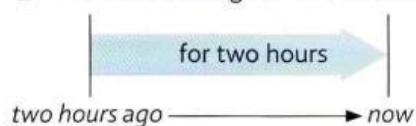


For and since When ... ? and How long ... ?

A

We use **for** and **since** to say how long something has been happening.We use **for** + a period of time (**two hours, six weeks** etc.):

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

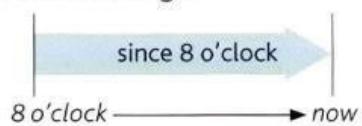


	for
two hours	20 minutes
a long time	six months
a week	ages
	five days
	50 years
	years

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

We use **since** + the start of a period (**8 o'clock, Monday, 1999** etc.):

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



	since
8 o'clock	Monday
April	2001
lunchtime	we arrived
	12 May
	Christmas
	I got up

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

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)

You can use **in** instead of **for** in negative sentences (**I haven't ... etc.**):

- They **haven't had** a holiday **in ten years**. (= for ten years)

B

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 they known each other?B: They've known each other **for a long time / since they were at school**.

C

We say:

It's	(= It is)	a long time
or It's been	(= It has been)	six months (etc.)

since something happened

- It's two years since** I last saw Joe. **or It's been two years since** ...
 (= I haven't seen Joe for two years)
 It's ages since we went to the cinema. **or It's been ages since** ...
 (= We haven't been to the cinema for ages)
 How long is it since Mrs Hill died? **or How long has it been since** ...?
 (= When did Mrs Hill die?)

Exercises

12.1 Write for or since.

- 1 It's been raining since lunchtime.
- 2 Sarah has lived in Paris since 1995.
- 3 Paul has lived in Brazil for ten years.
- 4 I'm tired of waiting. We've been sitting here for an hour.
- 5 Kevin has been looking for a job since he left school.
- 6 I haven't been to a party for ages.
- 7 I wonder where Joe is. I haven't seen him since last week.
- 8 Jane is away. She's been away since Friday.
- 9 The weather is dry. It hasn't rained for a few weeks.

12.2 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 Japanese.
(how long / learn?)
(when / start?)
- 3 I know Simon.
(how long / you / know?)
(when / you / first / meet?)
- 4 Rebecca and David are married.
(how long?)
(when?)

12.3 Read the situations and complete the sentences.

- 1 It's raining. It's been raining since lunchtime. It started raining at lunchtime.
- 2 Ann and Jess are friends. They first met years ago. They've known each other for years.
- 3 Mark is ill. He became ill on Sunday. He has been ill since Sunday.
- 4 Mark is ill. He became ill a few days ago. He has been ill for a few days.
- 5 Sarah is married. She's been married for a year. She got married a year ago.
- 6 You have a headache. It started when you woke up.
I've been ill since I woke up.
- 7 Sue has been in Italy for the last three weeks.
She has been in Italy for three weeks.
- 8 You're working in a hotel. You started six months ago.
I've been working here for six months.

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

- 1 A: Do you often go on holiday?
B: No, I haven't had a holiday for five years.
- 2 A: Do you often see Laura?
B: No, I haven't seen her for about a month.
- 3 A: Do you often go to the cinema?
B: No, I haven't been to the cinema for a long time.
- 4 A: Do you often eat in restaurants?
B: No, I haven't eaten in a restaurant for ages.

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 been three weeks since I last saw her.
- 7 (3) No, I haven't eaten in a restaurant for ages.
- 8 (4) No, I haven't seen him for a long time.