

Present Perfect Continuous - Structure

How do we make the present perfect continuous tense in English?

Note: This is also called the **present perfect progressive** tense.

Positive form

Use the **present perfect of be (have/has been)** and the **verb-ing form**.

Full form	Short form
I have been playing	I've been playing
you have been playing	you've been playing
he has been playing	he's been playing
she has been playing	she's been playing
it has been playing	it's been playing
we have been playing	we've been playing
they have been playing	they've been playing

For example:

- I **have been living** in Sydney since March.
- He's **been staying** at a hotel near the park.
- They've **been cooking** all day.

Some notes on short forms:

1. We often contract **has** with nouns and other words in speaking and informal writing: Jane's, nobody's, that's, what's, etc.
2. We often contract **have** with nouns and other words in speaking, but not in writing: the students've, those've, what've, etc.
3. We do not usually contract verbs in writing if we have a compound subject: Jane and I've, Jane and Ben've, etc.

Negative form

Put **not** between **have/has** and **been**.

Full form	Short forms	
I have not been playing	I haven't been playing	*I've not been playing
you have not been playing	you haven't been playing	you've not been playing
he has not been playing	he hasn't been playing	he's not been playing
she has not been playing	she hasn't been playing	she's not been playing
it has not been playing	it hasn't been playing	it's not been playing
we have not been playing	we haven't been playing	we've not been playing
they have not been playing	they haven't been playing	they've not been playing

*The structure in the third column is sometimes used in British English, but it is rarely used in other varieties of English. When used in other varieties, it sounds quite formal.

For example:

- You **have not been listening**.
- She **has not been studying**.
- The internet **hasn't been working** this week. (it hasn't been working)
- We **haven't been replying** to their emails.
- They've **not been speaking** lately.

Question forms

Invert the subject and **have/has**, and then put a question word (**what, who**, etc.) at the beginning for wh- questions.

Yes/No questions	
	Have I been playing ?
	Have you been playing ?
	Has he been playing ?
	Has she been playing ?
	Has it been playing ?
	Have we been playing ?
	Have they been playing ?

Wh- questions	
What Who Where When Why How etc.	have I been playing ?
	have you been playing ?
	has he been playing ?
	has she been playing ?
	has it been playing ?
	have we been playing ?
	have they been playing ?

For example:

- Have I **been talking** too much?
- Has it **been snowing**?
- Have they **been making** lunch?
- What **have** you **been doing** today?
- Where **has** he **been going** after school?
- How long **have** we **been waiting**?

Short answers

Positive	Negative	
Yes, I have .	No, I haven't .	*No, I've not .
Yes, you have .	No, you haven't .	No, you've not .
Yes, he has .	No, he hasn't .	-
Yes, she has .	No, she hasn't .	-
Yes, it has .	No, it hasn't .	-
Yes, we have .	No, we haven't .	No, we've not .
Yes, they have .	No, they haven't .	No, they've not .

*The structure in the third column is sometimes used in British English, but it is rarely used in other varieties of English. When used in other varieties, it sounds quite formal.

Notes:

1. We do not use short forms in positive short answers.
2. We sometimes use full forms in negative short answers (e.g. No, I have not.), but this is rare and mainly used in very formal contexts or for emphasis.