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Grammar Reference

> Construction of the present perfect continuous

The **present perfect continuous** is formed as follows:

have (conjugated) + **been** + **-ing**

Example:

She's (has) **been reading** a book for two hours.
I've (have) **been living** in Canada for five years.

> Use of the present perfect continuous

The **present perfect continuous** is used especially when talking about events or actions:

- that **begin** in the **past** and **continue** in the **present**.

Example:

They've **been living** together **for** a long time.
I've **been working** in this company **for** three months and I find it interesting.

- that have **just finished**.

Example:

We are very tired because we've **been working for** hours.

> 'Either ... or' - 'Neither ... nor'

- To indicate a **choice** between **two adjectives, nouns, noun phrases, verbs, or clauses**, 'either ... or' is used.

Example:

She's **either** English **or** American.
I want **either** fruit juice **or** coffee.
In the summer, I **either** go to Prague **or** stay at home.
Either you pay duty on the extra ones, **or** I'll have to confiscate them.

- To **exclude both** of two **adjectives, nouns, noun phrases, or verbs**, '**neither . . . nor**' is used.

Example: She's **neither** nice **nor** nasty.
He met **neither** John **nor** his wife.
I **neither** read French **nor** write it.

> Direct and indirect questions

- In a **direct question**, the **auxiliary** (or the **stative verb 'to be'**) precedes the **subject**.

Example: **Are you listening** to me?
Are you really that tired?
Will you go home at noon?
But what **can I do**?

- When **no auxiliary** is present, '**do**' is used.

Example: **Do you have** that passport?
Does it change the weather?

An **indirect question** contains the following:

- a **main clause** with a verb like '**to ask**,' '**to wonder**' or '**to discuss**';
- a **dependent clause** introduced by an **interrogative** ('where,' 'when,' 'why,' 'how,' 'who,' 'which,' 'what' or 'whose') or by a **subordinating conjunction** ('if' or 'whether').

In the dependent clause, the verb **follows the subject** as it would in a non-interrogative clause.

Example: The waiter **asks** you **what** you **would** like to drink.
You call to **find out if** the weather **is going to be** all right.