



Tikrit University

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English Department

Subject : Grammar

{First and Third Year}

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Present Perfect Continuous Tense

The Present Perfect Continuous 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

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

- I've been reading.
- Jenny'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.)