

PRESENT PERFECT X PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

WHEN DO WE USE THE PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS?

We use the **Present Perfect Continuous** to talk about something that started in the past and continues to the present moment, usually with a duration of time.

STRUCTURE:

Subject + has/have + been + present participle (-ING form of the verb)

- Most non-action verbs are not used in any continuous tense, which includes the present perfect continuous tense. (ex: know, hear, believe, cost)

HOW TO MAKE SENTENCES AND QUESTIONS IN THE "PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS"

AFFIRMATIVE SENTENCES:

Subject + has/have + been + gerund

Ex. We have (We've) been waiting in this line for over an hour.

Ex. We have been living here for over 10 years.

Ex. Kevin and I have been working for this company since 2005.

Ex. Maggie has been working all day.

NEGATIVE SENTENCES:

Subject + has/have + not + been + gerund

Ex. Sally has not (hasn't) been feeling well this whole week.

Ex. We haven't been feeling well since Monday.

Ex. I haven't been studying very much.

Ex. My computer hasn't been working all week.

*has + not = hasn't

*have + not = haven't

INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES (QUESTIONS):

Have/Has + subject + been + gerund...?

Ex. How long has the baby been sleeping?

Ex. How long have you been waiting in this line?

Ex. Has the baby been sleeping all this time?

Ex. How long have the neighbors been arguing like this?

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PRESENT PERFECT VS. PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS:

SOMETIMES THEY HAVE THE SAME MEANINGS

EXAMPLES:

1. Robert has worked for this company since he was 18 years old. (present perfect) = Robert has been working for this company since he was 18 years old. (present perfect continuous)
2. Gabriel has played soccer his entire life. (present perfect) = Gabriel has been playing soccer his entire life. (present perfect continuous)
3. I've studied English for 5 years. (present perfect) = I've been studying English for 5 years. (present perfect continuous)
4. I've lived in Brazil for 8 years. (present perfect) = I've been living in Brazil for 8 years. (present perfect continuous)
5. Will has gone to school ever since he was 5 years old. (present perfect) = Will has been going to school ever since he was 5 years old. (present perfect continuous)
6. I've worn glasses nearly my whole life. (present perfect) = I've been wearing glasses nearly my whole life. (present perfect continuous)

SOMETIMES THEY HAVE DIFFERENT MEANINGS

EXAMPLES:

1. I have (I've) talked to my mom several times this week. (present perfect – I'm not talking at the moment)
We have (We've) been talking on the phone for over 2 hours. (present perfect continuous – I'm still talking to my mom at the present moment)
2. The boys have played video games before. (present perfect – They are not playing at the moment, but they have played before)
The boys have been playing video games all day. (present perfect continuous – They are still playing)
3. The students have taken 5 tests so far this year. (present perfect – They are not taking a test right now)
The students have been taking a test for over an hour. (present perfect continuous – They started over an hour ago and are still taking the test)

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4. We've watched this show before. (present perfect – We watched this show in the past)
We've been watching this show all day. (present perfect continuous – We are still watching the show)

5. I've worked for this company for nearly 15 years. (present perfect – I started 15 years ago and I still work for this company)
I've been working all day. I'm really tired. (present perfect continuous – I've been actively working all day and I'm still working)

REVIEW:

We use the **Present Perfect Continuous** to talk about something that started in the past and continuous to the present moment, usually with a duration of time.

Question:

What have you been doing for the past 15 minutes?

• Possible answers: I have been studying English. / I've been watching this video. / I've been learning about the present perfect continuous tense.

Remember: Most non-action verbs are not used in any continuous tense, which includes the present perfect continuous tense. (ex: know, hear, believe, cost)

Examples:

1. I've known Mary for 3 years.

~~I've been knowing Mary for 3 years.~~

"Know" is a non-action verb, so you can't say "knowing")

* Another possibility is to say: "I am getting to know Mary" if you are in the process of figuring out who she is, etc.

2. I've had a cold for the past two weeks.

~~I've been having a cold for the past two weeks.~~

"Have" is a non-action verb when used to describe possession

* You can say: "I've been having a great time this entire trip." (In this example, "have" is being used to describe a condition)

3. I've always believed in you.

~~I've always been believing.~~

"Believe" is a non-action verb, you can't say "believing"

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EXERCÍCIOS

Create questions with the verbs in parenthesis.
Have you ever (past participle)...?

1. (fall) down the stairs
2. (lose) your ID
3. (ride) a camel
4. (take) a French class
5. (write) a poem
6. (win) a bet
7. (sit) in/on gum
8. (have) a nightmare
9. (break) your leg
10. (have) a mustache or beard

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■ ANSWERS

1. Have you ever fallen down the stairs?
2. Have you ever lost your ID?
3. Have you ever ridden a camel?
4. Have you ever taken a French class?
5. Have you ever written a poem?
6. Have you ever won a bet?
7. Have you ever sat in gum?
8. Have you ever had a nightmare?
9. Have you ever broken your leg?
10. Have you ever had a mustache?

Possible answers to the questions:

1. Yes, I have. I fell down the stairs yesterday.
2. No, I haven't.
3. Yes, I have. I've ridden a camel several times.
4. Yes, I have. I've taken many French classes.
5. Yes, I have. I wrote a poem for my English class last year.
6. No, I haven't. I've lost every bet I made.
7. Yes, I sat in gum yesterday.
8. Yes, I had a nightmare last night.
9. No, I haven't broken any bones.
10. No, I haven't.