

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 Amanda about the problem and she agrees with me.
- Where have you been? I've been looking for you everywhere.

B

It has been raining for two hours.

Study this example situation:



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 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 TV. **He's been watching TV all day.**
- Where have you been? I've been looking for you **for the last half hour.**
- Chris **hasn't been feeling** well **recently.**

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

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

C

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

I am doing
present continuous
↓
now

- Don't disturb me now. I'm working.
- We need an umbrella. It's raining.
- Hurry up! We're waiting.

I have been doing
present perfect continuous
now

- I've been working hard. Now I'm going to have a break.
- The ground is wet. It's been raining.
- We've been waiting for an hour.

Exercises

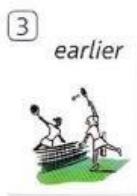
9.1 What have these people been doing or what has been happening?



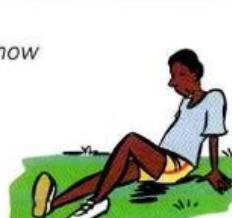
They 've been shopping.



She



They



He

9.2 Write a question for each situation.

1 You meet Paul as he is leaving the swimming pool.

You ask: (you / swim?) Have you been swimming?

2 You have just arrived to meet a friend who is waiting for you.

You ask: (you / wait / long?)

3 You meet a friend in the street. His face and hands are very dirty.

You ask: (what / you / do?)

4 A friend of yours is now working in a shop. You want to know how long.

You ask: (how long / you / work / there?)

5 A friend tells you about his job – he sells mobile phones. You want to know how long.

You ask: (how long / you / sell / mobile phones?)

9.3 Read the situations and complete the sentences.

1 It's raining. The rain started two hours ago.

It's been raining for two hours.

2 We are waiting for the bus. We started waiting 20 minutes ago.

We for 20 minutes.

3 I'm learning Spanish. I started classes in December.

I since December.

4 Jessica is working in a supermarket. She started working there on 18 January.

since 18 January.

5 Our friends always spend their holidays in Italy. They started going there years ago.

for years.

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

1 Maria has been learning (Maria / learn) English for two years.

2 Hello, Tom. (I / look) for you. Where have you been?

3 Why (you / look) at me like that? Stop it!

4 Linda is a teacher. (she / teach) for ten years.

5 (I / think) about what you said and I've decided to take your advice.

6 'Is Paul on holiday this week?' 'No, (he / work).' (he / work).

7 Sarah is very tired. (she / work) very hard recently.