

53 Present perfect with *for*, *since*, etc.



1 *for/since*

We use the present perfect with *for* or *since* to talk about situations that started in the past and continue now:



For and *since* both answer the question *How long?*

'How long have you worked here?' '*For* five years.'

'How long have you known Sami?' '*Since* 2000.'

Use <i>for</i> + a period of time	five minutes, an hour, two weeks, for years, a long time, etc.	Sami's been my best friend <i>for</i> <i>many years</i> .
Use <i>since</i> + an exact time, day, date or event	five o'clock, Monday, March, he left school	Sami's been my best friend <i>since</i> 2000. Sami's been my best friend <i>since</i> we started school.

! X ~~I know Alan for thirty years.~~ ✓ I've known Alan for thirty years.

2 *this morning, this week, etc.*

We use the present perfect with time expressions (e.g. *today, this morning, this week, this year*) when the time is still continuing:

Have you seen Jan this morning? (It is still morning.)

I've worked forty hours this week. (The week has not finished.)

Compare the present perfect and past simple

- present perfect:
I've made several phone calls this morning. (It is still morning.)
- past simple:
I made several phone calls this morning.
(It is now afternoon/evening – the morning has finished.)

! After *when* or *what time* in questions, we use the past simple not the present perfect:

X ~~When have you bought your car?~~ ✓ *When did you buy your car?*

X ~~What time have you arrived?~~ ✓ *What time did you arrive?*

Practice

1 Write *for* or *since* below.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 0 <i>for</i> about 200 years | 4 one year |
| 00 <i>since</i> 1810 | 5 July |
| 1 1987 | 6 I was eighteen |
| 2 ten minutes | 7 nearly three months |
| 3 quarter past three | 8 about twenty-five years |

2 Complete each sentence in two ways. Use the phrases from Exercise 1.

- 0 They built that school a long time ago.
It's been there *for about 200 years* / *since 1810*.
- 1 It's 3.25 and I've been at the dentist's /
- 2 My parents have been married /
- 3 I'm nineteen. I started college when I was eighteen.
I've been at college /
- 4 It's October and the weather has been lovely /

3 Match the two parts of the sentences.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 0 I haven't heard from my sister this | A we had that meal at the airport. |
| 1 This film's so long! It's already lasted for | B my holiday – two weeks by the beach! |
| 2 We haven't felt very well since | C two hours and there's still another hour to go. |
| 3 I haven't seen my parents for | D morning and I haven't finished the report. |
| 4 I'm really sorry but I've been very busy this | E week, but she usually phones on Fridays. |
| 5 I've felt more relaxed since | F two months because they live abroad now. |

4 **GRAMMAR IN USE** For 1–6, write the present perfect or the past simple of the verbs in brackets (). For A–D, write *for*, *since* or *How long*.

- DOCTOR (0) ...*How long*... have you had this cold?
- PATIENT Well, I (00) ...*'ve had*... (have) it for nearly two weeks, but I've had a cough for longer.
- DOCTOR How long have you had that?
- PATIENT I've had it (A) October, so more than a month. The thing is,
I (1) (have) about five colds (B) the spring.
- DOCTOR That is a lot. (2) (you / have) a lot of colds last year, too?
- PATIENT No, not really. I think I (3) (have) only two all last year.
- DOCTOR Mmm, (4) (you / change) anything about your life this year?
- PATIENT Well, yes, my job. I work in a gym now. I'm a fitness trainer.
- DOCTOR I see. (C) have you worked there?
- PATIENT I (5) (start) the job in March, so I've been there (D)
eight months. We've had a few customers with colds I suppose ...
- DOCTOR I see. And what was your job before?
- PATIENT I was a gardener. I worked by myself.
- DOCTOR Well, that's it. You (6) (spend) a lot of time close to people with colds, and you've caught their colds. Now, I think you should ...