

**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):

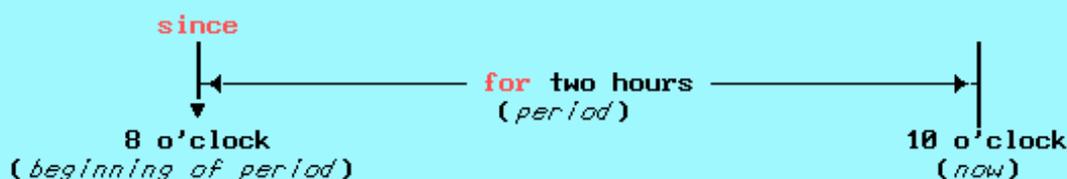
- A: **How long has it been** raining?
- B: It's **been raining since one o'clock** / **for an hour**.
- A: **How long have Tom and Ann known** each other?

**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.)