (I am doing and I do)

We use continuous tenses only for actions and happenings (they are eating / it is raining etc.). Some verbs (for example, know and like) are *not* action verbs. You cannot say 'I am knowing' or 'they are liking'; you can only say 'I know', 'they like'.

The following verbs are not normally used in continuous tenses:

like	love	hate	want	need	prefer		
know	realise	suppose	mean	understand	believe	remember	
belong	contain	consist	depend	seem			

- I'm hungry. I **want** something to eat. (*not* 'I'm wanting')
- Do you **understand** what I **mean**?
- Ann **doesn't seem** very happy at the moment.

When **think** means 'believe', do *not* use the continuous:

- What **do you think** (= believe) will happen? (*not* 'what are you thinking')
- but* • You look serious. What are you **thinking** about? (= What is going on in your mind?)
- I'm **thinking** of giving up my job. (= I am considering)

When **have** means 'possess' etc., do *not* use the continuous (see Unit 17):

- We're enjoying our holiday. We **have** a nice room in the hotel. (*not* 'we're having')
- but* • We're enjoying our holiday. We're **having** a great time.

**See**    **hear**    **smell**    **taste**

We normally use the present simple (*not* continuous) with these verbs:

- Do you **see** that man over there? (*not* 'are you seeing')
- This room **smells**. Let's open a window.

We often use **can** + see/hear/smell/taste:

- Listen! **Can** you hear something?

But you can use the continuous with **see** (I'm seeing) when the meaning is 'having a meeting with' (especially in the future – see Unit 19A):

- I'm **seeing** the manager tomorrow morning.

**He is selfish** and **He is being selfish**

The present continuous of **be** is I am being / he is being / you are being etc.

I'm **being** = 'I'm behaving / I'm acting'. Compare:

- I can't understand why he's **being** so selfish. He isn't usually like that.  
(**being** selfish = behaving selfishly at the moment)

- but* • He never thinks about other people. He **is** very selfish. (*not* 'he is being')  
(= he is selfish generally, not only at the moment)

We use **am/is/are being** to say how somebody is behaving. It is not usually possible in other sentences:

- It's hot today. (*not* 'it is being hot')
- Sarah is very tired. (*not* 'is being tired')

**Look** and **feel**

You can use the present simple or continuous when you say how somebody looks or feels now:

- You **look** well today. *or* You're **looking** well today.
- How **do you feel** now? *or* How **are you feeling** now?







- but* • I usually feel tired in the morning. (*not* 'I'm usually feeling')

EXERCISES

4.1 Are the underlined verbs right or wrong? Correct the ones that are wrong.

- 1 I'm seeing the manager tomorrow morning. ...RIGHT...
- 2 I'm feeling hungry. Is there anything to eat? .....
- 3 Are you believing in God? .....
- 4 This sauce is great. It's tasting really good. .....
- 5 I'm thinking this is your key. Am I right? .....

4.2 Look at the pictures. Use the words in brackets to make sentences. (You should also study Unit 3 before you do this exercise.)

<p>1 (you / not / seem / very happy today) You don't seem very happy today.....</p> 	<p>4 (the dinner / smell / good) .....</p> 
<p>2 (what / you / do?) .....</p> <p>Be quiet! (I / think) .....</p> 	<p>5 Excuse me. (anybody / sit / here?) .....</p> <p>No, it's free.</p> 
<p>3 (who / this umbrella / belong to?) .....</p> <p>I've no idea.</p> 	<p>6 Can you ring me back in half an hour? (I / have / dinner) .....</p> 

4.3 Put the verb into the correct form, present continuous or present simple.

- 1 Are you hungry? ...Do you want... something to eat? (you/want)
- 2 Jill is interested in politics but she ..... to a political party. (not/belong)
- 3 Don't put the dictionary away. I ..... it. (use)
- 4 Don't put the dictionary away. I ..... it. (need)
- 5 Who is that man? What .....? (he/want)
- 6 Who is that man? Why ..... at us? (he/look)
- 7 George says he's 80 years old but nobody ..... him. (believe)
- 8 She told me her name but I ..... it now. (not/remember)
- 9 I ..... of selling my car. (think) Would you be interested in buying it?
- 10 I ..... you should sell your car. (think) You ..... it very often. (not/use)
- 11 I used to drink a lot of coffee but these days I ..... tea. (prefer)
- 12 Air ..... mainly of nitrogen and oxygen. (consist)

4.4 Complete the sentences using the most suitable form of be. Sometimes you must use the simple (am/is/are) and sometimes the continuous is more suitable (am/is/are being).

- 1 I can't understand why ...he's being... so selfish. He isn't usually like that.
- 2 Jack ..... very nice to me at the moment. I wonder why.
- 3 You'll like Jill when you meet her. She ..... very nice.
- 4 Normally you are very sensible, so why ..... so silly about this matter?
- 5 Why isn't Sarah at work today? ..... ill?



# Past simple (I did)

A Study this example:

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was an Austrian musician and composer. He lived from 1756 to 1791. He started composing at the age of five and wrote more than 600 pieces of music. He was only 35 years old when he died.



Lived/started/wrote/was/died are all *past simple*.

B Very often the past simple ends in **-ed** (*regular verbs*):

- I work in a travel agency now. Before that I **worked** in a shop.
- We **invited** them to our party but they **decided** not to come.
- The police **stopped** me on my way home last night.
- She **passed** her examination because she **studied** very hard.

For spelling (stopped, studied etc.), see Appendix 6.

But many verbs are *irregular*. The past simple does *not* end in **-ed**. For example:

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| write → <b>wrote</b> | • Mozart <b>wrote</b> more than 600 pieces of music. |
| see → <b>saw</b>     | • We <b>saw</b> Rose in town a few days ago.         |
| go → <b>went</b>     | • I <b>went</b> to the cinema three times last week. |
| shut → <b>shut</b>   | • It was cold, so I <b>shut</b> the window.          |

For a list of irregular verbs, see Appendix 1.

C In questions and negatives we use **did/didn't** + *infinitive* (enjoy/see/go etc.):

I	enjoyed
she	saw
they	went

did	you	enjoy?
	she	see?
	they	go?

I		enjoy
she	didn't	see
they		go

- A: Did you go out last night?  
B: Yes, I went to the cinema but I **didn't** enjoy the film much.
- 'When did Mr Thomas die?' 'About ten years ago.'
- They **didn't** invite her to the party, so she **didn't** go.
- 'Did you have time to write the letter?' 'No, I **didn't**.'

Be careful when **do** is the main verb in the sentence:

- What **did** you do at the weekend? (*not* 'what did you at the weekend')
- I **didn't** do anything. (*not* 'I didn't anything')

D The past of be (am/is/are) is **was/were**:

I/he/she/it	was/wasn't
we/you/they	were/weren't

was	I/he/she/it?
were	we/you/they?

Note that we do *not* use **did** in negatives and questions with **was/were**:

- I **was** angry because they **were** late.
- **Was** the weather good when you **were** on holiday?
- They **weren't** able to come because they **were** so busy.
- **Did** you go out last night or **were** you too tired?

## EXERCISES

5.1 Read what Sharon says about a typical working day:



SHARON

I usually get up at 7 o'clock and have a big breakfast. I walk to work, which takes me about half an hour. I start work at 8.45. I never have lunch. I finish work at 5 o'clock. I'm always tired when I get home. I usually cook a meal in the evening. I don't usually go out. I go to bed at about 11 o'clock. I always sleep well.

Yesterday was a typical working day for Sharon. Write what she did or didn't do yesterday.

- |   |                            |    |                                 |
|---|----------------------------|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | She got up at 7 o'clock.   | 7  | ..... at 5 o'clock.             |
| 2 | She ..... a big breakfast. | 8  | ..... tired when ..... home.    |
| 3 | She .....                  | 9  | ..... a meal yesterday evening. |
| 4 | It ..... to get to work.   | 10 | ..... out yesterday evening.    |
| 5 | ..... at 8.45.             | 11 | ..... at 11 o'clock.            |
| 6 | ..... lunch.               | 12 | ..... well last night.          |

5.2 Put one of these verbs in each sentence:

buy catch cost drink fall hurt sell spend teach throw win write

- Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music.
- 'How did you learn to drive?' 'My father ..... me.'
- We couldn't afford to keep our car, so we ..... it.
- I was very thirsty. I ..... the water very quickly.
- Paul and I played tennis yesterday. He's much better than me, so he ..... easily.
- Don ..... down the stairs this morning and ..... his leg.
- Jim ..... the ball to Sue, who ..... it.
- Ann ..... a lot of money yesterday. She ..... a dress which ..... £100.

5.3 A friend has just come back from holiday. You ask him about it. Write your questions.

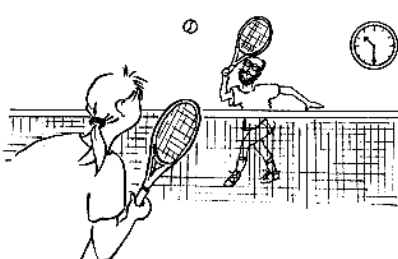
- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 (where/go?) <u>Where did you go?</u> | 6 (how/travel?) .....                |
| 2 (go alone?) .....                    | 7 (the weather / fine?) .....        |
| 3 (food/good?) .....                   | 8 (what / do in the evenings?) ..... |
| 4 (how long / stay there?) .....       | 9 (meet anybody interesting?) .....  |
| 5 (stay at a hotel?) .....             |                                      |

5.4 Complete the sentences. Put the verb into the correct form, positive or negative.

- It was warm, so I took off my coat. (take)
- The film wasn't very good. I didn't enjoy it very much. (enjoy)
- I knew Sarah was very busy, so I ..... her. (disturb)
- I was very tired, so I ..... to bed early. (go)
- The bed was very uncomfortable. I ..... very well. (sleep)
- Sue wasn't hungry, so she ..... anything. (eat)
- We went to Kate's house but she ..... at home. (be)
- It was a funny situation but nobody ..... (laugh)
- The window was open and a bird ..... into the room. (fly)
- The hotel wasn't very expensive. It ..... very much. (cost)
- I was in a hurry, so I ..... time to phone you. (have)
- It was hard work carrying the bags. They ..... very heavy. (be)

# Past continuous (I was doing)

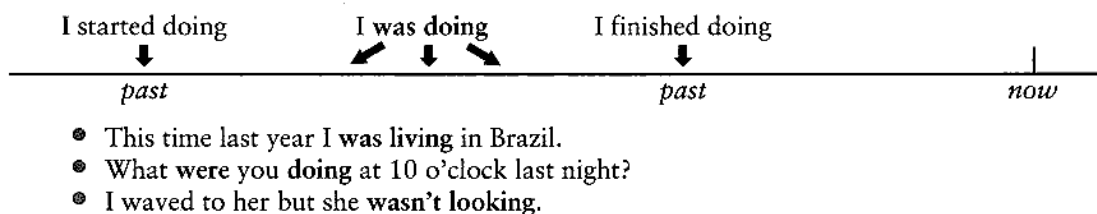
A Study this example situation:



Yesterday Karen and Jim played tennis. They began at 10 o'clock and finished at 11.30.  
So, at 10.30 they were **playing** tennis.  
They were **playing** = 'they were in the middle of playing'. They had not finished playing.  
**Was/were -ing** is the *past continuous*:

I/he/she/it	was	playing
we/you/they	were	doing
		working etc.

B We use the past continuous to say that somebody was in the middle of doing something at a certain time. The action or situation had already started before this time but had not finished:



C Compare the past continuous (I was doing) and past simple (I did):

<p><i>Past continuous</i> (in the middle of an action)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I <b>was walking</b> home when I met Dave. (= in the middle of walking home)</li> <li>• Ann <b>was watching</b> television when the phone rang.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Past simple</i> (complete action)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I <b>walked</b> home after the party last night. (= all the way, completely)</li> <li>• Ann <b>watched</b> television a lot when she was ill last year.</li> </ul>
--	---

D We often use the past simple and the past continuous together to say that something **happened** in the middle of something else:

- Tom **burnt** his hand when he **was cooking** the dinner.
- I saw you in the park yesterday. You **were sitting** on the grass and **reading** a book.
- While I **was working** in the garden, I **hurt** my back.

But we use the past *simple* to say that one thing happened *after* another:

- I **was walking** along the road when I **saw** Dave. So I **stopped** and we **had** a chat.

Compare:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When Karen arrived, we <b>were having</b> dinner. (= We had already started dinner before Karen arrived.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When Karen arrived, we <b>had</b> dinner. (= First Karen arrived and then we had dinner.)</li> </ul>
---	---

E There are some verbs (for example, **know/want/believe**) that are not normally used in the continuous (see Unit 4A):

- We were good friends. We **knew** each other well. (*not* 'we were knowing')
- I was enjoying the party but Chris **wanted** to go home. (*not* 'was wanting')

EXERCISES

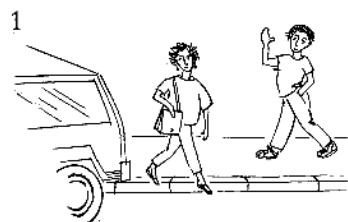
6.1 What were you doing at the following times? Write one sentence as in the examples. The past continuous is not always necessary (see the second example).

- 1 (at 8 o'clock yesterday evening) ... I was having dinner with some friends...
- 2 (at 5 o'clock last Saturday) ... I was on a train on my way to London...
- 3 (at 10.15 yesterday morning) .....
- 4 (at 4.30 this morning) .....
- 5 (at 7.45 yesterday evening) .....
- 6 (half an hour ago) .....

6.2 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences. Use the past continuous.

- 1 Tom burnt his hand when he... was cooking the dinner...
- 2 The doorbell rang while I .....
- 3 We saw an accident while we .....
- 4 Mary fell asleep while she .....
- 5 The television was on but nobody .....

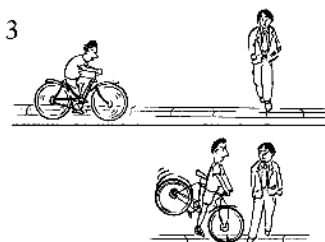
6.3 Put the verbs into the correct form, past continuous or past simple.



I saw (see) Sue in town yesterday but she ..... (not/see) me. She ..... (look) the other way.



I ..... (meet) Tom and Ann at the airport a few weeks ago. They ..... (go) to Berlin and I ..... (go) to Madrid. We ..... (have) a chat while we ..... (wait) for our flights.



I ..... (cycle) home yesterday when suddenly a man ..... (step) out into the road in front of me. I ..... (go) quite fast but luckily I ..... (manage) to stop in time and ..... (not/hit) him.

6.4 Put the verbs into the correct form, past continuous or past simple.

- 1 Jane was waiting (wait) for me when I arrived (arrive).
- 2 'What ..... (you/do) this time yesterday?' 'I was asleep.'
- 3 '..... (you/go) out last night?' 'No, I was too tired.'
- 4 'Was Carol at the party last night?' 'Yes, she ..... (wear) a really nice dress.'
- 5 How fast ..... (you/drive) when the accident ..... (happen)?
- 6 John ..... (take) a photograph of me while I ..... (not/look).
- 7 We were in a very difficult position. We ..... (not/know) what to do.
- 8 I haven't seen Alan for ages. When I last ..... (see) him, he ..... (try) to find a job in London.
- 9 I ..... (walk) along the street when suddenly I ..... (hear) footsteps behind me. Somebody ..... (follow) me. I was frightened and I ..... (start) to run.
- 10 When I was young, I ..... (want) to be a bus driver.

# Present perfect (1) (I have done)

A

Study this example situation:



Tom is looking for his key. He can't find it.  
He **has lost** his key.

'He has lost his key' = He lost it and he still hasn't got it.

Have/has lost is the *present perfect simple*:

I/we/they/you	have	(= I've etc.)	finished	
			lost	
he/she/it	has	(= he's etc.)	done	
			been	etc.

The present perfect simple is **have/has + past participle**. The past participle often ends in **-ed** (finished/decided etc.), but many important verbs are *irregular* (lost/done/been/written etc.). For a list of irregular verbs, see Appendix 1.

B

When we use the present perfect there is always a connection with *now*. The action in the past has a result *now*:

- 'Where's your key?' 'I don't know. I've **lost** it.' (I haven't got it *now*)
- He told me his name but I've **forgotten** it. (I can't remember it *now*)
- 'Is Sally here?' 'No, she's **gone** out.' (she is out *now*)
- I can't find my bag. **Have you seen** it? (do you know where it is *now*?)

We often use the present perfect to give new information or to announce a recent happening:

- Ow! I've cut my finger.
- The road is closed. There's **been** (= there **has been**) an accident.
- (*from the news*) The police **have arrested** two men in connection with the robbery.

C

You can use the present perfect with **just**, **already** and **yet**:

**Just** = 'a short time ago':

- 'Would you like something to eat?' 'No, thanks. I've **just had** lunch.'
- Hello. **Have you just arrived**?

We use **already** to say that something happened sooner than expected (see also Unit 110D):

- 'Don't forget to post the letter, will you?' 'I've **already posted** it.'
- 'What time is Mark leaving?' 'He's **already gone**.'

**Yet** = 'until now' and shows that the speaker is expecting something to happen. Use **yet** only in questions and negative sentences (see also Unit 110C):

- **Has it stopped** raining yet?
- I've written the letter but I **haven't posted** it yet.

D

Note the difference between **gone (to)** and **been (to)**:

- Jim is away on holiday. He **has gone** to Spain. (= he is there *now* or on his way there)
- Jane is back home from holiday now. She **has been** to Italy. (= she has now come back from Italy)

For **been (to)** see also Units 8 and 125B.

## EXERCISES

- 7.1 You are writing a letter to a friend. In the letter you give news about yourself and other people. Use the words given to make sentences. Use the present perfect.

Dear Chris,

Lots of things have happened since I last wrote to you.

1 I / buy / a new car ... *I've bought a new car.*

2 my father / start / a new job .....

3 I / give up / smoking .....

4 Charles and Sarah / go / to Brazil .....

5 Suzanne / have / a baby .....

- 7.2 Read the situations and write sentences. Choose one of the following:

arrive break go up grow improve lose

1 Mike is looking for his key. He can't find it. ... *He has lost his key.*

2 Margaret can't walk and her leg is in plaster. She .....

3 Maria's English wasn't very good. Now it is much better. ....

4 Tim didn't have a beard last month. Now he has a beard. ....

5 This morning I was expecting a letter. Now I have it. ....

6 Last week the bus fare was 80 pence. Now it is 90. ....

- 7.3 Complete B's sentences. Use the verb in brackets + just/already/yet (as shown).

A

1 Would you like something to eat?

2 Do you know where Julia is?

3 What time is David leaving?

4 What's in the newspaper today?

5 Is Ann coming to the cinema with us?

6 Are your friends here yet?

7 What does Tim think about your plan?

B

No, thanks. I *'ve just had* lunch. (just/have)

Yes, I ..... her. (just/see)

He ..... (already/leave)

I don't know. I .....  
(not/read/yet)

No, she ..... the film. (already/see)

Yes, they ..... (just/arrive)

I ..... (not/tell/yet)

- 7.4 Read the situations and write sentences with just, already or yet.

1 After lunch you go to see a friend at her house. She says 'Would you like something to eat?'

You say: No, thank you. ... *I've just had lunch.* (have lunch)

2 Joe goes out. Five minutes later, the phone rings and the caller says 'Can I speak to Joe?'

You say: I'm afraid ..... (go out)

3 You are eating in a restaurant. The waiter thinks you have finished and starts to take your plate away. You say: Wait a minute! ..... (not/finish)

4 You are going to a restaurant this evening. You phone to reserve a table. Later your friend says 'Shall I phone to reserve a table?' You say: No, ..... it. (do)

5 You know that a friend of yours is looking for a job. Perhaps she has been successful. Ask her. You say: .....? (find)

6 Ann went to the bank, but a few minutes ago she returned. Somebody asks 'Is Ann still at the bank?' You say: No, ..... (come back)

- 7.5 Put in been or gone.

1 Jim is on holiday. He's ... *gone* ... to Italy.

2 Hello! I've just ..... to the shops. I've bought lots of things.

3 Alice isn't here at the moment. She's ..... to the shop to get a newspaper.

4 Tom has ..... out. He'll be back in about an hour.

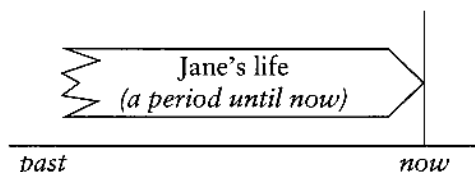
5 'Are you going to the bank?' 'No, I've already ..... to the bank.'

## Present perfect (2) (I have done)

A

Study this example conversation:

- DAVE: Have you travelled a lot, Jane?  
 JANE: Yes, I've been to lots of places.  
 DAVE: Really? Have you ever been to China?  
 JANE: Yes, I've been to China twice.  
 DAVE: What about India?  
 JANE: No, I haven't been to India.

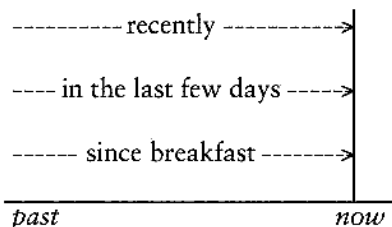


When we talk about a period of time that continues from the past until now, we use the *present perfect* (**have been / have travelled** etc.). Here, Dave and Jane are talking about the places Jane has visited in her life (which is a period that continues until now).

- Have you ever **eaten** caviar? (in your life)
- We've never **had** a car.
- 'Have you read *Hamlet*?' 'No, I **haven't** read any of Shakespeare's plays.'
- Susan really loves that film. She's **seen** it eight times!
- What a boring film! It's the most boring film I've **ever seen**.

In the following examples too the speakers are talking about a period that continues until now (recently / in the last few days / so far / since breakfast etc.):

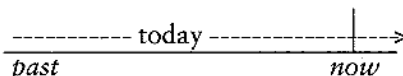
- Have you heard from George recently?
- I've met a lot of people in the last few days.
- Everything is going well. We haven't had any problems so far.
- I'm hungry. I haven't eaten anything since breakfast. (= from breakfast until now)
- It's nice to see you again. We haven't seen each other for a long time.



B

We use the present perfect with **today / this morning / this evening** etc. when these periods are *not finished* at the time of speaking (see also Unit 14B):

- I've drunk four cups of coffee **today**. (perhaps I'll drink more before today is finished)
- Have you had a holiday **this year** (yet)?
- I haven't seen Tom **this morning**. Have you?
- Ron **hasn't** worked very hard **this term**.



C

Note that we say 'It's the first time something **has happened**' (*present perfect*). For example:

Don is having a driving lesson. He is very nervous and unsure because it is his first lesson.

- It's **the first time** he **has driven** a car. (*not* 'drives')
- or He **has never driven** a car before.
- Linda has lost her passport again. It's the second time this **has happened**. (*not* 'happens')
- This is a lovely meal. It's the first good meal I've **had** for ages. (*not* 'I have')
- Bill is phoning his girlfriend again. That's the third time he's **phoned** her **this evening**.



## EXERCISES

8.1 You are asking somebody questions about things he or she has done. Make questions from the words in brackets.

- 1 (ever / ride / horse?) ... **Have you ever ridden a horse?**
- 2 (ever / be / California?) .....
- 3 (ever / run / marathon?) .....
- 4 (ever / speak / famous person?) .....
- 5 (always / live / in this town?) .....
- 6 (most beautiful place / ever / visit?) What .....

8.2 Complete B's answers. Some sentences are positive and some negative. Use a verb from this list:  
be be eat happen have meet play read see see try



- |    |                                     |   |
|----|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1  | What's George's sister like?        | I've no idea. ... <b>I've never met</b> .. her.             |
| 2  | How is Amy these days?              | I don't know. I ..... her recently.                         |
| 3  | Are you hungry?                     | Yes. I ..... much today.                                    |
| 4  | Can you play chess?                 | Yes, but ..... for ages.                                    |
| 5  | Did you enjoy your holiday?         | Yes, it's the best holiday .....<br>for a long time.        |
| 6  | What's that book like?              | I don't know. .... it.                                      |
| 7  | Is Brussels an interesting place?   | I've no idea. .... there.                                   |
| 8  | Mike was late for work again today. | Again? He .....<br>every day this week.                     |
| 9  | Do you like caviar?                 | I don't know. .... it.                                      |
| 10 | The car broke down again yesterday. | Not again! That's the second time .....<br>..... this week. |
| 11 | Who's that woman by the door?       | I don't know. .... before.                                  |

8.3 Complete these sentences using today / this year / this term etc.

- 1 I saw Tom yesterday but ... **I haven't seen him today.**
- 2 I read a newspaper yesterday but I ..... today.
- 3 Last year the company made a profit but this year .....
- 4 Tracy worked hard at school last term but .....
- 5 It snowed a lot last winter but .....
- 6 Our football team won a lot of games last season but we .....

8.4 Read the situations and write sentences as shown in the examples.

- 1 Jack is driving a car but he's very nervous and not sure what to do.  
You ask: ... **Have you driven a car before?** ...  
He says: ... **No, this is the first time I've driven a car.** ...
- 2 Len is playing tennis. He's not very good and he doesn't know the rules.  
You ask: Have .....  
He says: No, this is the first .....
- 3 Sue is riding a horse. She doesn't look very confident or comfortable.  
You ask: .....  
She says: .....
- 4 Maria is in London. She has just arrived and it's very new for her.  
You ask: .....  
She says: .....



# Present perfect continuous (I have been doing)

A

It has been raining. Study this example situation:



Is it raining?  
No, but the ground is wet.

It has been raining.

Have/has been -ing is the *present perfect continuous*:

I/we/they/you	have	(= I've etc.)	been	doing
he/she/it	has	(= he's etc.)		waiting playing etc.

We use the present perfect continuous for an activity that has recently stopped or just stopped. There is a connection with *now*:

- You're out of breath. **Have you been running?** (you're out of breath *now*)
- Paul is very tired. He's **been working** very hard. (he's tired *now*)
- Why are your clothes so dirty? What **have you been doing?**
- I've **been talking** to Carol about the problem and she thinks that...

B

It has been raining for two hours. Study this example situation:



It is raining now. It began raining two hours ago and it is still raining.

How long has it **been raining?**

It **has been raining** for two hours.

We often use the present perfect continuous in this way, especially with **how long**, **for...** and **since...**. The activity is still happening (as in this example) or has just stopped.

- **How long have you been learning** English? (you're still learning English)
- Tim is still watching television. He's **been watching** television all day.
- Where have you been? I've **been looking** for you for the last half hour.
- George **hasn't been feeling** well recently.

You can use the present perfect continuous for actions repeated over a period of time:

- Debbie is a very good tennis player. She's **been playing** since she was eight.
- Every morning they meet in the same café. They've **been going** there for years.

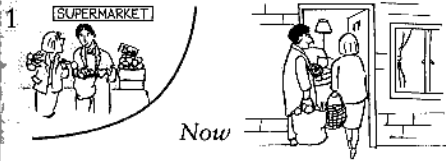
C

Compare I am doing (see Unit 1) and I have been doing:

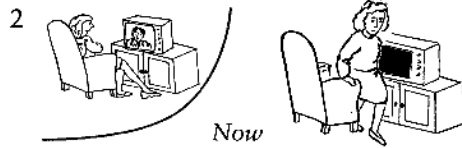
<p>I am doing <i>present continuous</i></p> <p>↓ <i>now</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't disturb me now. I'm working.</li> <li>• We need an umbrella. It's raining.</li> <li>• Hurry up! We're waiting.</li> </ul>	<p>I have been doing <i>present perfect continuous</i></p> <p>→ <i>now</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I've <b>been working</b> hard, so now I'm going to have a rest.</li> <li>• The ground is wet. It's <b>been raining</b>.</li> <li>• We've <b>been waiting</b> for an hour.</li> </ul>
--	--

EXERCISES

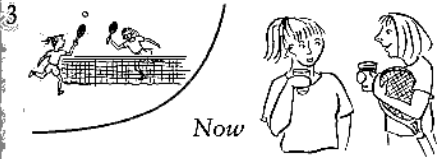
9.1 What have these people been doing or what has been happening?



Now They have been shopping...



Now She .....



Now They .....



Now He .....

9.2 Write a question for each situation.

- John looks sunburnt. You ask: (you / sit in the sun?) Have you been sitting in the sun?
- You have just arrived to meet a friend who is waiting for you. You ask: (you / wait / long?)  
.....
- You meet a friend in the street. His face and hands are very dirty. You ask: (what / you / do?)  
.....
- A friend of yours is now living in Baker Street. You want to know 'How long...?' You ask: (how long / you / live / in Baker Street?)  
.....
- A friend tells you about his job - he sells computers. You want to know 'How long...?' You ask: (how long / you / sell / computers?)  
.....

9.3 Read the situations and complete the sentences.

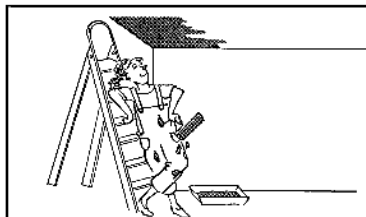
- The rain started two hours ago. It's still raining now. It has been raining for two hours.
- We started waiting for the bus 20 minutes ago. We're still waiting now.  
We ..... for 20 minutes.
- I started Spanish classes in December. I'm still learning Spanish now.  
I ..... since December.
- Ann began looking for a job six months ago. She's still looking now.  
..... for six months.
- Mary started working in London on 18 January. She's still working there now.  
..... since 18 January.
- Years ago you started writing to a penfriend. You still write to each other regularly now.  
We ..... for years.

9.4 Put the verb into the present continuous (I am -ing etc.) or present perfect continuous (I have been -ing etc.).

- Maria has been learning (learn) English for two years.
- Hello, Tom. I ..... (look) for you all morning. Where have you been?
- Why ..... (you/look) at me like that? Stop it!
- We always go to Ireland for our holidays. We ..... (go) there for years.
- I ..... (think) about what you said and I've decided to take your advice.
- 'Is Ann on holiday this week?' 'No, she ..... (work).'
- Sarah is very tired. She ..... (work) very hard recently.

# Present perfect continuous and simple (I have been doing and I have done)

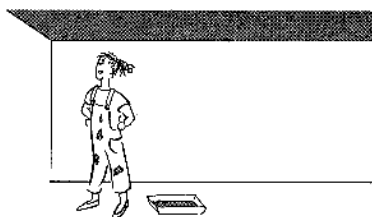
A Study these example situations:



Ann's clothes are covered in paint.  
She **has been painting** the ceiling.

**Has been painting** is the *present perfect continuous*.

We are interested in the activity. It does not matter whether something has been finished or not. In this example, the activity (painting the ceiling) has not been finished.



The ceiling was white. Now it is blue.  
She **has painted** the ceiling.

**Has painted** is the *present perfect simple*.

Here, the important thing is that something has been finished. 'Has painted' is a *completed action*. We are interested in the *result* of the activity (the painted ceiling), not in the activity itself.

Compare these examples:

- My hands are very dirty. I've **been repairing** the car.
- She's **been smoking** too much recently. She should smoke less.
- It's nice to see you again. What **have you been doing** since we last met?
- Where have you been? **Have you been playing** tennis?

- The car is OK again now. I've **repaired** it.
- Somebody **has smoked** all my cigarettes. The packet is empty.
- Where's the book I gave you? What **have you done** with it?
- **Have you ever played** tennis?

B We use the continuous to ask or say *how long* (for an activity that is still happening):

- How long **have you been reading** that book?
- Mary is still writing letters. She's **been writing** letters all day.
- They've **been playing** tennis since 2 o'clock.

We use the simple to ask or say *how much, how many* or *how many times* (completed actions):

- How many pages of that book **have you read**?
- Mary **has written** ten letters today.
- They've **played** tennis three times this week.

C There are some verbs (for example, *know/like/believe*) that are normally not used in the continuous:

- I've **known** about it for a long time. (*not* 'I've been knowing')

For a list of these verbs, see Unit 4A.

Present perfect simple → **UNITS 7-8** Present perfect continuous → **UNIT 9**

Present perfect + **how long/for/since** → **UNITS 11-12**

EXERCISES

10.1 Read the situations and write two sentences using the words in brackets.

- 1 Tom started reading a book two hours ago. He is still reading it and now he is on page 53.  
(read / for two hours) ...**He has been reading for two hours...**  
(read / 53 pages so far) ...**He has read 53 pages so far...**
- 2 Linda is from Australia. She is travelling round Europe at the moment. She began her tour three months ago.  
(travel / for three months) She .....  
(visit / six countries so far) .....
- 3 Jimmy is a tennis player. He began playing tennis when he was ten years old. This year he is national champion again – for the fourth time.  
(win / the national championship four times) .....  
(play / tennis since he was ten) .....
- 4 When they left college, Mary and Sue started making films together. They still make films.  
(make / ten films since they left college) They .....  
(make / films since they left college) .....

10.2 For each situation, ask a question using the words in brackets.

- 1 You have a friend who is learning Arabic. You ask:  
(how long / learn / Arabic?) ...**How long have you been learning Arabic?**
- 2 You have just arrived to meet a friend. She is waiting for you. You ask:  
(how long / wait?) .....
- 3 You see somebody fishing by the river. You ask:  
(how many fish / catch?) .....
- 4 Some friends of yours are having a party next week. You ask:  
(how many people / invite?) .....
- 5 A friend of yours is a teacher. You ask:  
(how long / teach?) .....
- 6 You meet somebody who is a writer. You ask:  
(how many books / write?) .....  
(how long / write / books?) .....
- 7 A friend of yours is saving money to go on holiday. You ask:  
(how long / save?) .....  
(how much money / save?) .....

10.3 Put the verb into the more suitable form, present perfect simple (I have done etc.) or continuous (I have been doing etc.).

- 1 Where have you been? ...**Have you been playing**... (you/play) tennis?
- 2 Look! Somebody ..... (break) that window.
- 3 You look tired. .... (you/work) hard?
- 4 '..... (you/ever/work) in a factory?' 'No, never.'
- 5 'Jane is away on holiday.' 'Oh, is she? Where ..... (she/go)?'
- 6 My brother is an actor. He ..... (appear) in several films.
- 7 'Sorry I'm late.' 'That's all right. I ..... (not/wait) long.'
- 8 'Is it still raining?' 'No, it ..... (stop).'
- 9 I ..... (lose) my address book. .... (you/see) it anywhere?
- 10 I ..... (read) the book you lent me but I ..... (not/finish) it yet.
- 11 I ..... (read) the book you lent me, so you can have it back now.

# How long have you (been)...?

A

Study this example situation:



Bob and Alice are married. They got married exactly 20 years ago, so today is their 20th wedding anniversary.

They **have been married for 20 years.**

We say:

They **are** married. (*present*)

*but* How long have they **been** married? (*present perfect*)  
(*not* 'How long are they married?')

They **have been** married for 20 years.

(*not* 'They are married for 20 years')

We use the *present perfect* to talk about something that began in the past and still continues now. Compare the *present* and the *present perfect*:

- Amy is in hospital.

*but* She **has been** in hospital since Monday. (*not* 'Amy is in hospital since Monday')

- We know each other very well.

*but* We **have known** each other for a long time. (*not* 'we know')

- Are you waiting for somebody?

*but* How long have you **been** waiting?

B

I **have been doing** something (*present perfect continuous*) = 'I started doing something in the past and I am still doing it (or have just stopped)':

- I've **been learning** English for a long time. (*not* 'I am learning')
- Sorry I'm late. **Have you been waiting** long?
- It's **been raining** since I got up this morning.

The action can be a repeated action:

- 'How long have you **been driving**?' 'Since I was 17.'

C

I **have done** (*simple*) or I **have been doing** (*continuous*)

The continuous is more usual with **how long**, **since** and **for** (see also Unit 10B):

- I've **been learning** English for a long time. (*not usually* 'I've learnt')

You can normally use either the continuous or simple with **live** and **work**:

- John **has been living** / **has lived** in London for a long time.
- How long have you **been working** / **have you worked** here?

But we use the *simple* with **always**:

- John **has always lived** in London. (*not* 'has always been living')

You can use the continuous or the simple for actions repeated over a long period:

- I've **been collecting** / I've **collected** stamps since I was a child.

Some verbs (for example, **know**/**like**/**believe**) are not normally used in the continuous:

- How long **have you known** Jane? (*not* 'have you been knowing')
- I've **had** a pain in my stomach since I got up this morning.

For a list of these verbs, see Unit 4A. For **have** see Unit 17.

D

We use the present perfect *simple* in negative sentences like these:

- I **haven't seen** Tom since Monday. (= Monday was the last time I saw him)
- Jane **hasn't phoned** me for two weeks. (= the last time she phoned was two weeks ago)

EXERCISES

11.1 Are the underlined verbs right or wrong? Correct them if they are wrong.

- 1 Bob is a friend of mine. I know him very well. ...RIGHT...
- 2 Bob is a friend of mine. I know him for a long time. ...WRONG: I've known him...
- 3 Sue and Alan are married since July. ....
- 4 The weather is awful. It's raining again. ....
- 5 The weather is awful. It's raining all day. ....
- 6 I like your house. How long are you living there? ....
- 7 Graham is working in a shop for the last few months. ....
- 8 I'm going to Paris tomorrow. I'm staying there until next Friday. ....
- 9 'Do you still smoke?' 'No, I gave it up. I don't smoke for years.' ....
- 10 That's a very old bicycle. How long do you have it? ....

11.2 Read the situations and write questions from the words in brackets.

- 1 John tells you that his mother is in hospital. You ask him:  
(how long / be / in hospital?) ...How long has your mother been in hospital?...
- 2 You meet a woman who tells you that she teaches English. You ask her:  
(how long / teach / English?) .....
- 3 You know that Jane is a good friend of Carol's. You ask Jane:  
(how long / know / Carol?) .....
- 4 Your friend's brother went to Australia some time ago and he's still there. You ask your friend: (how long / be / in Australia?) .....
- 5 Tim always wears the same jacket. It's a very old jacket. You ask him:  
(how long / have / that jacket?) .....
- 6 You are talking to a friend about Alan. Alan now works at the airport. You ask your friend:  
(how long / work / at the airport?) .....
- 7 A friend of yours is having driving lessons. You ask him:  
(how long / have / driving lessons?) .....
- 8 You meet somebody on a train. She tells you that she lives in Glasgow. You ask her:  
(always / live / in Glasgow?) .....

11.3 Complete B's answers to A's questions.



- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 1  | Amy is in hospital, isn't she?            | Yes, she <u>has been</u> in hospital since Monday.   |
| 2  | Do you see Ann very often?                | No, I <u>haven't seen</u> her for three months.      |
| 3  | Is Margaret married?                      | Yes, she ..... married for ten years.                |
| 4  | Are you waiting for me?                   | Yes, I ..... for the last half hour.                 |
| 5  | You know Linda, don't you?                | Yes, we ..... each other for ages.                   |
| 6  | Do you still play tennis?                 | No, I ..... tennis for years.                        |
| 7  | Is Jim watching TV?                       | Yes, he ..... TV all evening.                        |
| 8  | Do you watch TV a lot?                    | No, I ..... TV for a long time.                      |
| 9  | Have you got a headache?                  | Yes, I ..... a headache all morning.                 |
| 10 | George is never ill, is he?               | No, he ..... ill since I've known him.               |
| 11 | Are you feeling ill?                      | Yes, I ..... ill since I got up.                     |
| 12 | Sue lives in London, doesn't she?         | Yes, she ..... in London for the last few years.     |
| 13 | Do you still go to the cinema a lot?      | No, I ..... to the cinema for ages.                  |
| 14 | Would you like to go to New York one day? | Yes, I ..... to go to New York.<br>(use always/want) |

# When...? and How long...? For and since

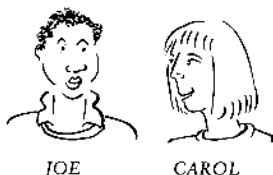
A

Compare **When...?** (+ *past simple*) and **How long...?** (+ *present perfect*):



A: When did it start raining?  
B: It started raining **an hour ago** / at 1 o'clock.

A: How long has it been raining?  
B: It's been raining **for an hour** / since 1 o'clock.



A: When did Joe and Carol first meet?  
B: They first met **a long time ago** / when they were at school.

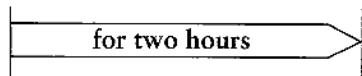
A: How long have Joe and Carol known each other?  
B: They've known each other **for a long time** / since they were at school.

B

We use both **for** and **since** to say how long something has been happening.

We use **for** when we say a period of time (two hours, six weeks etc.):

- I've been waiting **for two hours**.



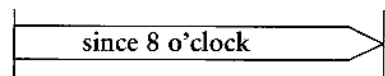
two hours ago -----> now

for	
two hours	a week
20 minutes	50 years
five days	a long time
six months	ages

- Sally's been working here **for six months**. (not 'since six months')
- I haven't seen Tom **for three days**. (not 'since three days')

We use **since** when we say the *start* of a period (8 o'clock, Monday, 1985 etc.):

- I've been waiting **since 8 o'clock**.



8 o'clock -----> now

since	
8 o'clock	1977
Monday	Christmas
12 May	lunchtime
April	they were at school

- Sally's been working here **since April**. (= from April until now)
- I haven't seen Tom **since Monday**. (= from Monday until now)

It is possible to leave out **for** (but not usually in negative sentences):

- They've been married (for) ten years. (with or without for)
- They haven't had a holiday for ten years. (you must use for)

We do *not* use **for** + **all...** (all day / all my life etc.):

- I've lived here **all my life**. (not 'for all my life')

C

We say 'It's (a long time / two years etc.) **since** something happened':

- It's **two years since** I last saw Joe. (= I haven't seen Joe for two years / the last time I saw Joe was two years ago)
- It's **ages since** we went to the cinema. (= We haven't been to the cinema for ages)

The question is **How long is it since...?**

- How long is it since you last saw Joe? (= When did you last see Joe?)
- How long is it since Mrs Hill died? (= When did Mrs Hill die?)

EXERCISES

12.1 Write questions with how long and when.

- 1 It's raining.  
(how long?) ... How long has it been raining?  
(when?) ... When did it start raining?
- 2 Kate is learning Italian.  
(how long / learn?) .....  
(when / start / learn?) .....
- 3 I know Martin.  
(how long / know?) .....  
(when / first / meet?) .....
- 4 Bob and Alice are married.  
(how long?) .....  
(when?) .....

12.2 Read the situations and complete the sentences beginning in the way shown.

- 1 (It's raining now. It's been raining since lunchtime.) It started raining at lunchtime.
- 2 (Ann and I are friends. We first met years ago.) We've known each other for years.
- 3 (Mark is ill. He became ill on Sunday.) He has .....
- 4 (Mark is ill. He became ill a few days ago.) He has .....
- 5 (Sarah is married. She's been married for two years.) She got .....
- 6 (You've got a camera. You bought it ten years ago.) I've .....
- 7 (Sue has been in France for the last three weeks.) She went .....
- 8 (You're working in a hotel. You started in June.) I've .....

12.3 Put in for or since.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 It's been raining ... <u>since</u> ... lunchtime.           | 6 Please hurry up! We've been waiting<br>..... an hour.         |
| 2 Tom's father has been doing the same job<br>..... 20 years. | 7 Kevin has been looking for a job<br>..... he left school.     |
| 3 Have you been learning English .....<br>a long time?        | 8 The house is very dirty. We haven't<br>cleaned it ..... ages. |
| 4 Sarah has lived in London ..... 1985.                       | 9 I haven't had a good meal .....<br>last Tuesday.              |
| 5 ..... Christmas, the weather<br>has been quite good.        |   |

12.4 Write B's sentences using the words in brackets.

- 1 A: Do you often go on holiday?  
B: (no / five years) ... No, I haven't had a holiday for five years.
- 2 A: Do you often eat in restaurants?  
B: (no / ages) No, I .....
- 3 A: Do you often see Sarah?  
B: (no / about a month) No, .....
- 4 A: Do you often go to the cinema?  
B: (no / a long time) .....

Now write B's answers again. This time use It's...since...

- 5 (1) ... No, it's five years since I had a holiday.
- 6 (2) No, it's .....
- 7 (3) No, .....
- 8 (4) .....