**4. The Present Perfect Continuous Tense**

**4.1. Forms:**

The present perfect continuous is the present tense of ***have + been + an ing***-form.

**AFFIRMATIVE:** SUBJECT + HAVE/HAS + BEEN+ PP (ING) + OBJECT

* *Ex: The builders have been working hard for the last hour.*

**NEGATIVE:** SUBJECT + HAVEN’T / HAS NOT + BEEN+ PP (ING) + OBJECT

* *Ex: The builders haven't been working hard for the last hour.*

**INTERROGATIVE:** HAVE/HAS + SUBJECT + BEEN+ PP (ING) + OBJECT +?

* *Ex: Have the builders been working hard for the last hour?*

**4.2. USE**

We use the present perfect continuous:

1. For an action which began in the past and is still continuing:
* *The repairs in your street have been causing lots of traffic problems.*
* *He has been repairing the machine the whole day.*
1. In the same way as the Present Perfect to express periods of time with *for* and *since*:
* *They've been waiting to be rehoused for six years.*
* *I've been living in this house since 1970.*

N.B.: This tense is commonly used to describe how long an action has been going on.

1. for an action which has just finished (it is used to talk about an **action** which **ends** just before the **present)**:
* *The painter has just been putting the final touches to the paintwork.*
* ***I 've been swimming****. That 's why my hair is wet*

We can use the present perfect continuous tense to talk about events with a connection to the present. But the focus is on the unfinished activity (progressive).

We can use the present perfect continuous to talk about **repeated** actions up to now

* *Natasha* ***has been playing*** *the piano since she was four*.

Reminder

What is the difference between Present perfect simple and present perfect continuous?

We use both of these tenses for finished and unfinished actions.

The present perfect simple can be used (often with 'since' and 'for') to talk about unfinished actions that started in the past and are still true in the present. It's often used with stative verbs:

* I've known John for three years.

The present perfect continuous can also be used (often with 'since' and 'for') to talk about unfinished actions that started in the past and are still true in the present. (Of course, we don't use the present perfect continuous with stative verbs):

* She's been living here for three years.

Sometimes there's really no difference in meaning between the two tenses. This is especially the case with verbs such as 'live', 'work' and 'study'.

 The present perfect continuous can be used to emphasise the length of time that has passed. The present perfect simple is generally neutral:

* They've been waiting for hours! (This emphasises the length of time).
* They've waited for hours. (This doesn't emphasise the length of time).

2: On the other hand, the present perfect simple is often used when we're talking about how much or how many. This isn't possible with the present perfect continuous:

3: The present perfect continuous often focuses on the action itself, while the present perfect simple focuses on the fact that the action is completed:

* I've been reading the book you recommended. (I'm enjoying it, but I'm not finished).
* I've read the book you recommended. (I've finished it, so we can talk about it).