

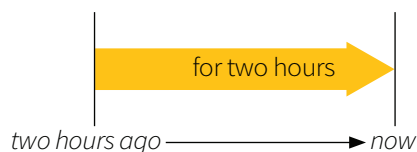
for and since when ... ? and how long ... ?

A

We use **for** and **since** to say how long something has been happening.

We use **for** + a period of time:

- ☐ We've been waiting **for two hours**.



for		
two hours	a long time	a week
20 minutes	six months	ages
five days	50 years	years

- ☐ Sally has been working here **for six months**. (*not since six months*)
- ☐ I haven't seen Tom **for three days**.

We use **since** + the start of a period:

- ☐ We've been waiting **since 8 o'clock**.



since		
8 o'clock	April	lunchtime
Monday	2001	we arrived
12 May	Christmas	I got up

- ☐ Sally has been working here **since April**. (= from April until now)
- ☐ I haven't seen Tom **since Monday**.

B

We often leave out **for** (but not usually in negative sentences):

- ☐ They've been married **for ten years**. or They've been married **ten years**.
- ☐ They **haven't had** a holiday **for** ten years. (you need **for**)

You can use **in** instead of **for** in negative sentences (**I haven't ...** etc.):

- ☐ They **haven't had** a holiday **in ten years**. (= **for** ten years)

We do *not* use **for** + **all ...** (**all day** / **all my life** etc.):

- ☐ I've lived here **all my life**. (*not for all my life*)

C

Compare **when ... ?** (+ *past simple*) and **how long ... ?** (+ *present perfect*):



A: **When** did it start raining?

B: It started raining **an hour ago** / **at 1 o'clock**.

A: **How long** has it been raining?

B: It's been raining **for an hour** / **since 1 o'clock**.



A: **When** did Joe and Kate first meet?

B: They first met { **a long time ago**.
when they were at school.

A: **How long** have they known each other?

B: They've known each other { **for a long time**.
since they were at school.

D

We say:

it's (= it is)	a long time	since something happened
or it's been (= it has been)	six months (<i>etc.</i>)	

- ☐ **It's two years since** I last saw Joe. or **It's been two years since ...**
(= I **haven't seen** Joe for two years)
- ☐ **It's ages since** we went to the cinema. or **It's been ages since ...**
(= We **haven't been** to the cinema for ages)
- ☐ **How long is it since** Mrs Hill died? or **How long has it been since ...**
(= when did she die?)

Present perfect and past 1 (**I have done** and **I did**)

A Study this example situation:



Tom is looking for his key. He can't find it.
He **has lost** his key. (*present perfect*)
This means that he doesn't have his key *now*.

Ten minutes later:



Now Tom **has found** his key. He has it now.
Has he **lost** his key? No, he **has found** it.
Did he **lose** his key? Yes, he **did**.
He **lost** his key (*past simple*)
but now he **has found** it. (*present perfect*)

The *present perfect* (something **has happened**) is a *present* tense. It tells us about the situation *now*.
'Tom **has lost** his key' = he doesn't have his key *now* (see Unit 7).

The *past simple* (something **happened**) tells us only about the *past*. If somebody says 'Tom **lost** his key', we don't know whether he has the key now or not. We know only that he lost it at some time in the past.

Compare *present perfect* and *past simple*:

- ☐ They **ve gone** away. They'll be back on Friday. (they are away *now*)
- ☐ They **went** away, but I think they're back at home now. (*not* They've gone away)
- ☐ It **has stopped** raining now, so we don't need the umbrella. (it isn't raining *now*)
- ☐ It **stopped** raining for a while, but now it's raining again. (*not* It has stopped)

B You can use the present perfect for new or recent happenings:

- ☐ I **ve repaired** the washing machine. It's working OK now.
- ☐ 'Hannah **has had** a baby! It's a boy.' 'That's great news.'

Usually, you can also use the past simple:

- ☐ I **repaired** the washing machine. It's working OK now.

Use the past simple (*not* the present perfect) for things that are not recent or new:

- ☐ Mozart **was** a composer. He **wrote** more than 600 pieces of music.
(*not* has been ... has written)
- ☐ My mother **grew** up in Italy. (*not* has grown)

Compare:

Somebody **has invented** a new type of washing machine.
Who **invented** the telephone? (*not* has invented)

C We use the present perfect to give new information (see Unit 7). But if we continue to talk about it, we normally use the past simple:

- ☐ A: Ow! I **ve burnt** myself.
B: How **did** you **do** that? (*not* have you done)
A: I **picked** up a hot dish. (*not* have picked)
- ☐ A: Look! Somebody **has spilt** something on the sofa.
B: Well, it **wasn't** me. I **didn't do** it. (*not* hasn't been ... haven't done)

Present perfect and past 2 (**I have done** and **I did**)

A

We do not use the present perfect (**I have done**) when we talk about a *finished* time (for example, **yesterday** / **last year** / **ten minutes ago** etc.). We use a past tense:

- ☐ It **was** very cold **yesterday**. (*not* has been)
- ☐ Paul and Lucy **arrived ten minutes ago**. (*not* have arrived)
- ☐ **Did** you **eat** a lot of sweets **when you were a child**? (*not* have you eaten)
- ☐ I **got** home late **last night**. I **was** very tired and **went** straight to bed.

Use the past to ask **When ... ?** or **What time ... ?**:

- ☐ **When did** your friends **arrive**? (*not* have ... arrived)
- ☐ **What time did** you **finish** work?

Compare:

Present perfect

- ☐ Tom **has lost** his key. He can't get into the house.
- ☐ Is Carla here or **has** she **left**?

Past simple

- ☐ Tom **lost** his key **yesterday**. He couldn't get into the house.
- ☐ **When did** Carla **leave**?

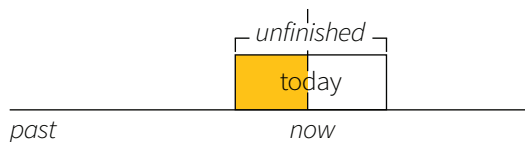
B

Compare:

Present perfect (**have done**)

- ☐ I've **done** a lot of work **today**.

We use the present perfect for a period of time that continues *until now*. For example:
today / **this week** / **since 2010**.

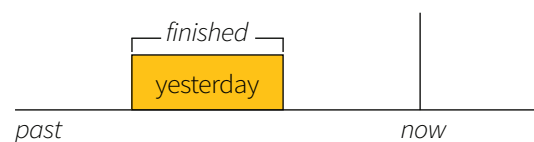


- ☐ It **hasn't** rained **this week**.
- ☐ **Have** you **seen** Anna **this morning**? (it is still morning now)
- ☐ **Have** you **seen** Ben **recently**? (in the last few days or weeks)
- ☐ I've **been working** here **since 2010**. (I still work here now)
- ☐ I don't know where Lisa is. I **haven't seen** her. (= I haven't seen her recently)
- ☐ We've **been waiting** for an hour. (we are still waiting now)
- ☐ Jack lives in Los Angeles. He **has lived** there for seven years.
- ☐ I've **never ridden** a horse. (in my life)
- ☐ It's the last day of your holiday. You say: It's **been** a really good holiday. I've really **enjoyed** it.

Past simple (**did**)

- ☐ I **did** a lot of work **yesterday**.

We use the past simple for a *finished* time in the past. For example:
yesterday / **last week** / **from 2010 to 2014**.



- ☐ It **didn't** rain **last week**.
- ☐ **Did** you **see** Anna **this morning**? (it is now afternoon or evening)
- ☐ **Did** you **see** Ben **on Sunday**?
- ☐ I **worked** here **from 2010 to 2014**. (I don't work here now)
- ☐ A: **Was** Lisa at the party **on Sunday**?
B: I don't think so. I **didn't see** her.
- ☐ We **waited** (*or were waiting*) for an hour. (we are no longer waiting)
- ☐ Jack **lived** in New York for ten years. Now he lives in Los Angeles.
- ☐ I **never rode** a bike **when I was a child**.
- ☐ After you come back from holiday you say: It **was** a really good holiday. I really **enjoyed** it.

Past perfect (I had done)

A Study this example situation:



Sarah and Paul went to the same party last week, but they didn't see each other. Paul left the party at 10.30 and Sarah arrived at 11 o'clock.

So when Sarah arrived at the party, Paul wasn't there.

He **had gone** home.

had gone is the *past perfect*:

I/we/they/you
he/she/it

had

(= I'd etc.)
(= he'd etc.)

gone
seen
finished etc.

The past perfect (simple) is **had** + *past participle* (**gone/seen/finished** etc.).

Sometimes we talk about something that happened in the past:

- ☐ Sarah **arrived** at the party.

This is the starting point of the story. Then, if we want to talk about things that happened *before* this time, we use the past perfect (**had** ...):

- ☐ **When Sarah arrived** at the party, Paul **had** already **gone** home.

Some more examples:

- ☐ When we got home last night, we found that somebody **had broken** into the flat.
- ☐ Karen didn't come to the cinema with us. She'd already **seen** the movie.
- ☐ At first I thought I'd **done** the right thing, but I soon realised that I'd **made** a big mistake.
- ☐ The people sitting next to me on the plane were nervous. They **hadn't flown** before.
or They'd never **flown** before.

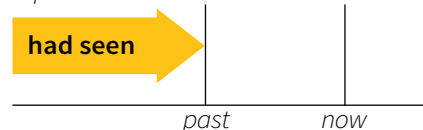
B Compare *present perfect* (**have seen** etc.) and *past perfect* (**had seen** etc.):

Present perfect



- ☐ Who is that woman? I've **seen** her before, but I can't remember where.
- ☐ We aren't hungry. We've just **had** lunch.
- ☐ The house is dirty. They **haven't cleaned** it for weeks.

Past perfect



- ☐ I wasn't sure who she was. I'd **seen** her before, but I couldn't remember where.
- ☐ We weren't hungry. We'd just **had** lunch.
- ☐ The house was dirty. They **hadn't cleaned** it for weeks.

C Compare *past simple* (**left, was** etc.) and *past perfect* (**had left, had been** etc.):

Past simple

- ☐ A: Was Tom there when you arrived?
B: Yes, but he **left** soon afterwards.
- ☐ Kate **wasn't** at home when I phoned.
She **was** at her mother's house.

Past perfect

- ☐ A: Was Tom there when you arrived?
B: No, he'd already **left**.
- ☐ Kate **had** just **got** home when I phoned.
She'd **been** at her mother's house.

Past perfect continuous (I had been doing)

A Study this example situation:

yesterday morning



Yesterday morning I got up and looked out of the window. The sun was shining, but the ground was very wet.

It **had been raining**.

It was *not* raining when I looked out of the window. The sun was shining. But it **had been raining** before.

had been -ing is the *past perfect continuous*:

I/we/you/they
he/she/it

had

 (= I'd etc.)
 (= he'd etc.)

been

 doing
 working
 playing etc.

Some more examples:

- ☐ My hands were dirty because I'd **been repairing** my bike.
- ☐ Tom was tired when he got home. He'd **been working** hard all day.
- ☐ I went to Madrid a few years ago and stayed with a friend of mine. **She hadn't been living** there very long, but she knew the city very well.

You can say that something **had been happening** before something else happened:

- ☐ We'd **been playing** tennis for about half an hour when it **started** to rain heavily.

B Compare **have been -ing** (*present perfect continuous*) and **had been -ing** (*past perfect continuous*):

Present perfect continuous



- ☐ I hope the bus comes soon. I've **been waiting** for 20 minutes. (*before now*)
- ☐ James **is** out of breath. He's **been running**. (= he **has** been ...)

Past perfect continuous



- ☐ At last the bus came. I'd **been waiting** for 20 minutes. (*before the bus came*)
- ☐ James **was** out of breath. He'd **been running**. (= he **had** been ...)

C Compare **was -ing** (*past continuous*) and **had been -ing**:

- ☐ It **wasn't raining** when we went out. The sun **was shining**. But it **had been raining**, so the ground was wet.
- ☐ Katherine **was lying** on the sofa. She was tired because she'd **been working** hard.

D Some verbs (for example, **know**) are not normally used in *continuous* forms (**be + -ing**):

- ☐ We were good friends. We **had known** each other for years. (*not had been knowing*)
- ☐ A few years ago Lisa cut her hair really short. I was surprised because she'd always **had** long hair. (*not she'd been having*)

For a list of these verbs, see **Unit 4A**. For **have**, see **Unit 17**