UNIT 18  for  since  ago

Unit 17  How long have you ...? (present perfect 3)

• for and since:
We use for and since to say how long:

- Jill has been in London for four days. since Monday.

We use for + a period of time (four days / two years etc.):

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{past} \\
1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \\
\text{now}
\end{array}
\]

\begin{array}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
\text{for} & \text{four days} & \text{ten minutes} \\
\text{an hour} & \text{two hours} & \\
\text{a week} & \text{three weeks} & \\
\text{a month} & \text{six months} & \\
\text{five years} & \text{a long time} & \\
\hline
\end{array}

We use since + the start of the period (Monday / 9 o'clock etc.):

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{start of the} \\
\text{period}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{past} \\
\text{Monday} \\
\text{now} \\
\text{since Monday}
\end{array}
\]

\begin{array}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
\text{since} & \text{Monday} & \text{Wednesday} \\
\text{9 o'clock} & 12.30 & \\
\text{24 July} & 10 October & \\
\text{December} & Christmas & \\
\text{1985} & \text{I got up} & \\
\hline
\end{array}

Compare:

- Barry has been in Canada since January. (= from January to now)
  Barry has been in Canada for six months, (not 'since six months')
- I've known her since 1980. (= from 1980 to now)
  I've known her for a long time, (not 'since a long time')

Unit 92 from... to until since for

• ago = before now:

- Susan started her new job two weeks ago. (= two weeks before now)
- 'When did Tom go out?' 'Ten minutes ago.' (= ten minutes before now)
- I had dinner an hour ago. (= an hour before now)
- Life was very different a hundred years ago.

We use ago with the past simple (did/had/started etc.).

Compare ago and for:

- When did she arrive in London?
  She arrived in London four days ago.

- How long has she been in London?
  She has been in London for four days.
UNIT 18 Exercises

18.1 Write for or since.
1 She's been in London ...one day.
2 She's been in London ...four days.
3 Mike has been ill a long time. He's been in hospital October.
4 My aunt has lived in Australia ...15 years.
5 Nobody lives in those houses. They have been empty many years.
6 Mrs Harris is in her office. She's been there ...7 o'clock.
7 India has been an independent country ...1947.
8 The bus is late. We've been waiting ...20 minutes.

18.2 When was ...? Use ago in your answers.
1 your last meal? (i.e. the last time you drank coffee?
2 last December?
3 1984? ...7 the last time you were in a car?
4 the last time you were ill?
5 the last time you went to the cinema?
6 the last time you read a newspaper?

18.3 Answer the questions. Use the words in brackets ( ) + for or ago.
1 (four days) When did she arrive in London? four days ago.
2 (four days) How long has she been in London for four days.
3 (20 years) How long have they been married? for twenty years.
4 (20 years) When did they get married? 
5 (ten minutes) When did Dan arrive? ten minutes ago.
6 (two months) When did you buy those shoes? two months ago.
7 (two months) How long has she been learning English? two months.
8 (a long time) How long have you known Jan? 
9 (an hour) What time did you have lunch? an hour ago.

18.4 Complete the sentences with for ... or since ...
1 She is in London now. She arrived there four days ago. She has been there for four days.
2 Jack is here. He arrived here on Thursday. He has
3 It is raining. It started an hour ago. It's been
4 I know Sue. I first met Sue two years ago. I've
5 I have a camera. I bought it in 1985. I've
6 They are married. They got married six months ago. They've
7 Liz is studying medicine at university. She started three years ago.
   She has

18.5 Write sentences about yourself. Begin with the words in brackets ( ).
1 (I've lived)
2 (I've been)
3 (I've been learning)
4 (I've had)
5 (I've known)