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The present progressive, present perfect continuous and The present perfect simple.

I-Present progressive/ continuous

The present progressive is used to refer to something temporary which has begun and has not finished; something which is completable and is in the process of being completed. Events can be constant, but they can also be repeated or intermittent. The use of the progressive with acts and events results in stretching out the verbal action.

Form: present tense of 'be' ('m, is, 's or are, 're) + an -ing verb form.

- I'm/am printing my thesis. (affirmative)
- He/ she's/ is singing beautifully. (affirmative)
- Is she following the instructions? (question/ interrogative)
- They are not driving. (negative)

1-States and the progressive

Generally, stative verbs do not occur in the progressive:

- *I am liking the course
- *He was knowing English

There are a few exceptions where stative verbs occur in the progressive. They indicate a type of behaviour with limited duration:

- You are being obstinate
- He is being silly.

Some verbs which are ordinarily stative (verbs expressing emotion or attitude), when used in the progressive, indicate tentativeness:

- I'm hoping to take my exam soon
- I was wondering whether you could help me.

2-Durative situations and the progressive

The use of the progressive with durative (dynamic) verbs which have an end point (decide, write, sew, rain, ripen, ache, etc.) is to stretch out the durative phase of the process before the end-point:

- He is writing out the invitations
- She is growing up into a beautiful girl
- The apricots are ripening well.

3-The habitual progressive

The progressive here is used with dynamic verbs to refer to events that repeatedly occur, with the implication that they take place over a limited period of time

- She's writing some short stories.
- He's teaching in a comprehensive school

II-Present perfect continuous

The present perfect continuous is used in situations where events/actions/ states are seen as continuing from some indefinite time in the past up to the present, frequently up to speech time as in:

-I've been looking forward to meeting you.

Form: has ('s) or have ('ve) + been + -ing verb form.

Examples:

-she has been wearing glasses for years. (affirmative)

-Have you been driving? (question)

-How long have you been driving? (question)

-I haven't been learning Italian for long. (negative)

We use the present perfect continuous when we measure the duration of a present action or to specify when it began. We use it in conjunction with an expression beginning with the preposition 'for' or 'since', or with the question 'how long...?' or when one of these expressions is implied.

-We've been driving for hours.

-How long have you been trying to contact me?

III-Present perfect simple

The present perfect places the event in a period of time which extends up to and includes speech time, sometimes called the 'extended now'.

Form

We form the present perfect simple with has ('s) or have ('ve) followed by the main verb in a past participle form: has ('s)/ have ('ve)+ past participle form of the verb.

-She has known about it for weeks. (affirmative)

-Have they worked here? (question/interrogative)

-They haven't lived in Shanghai for long. (negative)

Past participles may be regular (e.g. lived) or irregular (e.g. known).

We use the present perfect simple when we specify the beginning of a present action or when we measure its duration so far. We often use the present perfect simple in conjunction with the prepositions 'for' and 'since' and the question 'how long...?'

In describing general (biographical) facts (the present perfect continuous can also be used):

-He's smoked/ been smoking since he was in the army.

1-Duration

We sometimes choose the present perfect simple to emphasise that something isn't short-term.

Simple: I've worked here most of my life. (i.e. long-term)

Continuous: I've been working here for just a few days. (i.e. short-term)

2-Repetition

We can choose the continuous form to stress that something is repeated.

Continuous: I've been using the swimming pool since we moved into the district. (i.e. repeated)

Simple: I've used the swimming pool since we moved into the district. (i.e. on one of two occasions.)

3-Static verbs

These are the type of verbs we generally avoid in the present continuous and the present perfect continuous (verbs describing existence, mental states and possession).

-I've known about the inspection for weeks.

*I've been knowing...

The perfect is however anomalous without an adjunct of duration or frequency (like 'always' and 'never')

And for + unit of time or since + a point of time.

-The ring has always belonged to my mother.

- I have known her since we were at school together.

-I have wanted to visit Italy for years.

4-After 'the first/second... time'

We use the present perfect simple after this expression when we refer to an event in the present (or the future).

-Is this the first time she has flown?

Exercise 1

Directions: Complete the sentences by using either the simple present or the present progressive of the verbs in the list. Include any words given in parentheses. Use each verb only once.

<i>belong</i>	<i>fail</i>	<i>scream</i>	<i>tape</i>
<i>bite</i>	<i>fight</i>	✓ <i>shine</i>	<i>try</i>
<i>bleed</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>shrink</i>	<i>whisper</i>
<i>blow</i>	✓ <i>own</i>	<i>sleep</i>	

1. It's a gray day today. The sun (*not*) isn't shining.
2. The bank lent us money for a down payment, so now we (*own*) own the house we used to rent.
3. Shhh! I _____ to concentrate. I can't hear myself think with all that noise going on.
4. This book is mine. That one _____ to Pierre.
5. Shhh! The baby _____. We don't want to wake him up.
6. A: Juan! What's the matter with your hand? It _____.
B: I just cut it when I was using a knife. It's not serious. I'll wash it and put a bandage on it.
7. A: My marks in school are terrible this term. I _____ three of my courses.
B: Maybe you can improve your grades before the end of the term if you start studying harder.
8. That sweater won't fit you if you wash it in hot water. Wool _____ in hot water.

Exercise 2

Directions: Complete the sentences with the present perfect of the appropriate verb from the list. Use each verb only once. Include any words in parentheses.

<i>cost</i>	<i>grow</i>	<i>ride</i>	<i>swim</i>
<i>drive</i>	<i>improve</i>	<i>save</i>	<i>win</i>
✓ <i>eat</i>	<i>know</i>	<i>start</i>	<i>write</i>
<i>forget</i>	<i>make</i>	<i>sweep</i>	

- A: How about more pie?
 B: No, but thanks. I can't swallow another bite. I *(already)* have already eaten too much.
- Our football team is having a great season. They _____ all but one of their games so far this year and will probably win the championship.
- Jane is expecting a letter from me, but I *(not)* _____ to her yet. Maybe I'll call her instead.
- Jack is living in Spain now. His Spanish used to be terrible, but it _____ greatly since he moved there.
- Our baby *(not)* _____ to talk yet. My friend's baby, who is several months older, can already say a few words in English and a few words in French.
- A: I hear your parents are coming to visit you. Is that why you're cleaning your apartment?
 B: You guessed it! I *(already)* _____ the floor, but I still need to dust the furniture. Want to help?
- A: I understand Tom is a good friend of yours? How long *(you)* _____ him?
 B: Since we were kids.
- Everyone makes mistakes in life. I _____ lots of mistakes in my life. The important thing is to learn from one's mistakes. Right?
- A: I *(never)* _____ on the subways in New York City. Have you?
 B: I've never even been in New York City.

EXERCISE 31

Fill in the blanks with the simple past or the present perfect.

EXAMPLE:

A. Have you gotten a letter from your parents lately?
(get)

B. Yes. I got a letter from them yesterday.

1. A. Have you _____ any pictures lately?
(take)

B. No. I _____. My camera is broken.

2. A. Have you _____ any good movies lately?
(see)

B. Yes. I _____ a great movie last weekend.

3. A. Have you _____ for a walk lately?
(go)

B. Yes. I _____ for a walk yesterday.

4. A. Have you _____ yourself a gift lately?
(buy)

B. Yes. I _____ myself a new CD player last week.

5. A. Have you _____ a good conversation with a friend lately?
(have)

B. No. I _____ time to talk with my friends lately.

6. A. Have you _____ a massage lately?
(have)

B. No. I _____ never _____ a massage.

7. A. Have you _____ the laundry lately?
(do)

B. Yes. I _____ it this morning.