

Present perfect continuous (I have been doing)

A

It has been raining

Study this example situation:



Is it raining?

No, but the ground is wet.

It has been raining.

Have/has been -ing is the *present perfect continuous*:

I/we/they/you	have	(= I've etc.)	been	doing waiting playing etc.
he/she/it	has	(= he's etc.)		

We use the present perfect continuous for an activity that has recently stopped or just stopped.

There is a connection with *now*:

- ☐ You're out of breath. **Have you been running?** (= you're out of breath *now*)
- ☐ Paul is very tired. **He's been working** very hard. (= he's tired *now*)
- ☐ Why are your clothes so dirty? What **have you been doing?**
- ☐ **I've been talking** to Amanda about the problem and she agrees with me.
- ☐ Where have you been? **I've been looking** for you everywhere.

B

It has been raining for two hours.

Study this example situation:



It began raining two hours ago and it is still raining.

How long **has it been raining?**It **has been raining** for two hours.We use the present perfect continuous in this way especially with **how long**, **for ...** and **since ...**. The activity is still happening (as in this example) or has just stopped.

- ☐ **How long have you been learning** English? (= you're still learning English)
- ☐ Tim is still watching TV. **He's been watching** TV all day.
- ☐ Where have you been? **I've been looking** for you **for the last half hour**.
- ☐ Chris **hasn't been feeling** well **recently**.

You can use the present perfect continuous for actions repeated over a period of time:

- ☐ Silvia is a very good tennis player. **She's been playing** **since she was eight**.
- ☐ Every morning they meet in the same cafe. **They've been going** there **for years**.

C

Compare **I am doing** (see Unit 1) and **I have been doing**:

I
am doing
present continuous

now

- ☐ Don't disturb me now. **I'm working**.
- ☐ We need an umbrella. **It's raining**.
- ☐ Hurry up! **We're waiting**.

I
have been doing
present perfect continuous

now

- ☐ **I've been working** hard. Now I'm going to have a break.
- ☐ The ground is wet. **It's been raining**.
- ☐ **We've been waiting** for an hour.

Exercises

Unit
9

9.1 What have these people been doing or what has been happening?

1 earlier  now  They 've been shopping.	2 earlier  now  She
3 earlier  now  They	4 earlier  now  He

9.2 Write a question for each situation.

- You meet Paul as he is leaving the swimming pool.
You ask: (you / swim?) Have you been swimming?
- You have just arrived to meet a friend who is waiting for you.
You ask: (you / wait / long?) How long have you been waiting?
- You meet a friend in the street. His face and hands are very dirty.
You ask: (what / you / do?) What have you been doing?
- A friend of yours is now working in a shop. You want to know how long.
You ask: (how long / you / work / there?) How long have you been working there?
- A friend tells you about his job – he sells mobile phones. You want to know how long.
You ask: (how long / you / sell / mobile phones?) How long have you been selling mobile phones?

9.3 Read the situations and complete the sentences.

- It's raining. The rain started two hours ago.
It 's been raining for two hours.
- We are waiting for the bus. We started waiting 20 minutes ago.
We have been waiting for 20 minutes.
- I'm learning Spanish. I started classes in December.
I have been learning since December.
- Jessica is working in a supermarket. She started working there on 18 January.
She has been working since 18 January.
- Our friends always spend their holidays in Italy. They started going there years ago.
They have been going for years.

9.4 Put the verb into the present continuous (I am -ing) or present perfect continuous (I have been -ing).

- Maria has been learning (Maria / learn) English for two years.
- Hello, Tom. have you been looking (I / look) for you. Where have you been?
- Why do you look (you / look) at me like that? Stop it!
- Linda is a teacher. has she been teaching (she / teach) for ten years.
- have you been thinking (I / think) about what you said and I've decided to take your advice.
- 'Is Paul on holiday this week?' 'No, is he working (he / work).'
- Sarah is very tired. has she been working (she / work) very hard recently.