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.

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?*

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.*
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.

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.*
I hope our game won’t be canceled today. It’s been raining all week so the field must be very wet.

*The activity (raining) has recently finished in this example. It’s not raining now but the fact that it has been raining a lot this week has an effect on the condition of the field now. It 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?

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!

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
- recently
- forever
- 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.
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!”
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.)
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.

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA
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.
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**?

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.)
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.
Thank you for reading this PDF. I hope it was helpful for you!

Find even more great English tools the next page!
PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

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