

It depends, I confess, on what you want to say,...

Both the simple past continuous and the present perfect continuous can be used to express something about this picture. Before we start, let's see how you do!

1. Beware! Multiple correct answers are possible! ☺ (Tick)

- _____ She was working, then she was talking on the phone.
- _____ She was working, when the phone interrupted her.
- _____ She has probably been working for awhile.



2. Want to try, again? Draw a line between these pictures and the correct phrases. (Drag lines to upper left hand corners)



S/he was waiting, when s/he took a pic.



S/he went, then s/he took a pic.



S/he has been taking pictures for Facebook.



First, let's look at the **forms**. You know what the simple past and the present perfect look like, but what about their continuous forms?

The past continuous, which I call the “simple past continuous” to help us remember, uses the *simple past* of the helping verb “to be” in the voice correct for the subject together with the *-ing* form of the verb that tells us what the action is, for example, *were running*.

3. WHEN do we use the past continuous? Look at the previous examples, again, then you tell me! (*Choose*)



4. Past continuous...your turn! Use “to talk” and “to come into the room” (*ungraded*):

The present perfect continuous, as you can guess, uses the *present perfect* of the helping verb “to be (+to have)” in the voice correct for the subject together with the *-ing* form of the verb that tells us what the action is, for example, *have been running*.

5. WHEN do we use the present perfect continuous? You tell me! (*Choose*)



There's one more thing you need to know about the present perfect continuous before you can use it to make your own sentences. We use FOR to express HOW LONG, & we use SINCE to express WHEN IT STARTED.

7. Which are correct? (Tick)

They have been talking since noon. | They have been talking for noon.

They have been talking since 1 hour. | They have been talking for 1 hour.



8. Your turn with the present perfect continuous! Use “to talk” and both FOR and SINCE (*ungraded*):

9. I bet this will be easy for you, now! Drag and drop these tenses under the correct pictures (*look carefully!*).



simple past continuous

present perfect continuous



(N.B., All pictures are Microsoft Clipart from the Word program used to make this file.)