# 56 Present perfect or present perfect continuous?

## 1 General uses

| PRESENT PERFECT | PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS |
|---|---|
| for an action that happened a short time ago and has a result now:<br>*He's **broken** his leg* (and can't play football today). | to explain a present situation:<br>*He's muddy because he's **been playing** football.* |
| for a finished action in the past, to answer *How much/many?*:<br>*We've **played** six games.* | for an action that is still continuing or has just finished, to answer *How long?*:<br>*We've **been playing** since nine o'clock.* |
| for a situation that is still continuing, and that we think is permanent, usually with *for* or *since*:<br>*The castle **has stood** here for 800 years.* | for a situation that is still continuing, and that we think is temporary, usually with *for* or *since*:<br>*I've **been standing** in this queue for forty minutes!* |

## 2 Uses with some verbs

We can use some verbs (e.g. *live, work, teach, study* with *for* or *since*) in the present perfect or present perfect continuous. They mean almost the same:

*We've **lived** in this house since we got married.*
or *We've **been living** in this house since we got married.*

*Philip **has taught** geography at Durham University for fifteen years.*
or *Philip **has been teaching** geography at Durham University for fifteen years.*

⚠ We don't use the present perfect continuous with some verbs (e.g. *understand, know, want, be*). We use the present perfect:

✗ ~~*Carly has been knowing Jason for two years.*~~
✓ *Carly **has known** Jason for two years.*
✗ ~~*I've been being much happier recently.*~~
✓ *I've **been** much happier recently.*

Verbs that don't use the continuous form ➤ Unit 41.2