Grammar reference

1

PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE AND CONTINUOUS

Present perfect simple: *have* + past participle

positive	negative	question
I**'ve read** the article in a newspaper.	She **hasn't had** lunch.	**Have** they **arrived** yet?

Present perfect continuous: *have been* + present participle

positive	negative	question
I**'ve been watching** the match.	She **hasn't been waiting** long.	**Have** they **been working** with you?

Both the **present perfect simple** and **present perfect continuous** talk about something which started in the past.

- The present perfect simple is a completed action which has a result in the present:
  She's passed her driving test, so now she can take the children to the day care centre herself.
- The present perfect continuous is an action which is still happening now:
  They've been working hard on their presentation, but it isn't finished yet.

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The two tenses are often very similar in their usage. However:

present perfect simple	present perfect continuous
• emphasises the result: *They've worked on the environmental project all week and they're going to present the final version tomorrow.* • focuses on how much of an activity is complete: *I've listened to all of the audio novels you recommended.* • may give the idea that something is permanent (and may be accompanied by a time expression which shows this): *She's been a lecturer in the science department for well over twenty years and she is still actively involved in research.*	• emphasises the action: *They've been working on the environmental project all week, but they've still got some way to go.* • focuses on how long an activity has been in progress: *I've been listening to the audio novels you recommended and I've still got two left.* • may give the idea that something is temporary (and may be accompanied by a time expression which shows this): *She's been working here part-time this week, but she goes back to her normal job on Monday.*
• focuses on how many times an action has been repeated: *We've watched that programme about celebrities several times.*	• focuses on the process of change over a period of time and that the changes are not finished: *My use of grammar has been getting more accurate since I started testing myself.*

Note:
Some verbs are not used in the continuous form, e.g. *know, hate, understand, want.*
I've known Guy for a long time. (NOT: ~~*I've been knowing*~~ *Guy for a long time.*)
I've understood everything you've outlined. (NOT: ~~*I've been understanding*~~ *everything you've outlined.*)

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PRACTICE

1 Complete the sentences with either the present perfect simple or continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

1 I _____ (prepare) my presentation on mammals all week, but I _____ (not finish) it yet.

2 What _____ (you do)? Your hands are covered in dirt.

3 Your parents _____ (look) exhausted recently. Have they _____ (work) too much?

4 I _____ (not complete) my essay yet, because I _____ (chill out) in the garden for over an hour.

5 Have you got a plaster? I _____ (do) some work around the house and I _____ (damage) the nail on my thumb quite badly.

6 I _____ (be) to Spain several times this year. Every visit was really outstanding.

7 Recently the government _____ (become) more aware of the need to promote music education.

8 I _____ (change) a wheel on my car, so I'm not really in the mood to go out.

2 Tick the correct sentences. Correct the sentences with mistakes.

1 The surgeon has just finished a nine-hour operation, so he's exhausted.

2 We have lived in Berlin for two years and before that we lived in London for five years.

3 I have finally been learning how to use the passive in English. I feel over the moon that I can do it at last.

4 I can see that he has eaten too much recently. He's gained a lot of weight.

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5 The rain has been pouring down all day, so I chose to stay indoors.

6 They haven't mastered Chinese, but they can communicate at a basic level. That's an incredible achievement!

7 They have browsed for jobs in sport management for over four hours and still haven't found anything.

8 I have gone to the weight lifting session every weekend for years.

3 **Make sentences with either the present perfect simple or continuous.**

1 Scientists / discover / vaccines / to cure / many fatal illnesses.

2 He / not put / his recent qualifications on his CV / yet.

3 Wake up! You / sleep for / over two hours now.

4 We all feel thirsty, / because / as usual / not / drink enough / during training.

5 She / know him / since / he was a small child.

6 It snow / heavily / all morning / and as a result / the roads / are slippery now.

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