

English Grammar

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS



The present perfect continuous (also known as the present perfect progressive) is **have/has + been +** the continuous tense of a verb.

(Continuous tense is *verb ~ing*.) This verb tense has a connection to events happening now.



The **PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS** is **have/has + *been* + the continuous tense of a verb.**

We use it to talk about an activity that has stopped recently.

I **have *been* looking** for a new English teacher since October. I finally found one. = *The act of looking has just stopped. A new teacher has been found.*

There is some connection to the present moment. (Now)

I'**ve *been* studying** all night. I need a break! = *I was studying until just now. I will continue studying after I take a break.*

What **have** you ***been* doing**? = *What have you done recently? What are you continuing to do?*



PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

For anyone who has read my PRESENT PERFECT tense blog post, you know that I try to make grammar more interesting by using lots of helpful examples. (See that post [HERE](#))

As we practice the present perfect continuous grammar in this post, my goal for you is the same. Learn the rules, understand the rules and then see the grammar used in many natural situations.

Present perfect continuous EXAMPLE sentences

My brother works at the movie theater so I get free tickets sometimes.
He **has been working** there for 2 years.



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I **have been training** in Jiu-jitsu since I was 22.

*Both of these examples talk about an activity that is still happening. My brother still works at the movie theater and I still train in Jiu-Jitsu.



PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS



It is 12:00 pm ~ It's *been raining* all morning. The soccer field must be very wet. I hope our game isn't cancelled.

*The activity (raining) has recently finished in this example. It's not raining now but **the fact** that it has been raining **has an effect on now**. The soccer field is wet.

More examples

They **have been renovating** the school beside my apartment **for** 5 months. I hope they finish soon, it's very noisy!

**They started the renovations 5 months ago and it hasn't finished yet. It still continues.* (renovations is the noun form of the verb *renovate*)

Have you *been watching* the baseball playoffs?



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Heather **has been telling** everyone at work about her new car.

Getting up early is a great habit. **I've been waking up** at 5:00 AM since November and I love it. I get a lot of work done before most people are even awake!



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Reid bought a nice bicycle last month. He **has been riding** it to work every day and he has lost 3 kilograms!

Present perfect continuous with adverbs of time



The present perfect continuous references how long an activity has been happening. We often use it with adverbs and expressions like:

often – long – much – for – since – all day/morning/afternoon/night

Like in our first 2 examples.

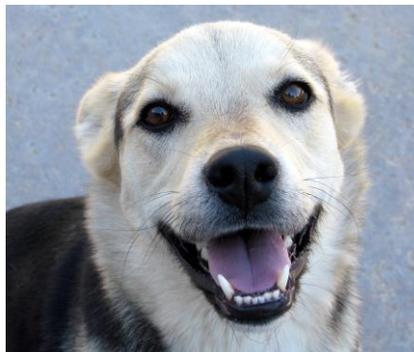
He *has been working* there **for** 2 years.

I have been training in Jiu-Jitsu **since** I was 22.

More examples:

I feel like *I've been working* at this company **forever!**

That dog *has been standing* outside the window **all morning.**



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You've *been driving* **all afternoon**. Let's pull over so you can take a break.

And in negative forms like:

I want to go skiing this weekend but it **hasn't *been snowing much*** this winter. There is not enough snow on the mountains. (Now)

More negative examples

The negative form will use **haven't** and **hasn't** been.

Lisa: Hi Jeff, sorry I'm late. Thanks for waiting.
Jeff: It's okay, I **haven't *been waiting*** long.

"I **haven't *been working*** out very often this year. Time to get back to the gym!"

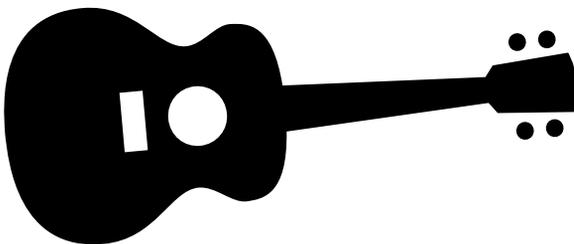
PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

A: "Terry is a good guitar player."

B: "He has natural talent. He sounds like a pro already and he **hasn't** even *been playing* very long." (Learn how to use the adverb **EVEN** here.)



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Compare the Present perfect tense and Present perfect continuous

The present perfect tense uses the past participle verb tense to talk about a finished action. The present perfect continuous talks about an activity that recently stopped or still continues. Let's compare two example sentences.

Present perfect

The accident **has made** everyone more careful when crossing the street. (MADE is the past participle of the verb TO MAKE) – An accident happened and it has caused people to be more careful. It had an effect on people.

[The accident is over now, it does not continue.]

Present perfect continuous

After the accident, the city put a big sign at the intersection. The sign **has been making** people more careful. – The sign is causing people to be more careful. It is still having an effect on people.

[The sign continues to be seen by people. It continues to have an effect on people.]

*The first example is from my [present perfect](#) post.



Interrogative (Questions)

How long **has** your brother *been working* at the movie theater?

How long **have** you *been training* Jiu-Jitsu?

These 2 questions are asking about an amount of time.

Wow Alex you look great! **Have** you *been working out*?

This question doesn't ask about an amount of time. It asks if Alex **has been doing** something recently that still continues.



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Examples from the



English
Grammar

PRESENT PERFECT
CONTINUOUS

We **have been hearing** a lot about the Coronavirus this year. (Jan. 2020)
[The world is getting lots of news about the spread of this virus. At the time I wrote this post we are continuing to get more news updates.]

Japan's immigration workers **have been screening** visitors who have Wuhan China at the airport since last week. [Immigration staff started screening passengers last week, and this action continues until now. *The time of writing this post.]

screening [noun] the testing or examining of a large number of people or things for disease, faults, etc.

Eric's friend lives in China. He **has been trying** to contact him all day but he can't get through.



Contractions of **have**, **has** and **is**

In spoken English we use contractions a lot! You will hear these contractions used very often in natural conversation.

Contractions of **have** and **has**

HAVE

I have *becomes* **I've**

We have *becomes* **We've**

They have *becomes* **They've**

HAS

He has *becomes* **He's**

She has *becomes* **She's**

It has *becomes* **It's**

In English the contractions for **HE HAS** and **HE IS** are the same.

IS

He is *becomes* **He's**

She is *becomes* **She's**

It is *becomes* **It's**



How do I know if a contraction is **HAS** or **IS**?



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In English the contractions for HE HAS and HE IS are the same. Here is an easy way to tell if the contraction is for HAS or IS. Please look at the following example.

A: “How is your brother?”

B: “**He’s** busy. **He’s** been working hard all week.”

= He **is** busy. He **has** been working hard all week.

IS contraction

In English, adjectives are followed by a form of the verb **TO BE**.

My sister's tall. (My sister is tall.)

*From our example sentence the word *busy* is an **adjective** so we know it follows a form of the verb **TO BE**. The contraction must be **IS**.

Present continuous tense verbs (verbs that end in ~ing) will also follow a form of the verb **TO BE**.

My sister's riding the bus right now. (My sister is riding the bus right now.)



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HAS contraction

The verb **HAS** will be followed by the *PAST PARTICIPLE* form of a verb when it is used with the *perfect tense*.

My sister's *BEEN* studying English since Jr. Highschool. (My sister **has** been studying English since Jr. Highschool.)

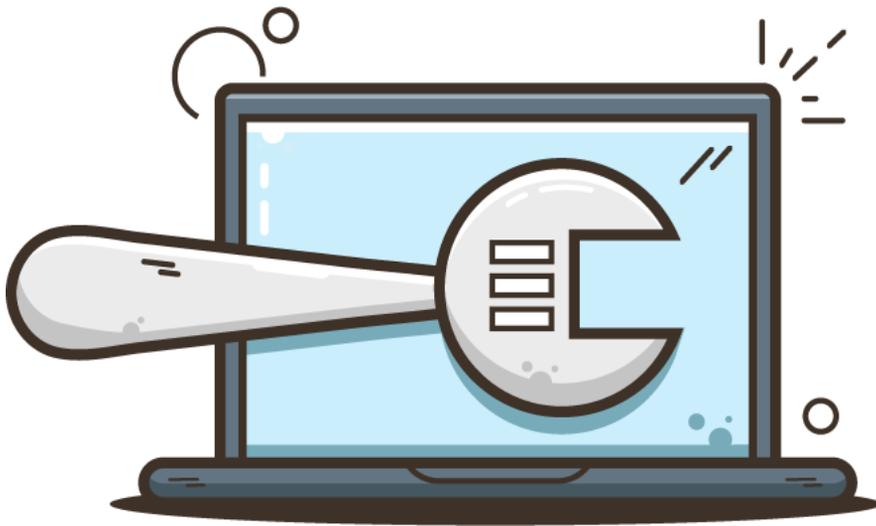
From our example sentence, the word *been* is the **past participle** of the verb *TO BE*. We know that for the perfect tense the past participle is followed by **have** or **has**. The contraction must be **HAS** in this sentence.

I haven't seen the movie yet but my sister's *SEEN* it and she said it was good. (I haven't seen the movie yet but my sister **has** seen it and she said it was good.)

Again, the past participle *SEEN* follows the contraction 's, so we know it must be **HAS**.



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