

HOW LONG TO A POINT IN THE FUTURE

In April, she will have been teaching for twelve years.

Use with: when + present simple, by the time + present simple, for + time.

**FUTURE
PERFECT
CONTINUOUS**

ACTION FINISHED BEFORE A POINT IN THE FUTURE

When I see you, I'll have been studying, so I'll be tired.

Use with: when + present simple, by the time + present simple.



When should I use the Future Perfect Continuous?

1: Just like with the other perfect continuous tenses, we can use the future perfect continuous to say 'how long' for an action that continues up to another point in the future. The second point can be a time or another action. Generally, we need 'for + length of time' and if we use 'when' or 'by the time', we usually use the present simple.

- In April, she will have been teaching for twelve years.
- By the time you arrive, I'll have been cooking for hours!

In the same way as with the future perfect simple, we often use the future perfect continuous because we like easy numbers. It's also possible to use the present perfect continuous, but then we get a more complicated number.

- I've been working here for 11 months and three weeks. (This is correct, but the time is not an easy number.)
- On Tuesday, I will have been working here for one year. (A much easier number.)

2: We can use the future perfect continuous, like the other perfect continuous tenses, to talk about something that finishes just before another time or action (in this case, in the future). It's often used because there will be a result at the second point in the future. (Again, if we use 'when' we usually need the present simple.)

- When I see you, I'll have been studying, so I'll be tired.

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

FINISHED

PRESENT RESULT

I've been working (that's why I'm tired).

UNFINISHED

HOW LONG

I've been living in London for two years.
She's been working here since 2004.

Use with: since 2010, since July, for ten years, for three days.

TEMPORARY SITUATIONS

I've been going to the gym a lot recently.

Use with: recently.



When should we use the Present Perfect Continuous?

Unfinished actions

1: To say how long for unfinished actions which started in the past and continue to the present. We often use this with 'for' and 'since'.

- I've been living in London for two years.
- She's been working here since 2004.
- We've been waiting for the bus for hours.

This use is very similar to how we use the present perfect simple, and often it's possible to use either tense. Of course, with stative verbs, we can't use the present perfect continuous.

- I've been here for hours.
- NOT: ~~I've been being here for hours.~~

2: For temporary habits or situations. The action started in the past and continues to the present in the same way as with use number 1, but we don't answer the questions about 'how long' so clearly. Instead, we use a word like 'recently'.

- I've been going to the gym a lot recently.
- They've been living with his mother while they look for a house.
- I've been reading a lot recently.

This is very similar to the use of the present continuous for temporary habits and often either tense is possible.

Finished actions

3: Actions which have recently stopped (though the whole action can be unfinished) and have a result, which we can often see, hear, or feel, in the present. We don't use a time word here.

- I'm so tired, I've been studying.
- I've been running, so I'm really hot.
- It's been raining so the pavement is wet.

The present perfect simple has a very similar use, which focuses on the result of the action, whereas the present perfect continuous focuses on the action itself. See my page about the difference between the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous for more explanation.