

For and during

We use **for** + a period of time to say how long something goes on:

for **two hours** for **a week** for **ages**

- ☐ We watched TV **for two hours** last night.
- ☐ Jess is going away **for a week** in September.
- ☐ Where have you been? I've been waiting **for ages**.
- ☐ Are you going away **for the weekend**?



We use **during** + *noun* to say when something happens (*not* how long):

during **the movie** during **our holiday** during **the night**

- ☐ I fell asleep **during the movie**.
- ☐ We met some really nice people **during our holiday**.
- ☐ The ground is wet. It must have rained **during the night**.

With 'time words' (for example: **the morning** / **the afternoon** / **the summer**), you can usually say **in** or **during**:

- ☐ It must have rained **in the night.** or ... **during the night.**
- ☐ I'll phone you sometime **during the afternoon.** or ... **in the afternoon.**

You cannot use **during** to say how long something goes on:

- ☐ It rained **for** three days without stopping. (*not during three days*)

Compare **during** and **for**:

- ☐ I fell asleep **during the movie**. I was asleep **for half an hour**.

During and while

Compare:

We use **during** + *noun*:

- ☐ I fell asleep **during** the movie.
- ☐ We met a lot of interesting people **during** our holiday.
- ☐ Robert suddenly began to feel ill **during** the exam.

We use **while** + *subject* + *verb*:

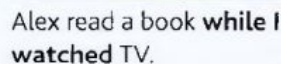
- ☐ I fell asleep **while I was watching TV.**
subject + verb
- ☐ We met a lot of interesting people **while we were on holiday.**
- ☐ Robert suddenly began to feel ill **while he was doing the exam.**

Some more examples of **while**:

- ☐ We saw Clare **while we were waiting** for the bus.
- ☐ **While you were** out, there was a phone call for you.
- ☐ Alex read a book **while I watched TV**.

When you are talking about the future, use the *present (not will)* after **while**:

- ☐ I'm going to Singapore next week. I hope to see some friends of mine **while I'm** there. (*not while I will be there*)
- ☐ What are you going to do **while you're** waiting? (*not while you'll be waiting*)



See also Unit 25.

Exercises

Unit
119

119.1 Put in **for** or **during**.

- 1 It rained for three days without stopping.
- 2 I fell asleep during the movie.
- 3 I went to the theatre last night. I met Sue during the interval.
- 4 Martin hasn't lived in Britain all his life. He lived in Brazil for four years.
- 5 Production at the factory was seriously affected during the strike.
- 6 I felt really ill last week. I could hardly eat anything during three days.
- 7 I waited for you for half an hour and decided that you weren't coming.
- 8 Sarah was very angry with me. She didn't speak to me for a week.
- 9 We usually go out at weekends, but we don't go out during the week very often.
- 10 Jack started a new job a few weeks ago. Before that he was out of work for six months.
- 11 I need a break. I think I'll go away for a few days.
- 12 The president gave a long speech. She spoke during two hours.
- 13 We were hungry when we arrived. We hadn't had anything to eat during the journey.
- 14 We were hungry when we arrived. We hadn't had anything to eat during eight hours.

119.2 Put in **during** or **while**.

- 1 We met a lot of interesting people while we were on holiday.
- 2 We met a lot of interesting people during our holiday.
- 3 I met Mike while I was shopping.
- 4 While I was on holiday, I didn't read any newspapers or watch TV.
- 5 During our stay in Paris, we went to a lot of museums and galleries.
- 6 My phone rang while we were having dinner.
- 7 There was a lot of noise during the night. What was it?
- 8 I'd been away for many years. While that time, many things had changed.
- 9 What did they say about me while I was out of the room?
- 10 I went out for dinner last night. Unfortunately I began to feel ill during the meal and had to go home.
- 11 Please don't interrupt me while I'm speaking.
- 12 There were many interruptions during the president's speech.
- 13 Can you hold my bag while I try on this jacket?
- 14 We were hungry when we arrived. We hadn't had anything to eat during we were travelling.

119.3 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences.

- 1 I fell asleep while I was watching TV.
- 2 I fell asleep during the movie.
- 3 Nobody came to see me while I was sleeping.
- 4 Can you wait for me while I change my clothes.
- 5 Most of the students looked bored during the lesson.
- 6 I was asked a lot of questions during the interview.
- 7 Don't open the car door while I'm driving.
- 8 The lights suddenly went out while I was reading.
- 9 It started to rain during the match.
- 10 It started to rain while I was walking home.
- 11 What are you going to do while I'm away.