

## Unit 19

## Present perfect with how long and past simple with when

### Since and for

**a** Use the *past simple* (I **did**) to ask or say *when* something happened:

- A: **When did it start** raining?  
B: It **started** raining **at one o'clock** / **an hour ago**.
- A: **When did** Tom and Ann first **meet**?  
B: They first **met** **when they were at school** / **a long time ago**.

Use the *present perfect* (I **have done** / I **have been doing**) to ask or say *how long* something has been happening (up to the present):

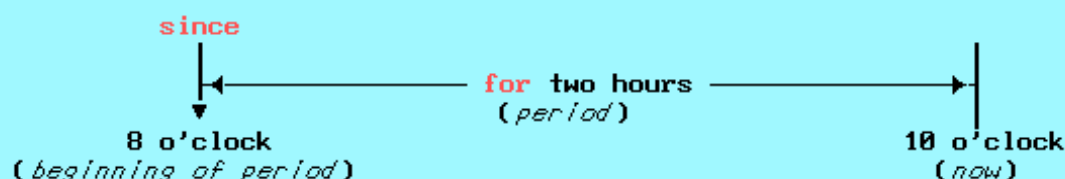
- A: **How long has it been** raining?  
B: It's **been raining since one o'clock** / **for an hour**.
- A: **How long have** Tom and Ann **known** each other?

**b** Since and for

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

- I've been waiting for you **since 8 o'clock**.
- I've been waiting for you **for two hours**.

We use **since** when we say the beginning of the period (**8 o'clock**).  
We use **for** when we say the period of time (**two hours**).



<u>since</u>			<u>for</u>		
8 o'clock		1977	two hours		a week
Monday		Christmas	ten minutes		five years
12 May		lunchtime	three days		a long time
April		we arrived	six months		ages

- She's been working here **since April**. (= from April until now)  
She's been working here **for six months**. (*not* 'since six months')
- I haven't seen Tom **since Monday**. (= from Monday until now)  
I haven't seen Tom **for three days**. (*not* 'since three days')

We do not use **for** in expressions with **all** (**all day** / **all morning** / **all week** / **all my life** etc.):

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

**c** Note the structure **How long is it since ... ?**:

- A: **How long is it since** you had a holiday?  
B: It's **two years since** I had a holiday. (= I haven't had a holiday for two years.)
- It's **ages since** Tom visited us. (= He hasn't visited us for ages.)