

## 6.3 Present Perfect or Past Simple?

- 1 The Present Perfect can express unfinished actions. The Past Simple expresses completed actions.

### Present Perfect

*I've lived in Texas for six years.*  
(I still live there.)  
*I've written several books.*  
(I can still write some more.)

### Past Simple

*I lived in Texas for six years.*  
(Now I live somewhere else.)  
*Shakespeare wrote 30 plays.*  
(He can't write any more.)

- 2 The Present Perfect refers to indefinite time. The Past Simple refers to definite time. Notice the time expressions used with the two tenses.

### Present Perfect – indefinite

for a long time.  
I've done it since July.  
before.  
recently.  
I've already done it.  
I haven't done it yet.

### Past Simple – definite

yesterday.  
last week.  
two days ago.  
I did it at eight o'clock.  
in 1987.  
for a long time.

Be careful with *this morning/afternoon*, etc.

**Have you seen** Amy this morning? (It's still morning.)  
**Did you see** Amy this morning? (It's the afternoon or evening.)

## 6.4 Present Perfect Simple passive

### Form

**has/have been + past participle**

It	has been	sold.
They	have been	

### Use

The uses are the same in the passive as in the active.

*Two million cars **have been produced** so far this year.*  
(unfinished past)

**Has she ever been made redundant?** (in her life)  
*'Have you heard? Two hundred homes **have been washed away** by a tidal wave!' (announcing news)*

## 6.5 Present Perfect Continuous

### Form

**has/have + been + -ing**

*She's **been studying** for three years.*  
*They **haven't been working** here long.*  
*How long **have they been living** there?*

### Use

The Present Perfect Continuous expresses:

- 1 an activity that began in the past and is continuing now.

*I've **been studying** English for three years.*  
*How long **have you been working** here?*

Sometimes there is no difference between the simple and the continuous.

*I've **played** the piano since I was a boy.*  
*I've **been playing** the piano since I was a boy.*

The continuous can express a temporary activity, while the simple expresses a permanent state.

*I've **been living** in this house for the past few months. (temporary)*  
*I've **lived** here all my life. (permanent)*

Remember: State verbs (see 3.4 p143) are rarely used in the continuous.

*I've **had** this book for ages. I've **always loved** sunny days.*

- 2 a past activity that has caused some result connected with that activity, which is seen in the present now.

*I've **been working** all day. (I'm tired now.)*  
***Have you been crying?** (Your eyes are red.)*

The past activity might be finished or it might not. The context usually makes this clear.

*Look out of the window! It's **been snowing!** (It's stopped now.)*  
*I've **been writing** this book for two years. (It still isn't finished.)*  
*I'm covered in paint because I've **been decorating** the bathroom. (It might be finished or it might not. We don't know.)*

## 6.6 Present Perfect Simple or Continuous?

- 1 Present Perfect Simple means activity is completed. The present result we talk about is the reason we've been doing that activity.

*I've **painted** the kitchen. It looks fantastic! (the result is the painted kitchen)*

Present Perfect Continuous expresses an activity over a period of time, which may or may not be completed. If we talk about a present result, it is not usually the purpose of that activity, but some other result connected with doing it.

*I've **been painting** the kitchen. That's why I've got paint in my hair. (the result is paint in my hair)*

We use the simple if the result we talk about is the final number or quantity, because the simple expresses completion. The continuous isn't possible.

*I've **been reading** all day. I've **read** ten chapters.*  
*She's **been eating** ever since she arrived. She's **eaten** ten biscuits already.*

- 2 Some verbs have the idea of a long time, for example, *wait, work, play, try, learn, rain*. These verbs are often found in the continuous.

*It's **been raining** all day.*  
*I've **been learning** English for three years.*

Some verbs don't have the idea of a long time, for example, *find, start, buy, die, lose, break, stop*. These verbs are more usually found in the simple.

*I've **lost** my passport.*  
***Have you started** your Christmas shopping yet?*

These verbs can sometimes be used in both tenses. In the continuous, it means that the action has been repeated over a longer period.

*I've **cut** my finger. (One short action.)*  
*I've **been cutting** firewood. (Perhaps over several hours.)*

## Unit 7

### Verb patterns

#### The infinitive

- 1 The infinitive is used after some verbs.

*We've **decided to move** abroad. I'm **trying to phone** Pete.*  
*I **want to go** home. She'd **love to meet** you.*

- 2 Some verbs are followed by a person + the infinitive.

*They **asked me to help** them. He **told me to apply** for the job.*