

PRESENT PERFECT vs. PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS (U.S. English)

PRESENT PERFECT

Use "have/has" + past participle

Emphasizes result of the action

- *I have walked two miles (and now I'm here).
- *She has read that book (and will return it to the library).
- *We have cleaned the kitchen (and now we're going to bed).

With the verbs "live," "work," and "study," sentences in the Present Perfect and sentences in the Present Perfect Continuous mean the same thing:

I have lived in the U.S. for 4 years =
I have been living in the U.S. for 4 years.
Both are correct and they mean the same thing.

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

Use "have/has" + "been" + "ing" form of verb

Emphasizes the duration of the action

- *I have been walking for two hours.
- *She has been reading all night.
- *We have been cleaning the kitchen since this morning.

NOTE: The Present Perfect Continuous *cannot be used* with many stative verbs (verbs that express a state or condition rather than an action):

~~I have been knowing you for 6 months.~~
~~He has been liking pizza all his life.~~

Practice: Choose the correct option.

1. I'm sorry I'm late! How long _____ for me?
2. They _____ the food so now we can start cooking it.
3. The repairman _____ the TV in time for us to watch the World Cup!
4. We _____ for hours and we're still not there!
5. He _____ in 3 movies so far; this will be his fourth.
6. I _____ to California. Please come visit me here!
7. This is my sister's new car. She _____ it for only 2 days.
8. You _____ video games all day. Go outside and play!
9. My son is sick. I _____ him to the doctor twice already.
10. He _____ this medicine for 3 days but is still not better.
11. Melissa _____ a new dress for the party; here it is.
12. His phone _____ for ten minutes; why doesn't he answer it?
13. I _____ the cake in the oven; it will be ready in 45 minutes.
14. Have you seen my keys anywhere? I _____ for them for hours!
15. There you are! I _____ you for a long time.
16. It _____ all week; when will the sun come out?
17. You stayed up all night?! What _____?
18. We _____ 6 U.S. cities since we moved here.
19. You _____ for months. You must be ready to come home.