

Tikrit University

College of Nursing

Basic Nursing Sciences



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English

(Present Perfect Continuous)

Compiled by:

Asst. Lecturer: Mohanad Ahmed Jasim

Present Perfect Continuous

The Present Perfect Continuous tense uses **two** auxiliary verbs together with a main verb.

In this lesson we look at the **structure** and **use** of the Present Perfect Continuous tense, as well as the use of **for** and **since**, followed by a **quiz** to check your understanding.

Note that **continuous** tenses are also called **progressive** tenses. So the Present Perfect Continuous tense is sometimes called the Present Perfect Progressive tense.

How do we make the Present Perfect Continuous tense?

The structure of the Present Perfect Continuous tense is:

Subject +	auxiliary <i>have</i>	+	auxiliary <i>be</i>	+ main verb
	conjugated in Present Simple		past participle	
	have, has		been	present participle

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE

We have been singing.

subject

auxiliary

have (in present tense)

auxiliary

be (past participle V3)

main verb

sing (present participle *-ing*)

The first auxiliary (have) is conjugated in the Present Simple: *have, has*

The second auxiliary (be) is invariable in past participle form: *been*

The main verb is invariable in present participle form: *-ing*

For negative sentences we insert **not** after the first auxiliary verb.

For question sentences, we **exchange** the subject and first auxiliary verb.

Look at these example sentences with the Present Perfect Continuous tense:

	subject	auxiliary verb	auxiliary verb	main verb	
+	I	Have	Been	waiting	for one hour.
+	You	have	Been	talking	too much.
-	It	has	not Been	raining.	
-	We	have	not Been	playing	football.
?	Have you		Been	seeing	her?

subject	auxiliary verb	auxiliary verb	main verb	
? Have	they	Been	doing	their homework?

Contraction with Present Perfect Continuous

When we use the Present Perfect Continuous tense in speaking, we often contract the subject and the first auxiliary verb. We also sometimes do this in informal writing.

I have been	I've been
You have been	You've been
He has been	He's been
She has been	She's been
It has been	It's been
John has been	John's been
The car has been	The car's been
We have been	We've been
They have been	They've been

- I've been reading.
- Ali's been helping us recently.

In negative sentences, we may contract the first auxiliary verb and "not":

- I haven't been playing tennis.
- It hasn't been snowing.

How do we use the Present Perfect Continuous tense?

This tense is called the **Present** Perfect Continuous tense. There is usually a connection with the **present** or now.

We use the Present Perfect Continuous to talk about:

- past action recently-stopped
- past action still-continuing

Present Perfect Continuous for past action just stopped

We use the Present Perfect Continuous tense to talk about **action** that started in the past and stopped recently. There is usually a result **now**.

I'm tired because I've **been running**.

past

Present

Future

!!!

Recent action

Result now

- I'm tired ^[now] because I've **been running**.
- Why is the grass wet ^[now]? **Has it been raining?**
- You don't understand ^[now] because you **haven't been listening**.

Present Perfect Continuous for past action continuing now

We use the Present Perfect Continuous tense to talk about **action** that started in the past and is continuing **now**. This is often used with **for** or **since**.

I **have been reading** for 2 hours.

past

Present

Future

Action started in past.

Action is continuing now.

- I **have been reading for** 2 hours. (I am still reading now.)
- We've **been studying since** 9 o'clock. (We're still studying now.)
- How long **have you been learning** English? (You are still learning now.)
- We **have not been smoking**. (And we are not smoking now.)

For and Since with Present Perfect Continuous tense

We often use **for** and **since** with perfect tenses:

- We use **for** to talk about a **period** of time: *three hours, two months, one decade*
- We use **since** to talk about a **point** in past time: *9 o'clock, 1st January, Monday*

For a period of time -----	Since a point in past time - • -----
30 minutes	10.00am
four days	Friday
3 months	March
2 years	2010
3 centuries	1700
ages	I left school
ever	the beginning of time
etc	Etc

Look at these example sentences using *for* and *since* with the Present Perfect Continuous tense:

- I have been studying **for** three hours.
- I have been watching TV **since** 7pm.
- Tara hasn't been feeling well **for** two weeks.
- Tara hasn't been visiting us **since** March.
- He has been playing football **for** a long time.
- He has been living in Baghdad **since** he left school.