

55 Present perfect continuous



1 Form

| SUBJECT | POSITIVE | + been + -ing verb | NEGATIVE | + been + -ing verb |
|---------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| I/We/You/They | have ('ve) | | have not (haven't) | |
| He/She/It | has ('s) | been waiting | has not (hasn't) | been waiting. |

| QUESTIONS | | | SHORT ANSWERS |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|--|
| Have | I/we/you/they | | Yes, I/we/you/they have. No, I/we/you/they haven't. |
| Has | he/she/it | been waiting? | Yes, he/she/it has. No, he/she/it hasn't. |

We form the present perfect continuous with *have + been + the -ing form of the verb*.

2 Use

We use the present perfect continuous to talk about an action or situation that started in the past and is still happening now. We often use *for* and *since* with the present perfect continuous:

I've been waiting in this queue for three hours!

It is different from the present perfect because we usually use the continuous for a temporary action or situation, not for a situation that we think is permanent.

Compare:

present continuous → present perfect continuous (temporary)

I'm training for the race. I've been training for it for six months.

Are you waiting for the bus? Yes. I've been waiting for it for an hour/since three o'clock.

present simple → present perfect (permanent)

I live in Istanbul. I've lived there for twenty years.

'Do you know Alan?' 'Yes, I've known him all my life.'

We often use the present perfect continuous to explain a present situation:

'They look tired.' 'Well, they've been running for more than two hours.'

'Your Spanish is good.' 'Thanks, I've been studying it for two years now.'

! *X I live here for five months. ✓ I've been living here for five months.*

Practice

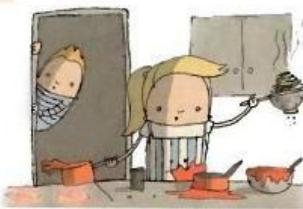
1 Use the words below to write sentences. Use the present perfect continuous and short forms.

- 0 I / drive / for three hours
- 1 We / wait / since two o'clock
- 2 Carola / not / sleep / well
- 3 you / revise / for your exam ?
- 4 They / build / a new gym
- 5 How long / he / work there ?
- 6 You / not / listen / to me !

I've been driving for three hours.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2 Look at the pictures. Complete the conversations with verbs from the box. Use short forms.

cook shop talk travel wait work



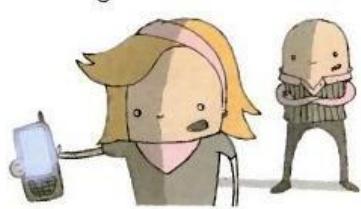
- 0 'We haven't seen Michael for some time.'
'No, he *'s been travelling..*'



- 1 'The kitchen's a bit untidy!'
'Mmm, I all afternoon.'



- 2 'You look really tired.'
'I all night.'



- 3 'The buses are terrible these days, aren't they?'
'Yes, I for forty minutes.'

- 4 'Can I have some money for the cinema?'
'Sorry, I I haven't got any!'

- 5 'You've been on the phone for hours!'
'I to my friends.'

3 Write sentences about the situations. Use the present perfect continuous and *for/since*.

- 0 They started playing tennis at two o'clock.
It's now five-thirty and they're still playing the same game! (since)
They've been playing the same game of tennis since two o'clock!
.....
- 1 I started learning Chinese when I was fifteen. Now I'm seventeen. (for)
.....
- 2 Our friends came to stay with us on Sunday, and they're still here. (since)
.....
- 3 It started raining yesterday afternoon and it still hasn't stopped. (since)
.....
- 4 Graham started looking for a new job six months ago. He still hasn't found one. (for)
.....