



General Pre Intermediate

Unit 11: People with a passion

Objectives

- Grammar: Present Perfect Simple and Continuous, tense review
- Vocabulary: Life's big moments
- Everyday English: Finding what to say
- Reading: The collectors!
- Listening: My kind of thing!





- 1.** Look at the photo. Why do you think the man has so many gnomes (nəʊmz/)?
- 2.** Would you like to have him as a neighbor? Why/Why not?
- 3.** Is it important to have a passion in life? Do you have one?



1. Answer these questions.

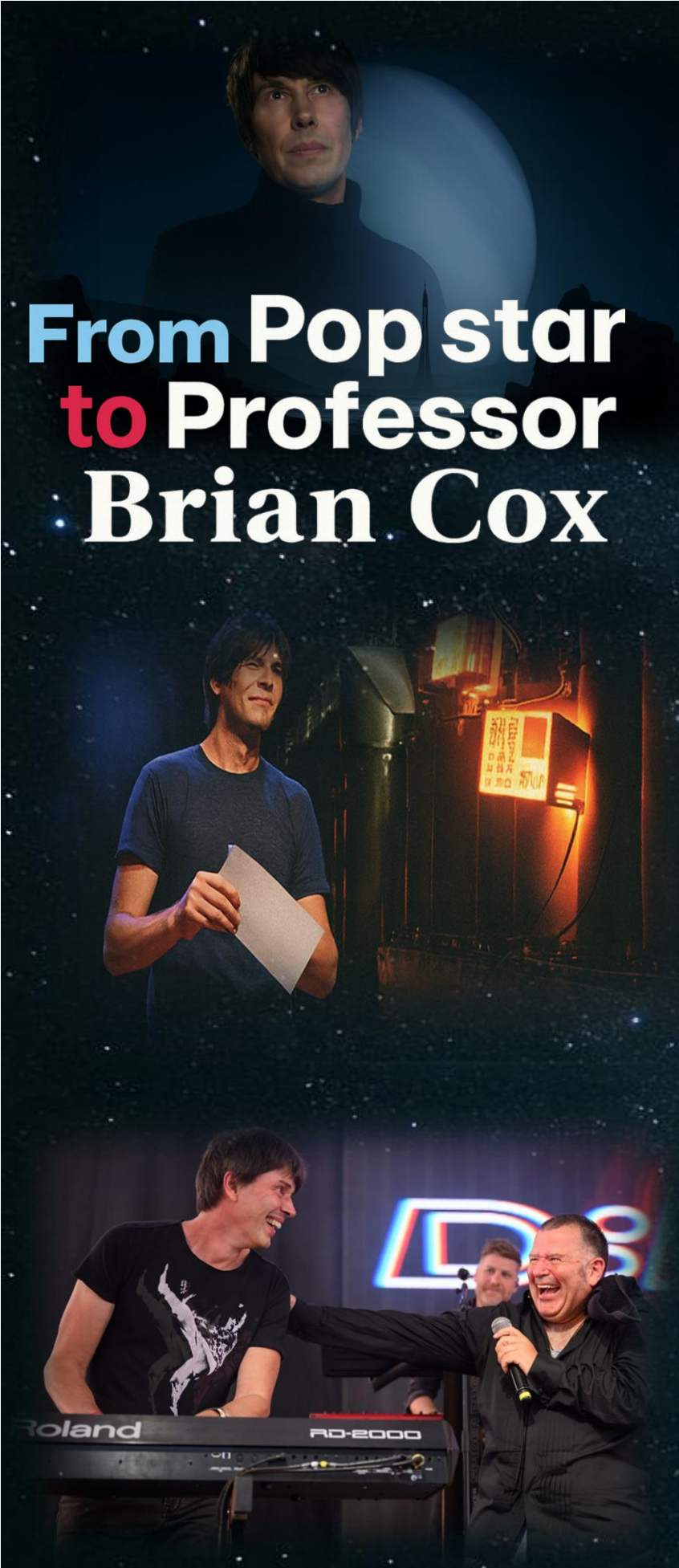
- How long have you been learning English?
- When did you start?

2. Ask your teacher the same questions about teaching English.

- 1. Look at the photos of Professor Brian Cox and read the introduction. Does he seem more like a scientist or a pop star? What message is he trying to convey?
- 2. Look quickly through the chart about his life. What three jobs has he had in his life so far?
- 3. Read the chart and answer these questions.
 - 1. When and where was Brian born?
 - 2. How old was he when men first landed on the moon?
 - 3. How did Carl Sagan influence him?
 - 4. Why did he fail his exams?
 - 5. How many bands did he play with? Which bands?
 - 6. How long has he been married? Has he got any children?
 - 7. Has he won any awards?
 - 8. What is he doing now?

4. Match a question about Brian in A with an answer in B.

A	B
1. When did he start being interested in the stars?	• Since 2005.
2. How long has he been interested in the stars?	• A great many.
3. When did he start doing research at CERN?	• All over Europe and Australia.
4. How long has he been doing research at CERN?	• When he was three.
5. When did he make his first TV show?	• Since he was three.
6. How long has he been making TV shows?	• When he was 29.
7. How many programmes has he made?	• For over 20 years.
8. Where has he been touring recently?	• In 2005.



Physicist, astronomer and TV Presenter, Brian Cox is passionate about teaching his subject so that we can all understand our universe more easily.

- Age – Life Event**
- 0** – Born in Oldham, North of England, 1968.
 - 3** – Became interested in rockets, the moon-landings and the stars at night.
 - 12** – Wanted to become a physicist and astronomer after reading Carl Sagan’s Cosmos.
 - 16–22** – Discovered music and so failed his exams. Joined the rock band, DARE, playing keyboards.
 - 23–24** – Left DARE. Went to Manchester University to study physics. At the same time joined another band, Dream.
 - 24** – Dream were nominated for MTV Europe music award and had a hit song, Things Can Only Get Better. Cox also continued his studies.
 - 29** – Left the band and completed his Doctor of Philosophy degree in particle physics.
 - 29–now** – Started work at the CERN research centre near Geneva, Switzerland, on the Large Hadron Collider – called the biggest scientific experiment ever.
 - 35** – Married Gia Milinovich, a US TV science presenter. Gia already had a son, Moki. Six years later their son, George, was born.
 - 37–now** – Started working as a TV presenter, making science programmes for the BBC. Has made over 40 programmes, including Wonders of the Solar System, A Night with the Stars and In Search of Science.
 - 38** – Won the Lord Kelvin award for his science work. Has won many more awards since then, including an OBE from the Queen in 2010.
 - 46–now** – Has been making a BBC TV series about the universe – Human Universe, The Entire Universe, Life of a Universe.
 - now** – Recently has been touring Europe and Australia with Brian Cox Live – a series of lectures on Space and Time.

LANGUAGE FOCUS

1. Read the sentences.

He made his first TV programme in 2005.
He's been making programmes since 2005.
He's made over 40 programmes so far.

What are the three tenses used? Which expresses ... ?

- a quantity
- a past action
- an activity over time

2. Complete the questions.

- When _____ he _____ his first TV programme?
- How long _____ he _____ TV programmes?
- How many programmes _____ he _____ so far?

Practice I Discussing grammar

1. Choose the correct tense in the sentences below.

1. How long *have you been waiting* / *are you waiting*?
2. Jo's *been looking* / *looked* for a new job for ages.
3. Pete and I *have gone out* / *have been going out* for a year.
4. I *bought* / *have bought* a new flat a few months ago.
5. How long *have you had* / *have you been having* that car?
6. Tom *worked* / *has been working* as a waiter since April.
7. Sue *has been talking* / *has talked* on her phone for ages.
8. She's *been speaking* / *has spoken* to at least six friends.

Questions with How long ... ?

2. Read the sentences aloud and reply using a question with How long ... ? Think of an answer.

1. My brother's working in Madrid.

How long has he been working there?

Only for a couple of weeks.

2. I'm training to run the marathon.
3. My sister is on holiday.
4. I'm learning how to paint.
5. I know Tina very well.
6. I have the latest iPhone.

About you!

3. Listen to the sentences. There is one word missing in each one. Say the complete sentence.

1. How long _____ you _____ (work) at this company?
2. How long _____ you _____ (exercise) at this gym?
3. How long _____ you _____ (work on) this project?
4. How long _____ you _____ (know) your manager?
5. How long _____ you _____ (live) in your current home?

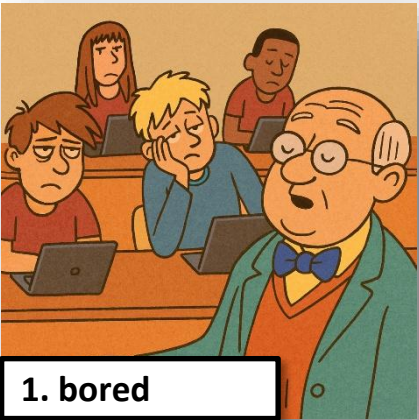


What have they been doing?

3. Ask questions with Why? about the people in the pictures.
Reply using because and give a reason.

Why are the students bored?

Because the professor's been teaching maths for hours, and they are not interested.



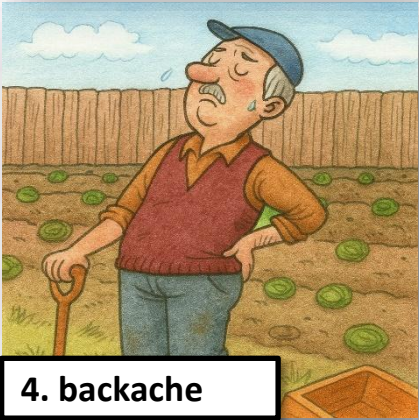
1. bored



2. tired and dirty



3. hot and tired



4. backache



5. covered in paint



6. no money left

5. Complete these sentences in the Present Perfect Simple about the people in 4.

1. They haven't understood (not understand) a word.
2. They're happy because they _____ (win) the match.
3. She _____ (make) two huge chocolate cakes for the party.
4. He _____ (plant) six rows of cabbages.
5. She _____ (paint) two walls already.
6. They _____ (spend) over £200!

Listen and check  11.3

Who is Martha Lane Fox?

1. Look at the photo and read the introduction.

Why is she called 'The golden girl'? What is she passionate about? What do you think her tragedy was?

2. Read the rest of the article about Martha and choose the correct tense for 1-10.

3. Use the following prompts to make questions about Martha and answer them.

1. How long / work / in digital technology?
2. Where / study?
3. How much/ sell lastminute.com for?
4. Has / fully recover / the accident?
5. What / do / since 2007?
6. Who I meet while / at Spectrum?
7. Where I drive / when / crash?
8. How long/ director of Twitter (now X)? How many followers?

Listen and check  11.4

4. **Optional.** In your own words, describe what has happened to Martha Lane Fox from 2017 to now.

The golden girl of the digital age



She has been named one of the 20 most powerful people in technology today. She's a dotcom multi-millionaire who believes passionately that Internet access should be for everyone, young and old. She has had amazing success but has also known tragedy.

The golden girl of Martha Lane Fox

She was born in Oxford, England, in 1973 and **1. studied / was studying** at Oxford University. After university, in 1994, she joined an IT company, 'Spectrum', and she **2. is working / has been working** in digital technology since then. While she **3. was working / has worked** at 'Spectrum' she met Brent Hoberman, and in 1998 these two entrepreneurs founded an online travel company called lastminute.com. It was hugely successful, making them millionaires. Eventually, in 2005, they **4. sold / have sold** it for £577 million!

However, in 2004, tragedy struck. Martha **5. drove / was driving** with friends in Morocco when they had a terrible car crash. She was flown back to England, where she spent six months in hospital and had 28 operations. She **6. recovered / has never fully recovered** from the accident, and still walks with a stick. However, she hasn't stopped work. Since 2007, she **7. is doing / has been doing** a lot of work for charities, and in 2012, she founded a digital skills charity, Go On UK.

Overall, she **8. has had / has been having** an amazing career. In 2013, she was made a life peer in the House of Lords – the youngest female peer ever. She **9. is / has been** chancellor of the Open University since 2014 and director of Twitter since 2016 – she **10. has / is having** over 186,000 followers on Twitter (now X).

She now lives in London with her partner, Chris Gorell Barnes. In 2016, they had twin boys, Milo and Felix. Martha couldn't have children herself because of the crash, so they were born to a surrogate mother in the US.

Since 2017, Martha has continued to take on major roles in public service and business. She joined the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, became a Non-Executive Director at Chanel, and later joined the boards of WeTransfer and, in 2024, Multiverse. After leaving the Twitter board in 2022, she was appointed President of the British Chambers of Commerce. Her achievements were recognised in 2023 when she became an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering. Most recently, in 2025, she has spoken publicly about the gender divide in the tech industry, including in a House of Lords podcast.

1. You will hear three people talk about things they love. Read the lines below and guess what they’re talking about.

1. Paula

‘They're so big and powerful but so beautiful when you see them racing round a field or a track: 'Of course, I have fallen off a few times, but the more you fall the less it hurts’

2. Andrew

‘I felt the power of the words – the thing that I like so much about it is that you can say so much with just a few words.’
‘It’s all about saying what often goes unsaid and with passion.’

3. James

‘I know everyone always complains about it, but I love it.’
‘I think if you live somewhere like California and there are 365 days of sunshine, it’s boring.’

2. Now listen and check if your ideas were correct. Make notes to complete the chart.



	What is their passion?	Why do they like it so much?
 Paula		
 Andrew		
 James		

3. Listen again and answer these questions after each one.

- 1. How long have they had their passion?
- 2. What was it that first created their interest?

1. Answer the questions:

- Which of the people's passions most interest you? Why?
- Which interest you least?
- Is there anything in your life that you feel passionate about?
- How do you think passions can influence a person's life or career?
- Do you believe people can develop new passions later in life? Why or why not?



Collectors

1. Many people like collecting things. Have you ever collected anything?
2. Look at the photos. What do the people collect? Which do you think are most surprising?
3. Answer the questions about one/ each collector.
1. How long have they been collecting?

2. How many have they collected?

3. When and how did their passion start?

4. Where do they keep their collections?

5. Do they have a favorite? What?

6. What do you learn about their families or friends?

7. In what way is their collection more than just a hobby?

8. Which of these numbers and dates relate to your people? In what way?
- 2 4 5 10 90 400 5,000 5,800 100,000 300,000 1959 1979 2013
4. Which did you find most interesting? Why?

Surprising Things People Love

THE ROYAL MEMORABILIA COLLECTOR

57-year-old Jan Hugo’s passion is the British royal family. Jan, from Hunter Valley, Australia, has been collecting royal memorabilia since 1981 and has now collected over 10,000 pieces. The collection fills four rooms in her home, where she lives with her husband David (who calls himself her royal servant!). Jan says her passion started by chance when they were given a commemorative coin for Prince Charles and Diana’s engagement. They have now spent over £100,000 on the collection and turned their house into a museum.

David, (who has a passion of his own – he collects beer cans and has 5,800 of them!), has started a business taking our groups round their home. Jan and David sometimes laugh themselves, unlike many of the royal fans who visit the museum – these fans are often very serious about the Royals and complain if the images of the Queen, Charles, Camilla, Diana, William, Kate, etc. aren’t lifelike enough.

Jan’s favourite piece is a doll of the newborn Prince George in 2013. There has been renewed interest in her collection since the latest royal weddings and births – as she says, the royal family is a never-ending story and this is good for business!



THE COCA-COLA CAN COLLECTOR

Davide Andreani, 44, from Pesaro in Italy, is a world-famous collector of Coca-Cola cans. In his house and garage he has the largest collection of Coca-Cola cans in the world. He’s been collecting the cans since he was 15, but his passion for them started when he was just five, and he was given his first can of Coke. He has now collected over 20,000 cans, and amazingly, each one is different.

In 2013, Davide received the Guinness World Record award for the ‘Largest Collection of Soft Drink Cans’ and he still holds the title.

His cans come from about 90 countries – but not Cuba and North Korea – the only two countries where Coca-Cola isn’t sold.

His father travelled on business, and often brought unusual cans home from his trips. The first one was from Germany, in 1979, with the word ‘Coca-Cola’ translated into various languages. Davide has got many duplicates – this is useful when he wants to swap cans with other collectors.

He uses his website to swap them and to search worldwide for the rarest, such as those made of gold and silver, often produced for special anniversaries. These are possibly his favourites and worth between \$400 and \$500 each!



TWO BARBIE DOLL COLLECTORS

There are over 100,000 Barbie doll collectors worldwide, but Bettina Dorfman, 58, from Düsseldorf, Germany has the world’s largest collection – over 17,000 dolls, worth nearly \$300,000! She has been collecting them since she was ten, when she was given a Barbie during a stay in hospital. She has Barbies all over her house and has a special room, called ‘Barbie’s Kingdom’, for her favourite Barbies, including an original one from 1959 – the year Barbie was ‘born’ at the International Toy Fair in New York. She is now worth a possible \$5,000!

Bettina doesn’t just collect the dolls, she’s also a Barbie doctor. She runs a Barbie hospital in her kitchen and repairs broken dolls from all over the world.

Bettina wanted her daughter, Melissa, to share her passion, but Melissa is more interested in table tennis.

And Barbie collectors aren’t all girls. Jian Yang, 33, from Singapore, has over 6,000 dolls. His interest began when he was a little boy and wasn’t allowed to have one. His passion grew as he grew, and he started to collect them. However, the Barbies have not been good for his love life – he believes that girlfriends worry about not being as beautiful as the dolls!

Amazingly, there’s a National Barbie Day on March 9th!



Collectors

5. These sentences are similar to ones in the articles, but the highlighted words are different. Find the words used in the articles.

- 1. Jan’s passion started **accidentally**.
- 2. Visitors complain if the images aren’t **realistic** enough.
- 3. The royal family is **an everlasting story**.
- 4. He uses his website to **exchange** cans and search for the **most unusual**.
- 5. Bettina **mends** Barbie dolls in her hospital.
- 6. ... including **one of the first** from 1959.
- 7. Jian Yang **was forbidden to** have a Barbie doll when he was a little boy.

Your Opinion matters!

- Do you think collecting things is a good idea? Explain.
- What things do you think are worth collecting? What are not?
- What are the pros and cons of collecting?



Surprising Things People Love

THE ROYAL MEMORABILIA COLLECTOR

57-year-old Jan Hugo’s passion is the British royal family. Jan, from **Hunter Valley, Australia**, has been collecting royal memorabilia since 1981 and has now collected over 10,000 pieces. The collection fills four rooms in her home, where she lives with her husband David (who calls himself her royal servant!). Jan says her passion started **by chance** when they were given a commemorative coin for Prince Charles and Diana’s engagement. They have now spent over £100,000 on the collection and turned their house into a museum.

David, (who has a passion of his own – he collects beer cans and has 5,800 of them!), has started a business taking our groups round their home. Jan and David sometimes laugh themselves, unlike many of the royal fans who visit the museum – these fans are often very serious about the Royals and complain if the images of the Queen, Charles, Camilla, Diana, William, Kate, etc. aren’t **lifelike** enough.

Jan’s favourite piece is a doll of the newborn Prince George in 2013. There has been renewed interest in her collection since the latest royal weddings and births – as she says, the royal family is a **never-ending** story and this is good for business!



THE COCA-COLA CAN COLLECTOR

Davide Andreani, 44, from **Pesaro in Italy**, is a world-famous collector of Coca-Cola cans. In his house and garage he has the largest collection of Coca-Cola cans in the world. He’s been collecting the cans since he was 15, but his passion for them started when he was just five, and he was given his first can of Coke. He has now collected over 20,000 cans, and amazingly, each one is different.

In 2013, Davide received the Guinness World Record award for the ‘Largest Collection of Soft Drink Cans’ and he still holds the title.

His cans come from about 90 countries – but not Cuba and North Korea – the only two countries where Coca-Cola isn’t sold.

His father travelled on business, and often brought unusual cans home from his trips. The first one was from Germany, in 1979, with the word ‘Coca-Cola’ translated into various languages. Davide has got many duplicates – this is useful when he wants to **swap** cans with other collectors.

He uses his website to swap them and to search worldwide for the **rarest**, such as those made of gold and silver, often produced for special anniversaries. These are possibly his favourites and worth between \$400 and \$500 each!



TWO BARBIE DOLL COLLECTORS

There are over 100,000 Barbie doll collectors worldwide, but **Bettina Dorfman, 58, from Düsseldorf, Germany** has the world’s largest collection – over 17,000 dolls, worth nearly \$300,000! She has been collecting them since she was ten, when she was given a Barbie during a stay in hospital. She has Barbies all over her house and has a special room, called ‘Barbie’s Kingdom’, for her favourite Barbies, including **an original one** from 1959 – the year Barbie was ‘born’ at the International Toy Fair in New York. She is now worth a possible \$5,000!

Bettina doesn’t just collect the dolls, she’s also a Barbie doctor. She runs a Barbie hospital in her kitchen and **repairs** broken dolls from all over the world. Bettina wanted her daughter, Melissa, to share her passion, but Melissa is more interested in table tennis.

And Barbie collectors aren’t all girls. Jian Yang, 33, from Singapore, has over 6,000 dolls. His interest began when he was a little boy and **wasn’t allowed** to have one. His passion grew as he grew, and he started to collect them. However, the Barbies have not been good for his love life – he believes that girlfriends worry about not being as beautiful as the dolls! Amazingly, there’s a National Barbie Day on March 9th!



Birth

1. When were you born? Do you know the exact time of your birth?

I was born on May, 26th, 1976 at 4 in the afternoon

I have no idea of the time.
I'll check my birth certificate.

2. Complete the sentences using a word from below.

born | birth | due | ~~pregnant~~ | weighed | expecting



May 13th

Laura is 1. pregnant. She's 2. _____ a baby.

The baby is 3. _____ in two weeks.



May 24th

She gave 4. _____ to a healthy baby boy.
He was 5. _____ at 4.20 a.m. this morning.
He 6. _____ 3.8 kilos.

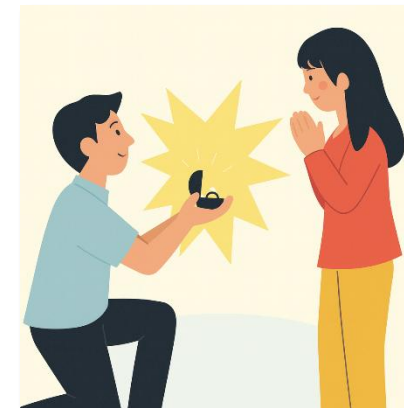
Marriage

3. Do you like going to weddings? Why/Why not? Complete the sentences with a word from below.

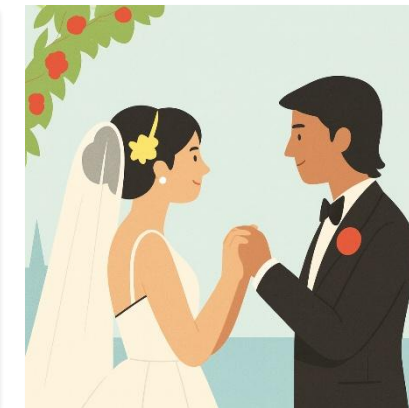
widowed | divorced | engaged | married | single



• He's _____.



• They're _____.



• They're _____.



• They're _____.



• She's _____.

4. Put the sentences about Tom's life in order. How old is he now? What does "honeymoon" mean?



Tom and Angie



When Tom met Angie and Laura!

1. ____ They got married a year later in 2007.
2. ____ They split up. Angie left Tom.
3. ____ They got engaged when they were 19.
4. **1** Tom met Angie at school when they were 17.
5. ____ They finally got divorced in 2012.
6. ____ After a few years, the marriage started to go wrong.
7. ____ Tom remarried in 2017. He married Laura, a colleague from work.
8. ____ They went to Venice on honeymoon.
9. ____ They couldn't afford a honeymoon.
10. **10** It's their anniversary today! They've just had a baby boy.

Death

5. Complete the sentences using a word from below.

die | funeral | died of | miss | death | dead | alive | died

1. 'Do you still have your dog?'
'No. He's been _____ a long time. I _____ him terribly.'
2. He _____ a heart attack. The _____ will take place at St Paul's Church next Tuesday.
3. Flowers _____ if you don't water them.
4. 'Are your grandparents still _____?'
'My grandmother is. My grandfather _____ before I was born.'
5. The _____ of his uncle came as a great shock. It was totally unexpected.

My life in a nutshell!

6. Listen to Alison talking about her life.  11.6

1. Who are Ben, Ellen, Tessa and Tom?
2. How old are Tessa and Tom now?
3. What do you learn about Alison's parents?
4. How is her life different from Tom's?



1. Look at the conversations. Which one gives good news and which one gives bad news?

2. Complete the four conversations with the words in the boxes. After each one, listen and check.  11.7



Congratulations! | called | weigh |
Give Helen my love | had | doing

A: Helen 1. _____ the baby last night.
B: Wow! 2. _____! Was it a boy or girl?
A: A boy.
B: How much did he 3. _____?
A: 4.1 kilos.
B: Ooh! A big boy. What's he 4. _____?
A: William James, after both of our fathers.
B: That's nice. How are mother and baby 5. _____?
A: They're fine.
B: That's wonderful. 6. _____ when you see her.
A: I will do. Thanks.



wedding | engaged | fantastic news |
bridesmaid | ring | beautiful

A: Alfie and I have got 1. _____.
B: That's 2. _____! Congratulations!
A: Do you like my 3. _____?
B: Wow! Diamonds! It's 4. _____! When's the 5. _____?
A: We're thinking of getting married next spring.
B: I hope I'm invited.
A: Of course you are. I want you to be a 6. _____.
B: Really? I'd love that. I've never been one before.



tough time | split up | What's happened |
sorry to hear | getting on well | shame

A: Have you heard about Bill and Josie?
B: No! 1. _____?
A: Well, they've been having a 2. _____ recently.
B: I know – they haven't been 3. _____ at all.
A: Mm. Well, they've finally decided to 4. _____.
B: I'm so 5. _____ that. What a 6. _____!
A: Yes, I always thought they were so good together.



lovely man | memories | together |
coping | so sorry | fond of him

A: We lost Grandpa last week.
B: I know. Your dad told me. I'm 1. _____. He was such a 2. _____. Everyone was really 3. _____.
A: He and Grandma were 4. _____ over 60 years.
B: That's incredible! How old was he?
A: 88.
B: And how's your Grandma 5. _____?
A: She's OK. She's got her family around her.
B: Well, I'm sure you all have wonderful 6. _____ of him.

My vision for the 21st century

1. Listen to the first part of Professor Ivan Gregor’s talk about life in the future. What kind of person is he? Write down three things you remember.
2. Read the notes taken by two students during his talk. Use the notes to help you remember more of the talk. Which style of note-taking do you prefer?



3. Listen to the second part of his talk. Complete Student 1's or Student 2's notes.
4. Use the notes to write a short summary of Professor Gregor's talk.



Life in the future

Student 1

OPTIMISTIC

serious problems

- always found ways to deal with problems – can do same in future
- life could become better – healthcare and technology

life expectancy

- already big improvements
- 50–80 US
- hundred in future
- grow new body parts
- fit and healthy

world population

- worry if people live longer
- educated and richer, don't need or want so many children
- use technology, educate better
- robots create wealth, share more equally

world government

- people demanding independence
- need other direction
- world government – problems and resources, managed at global level

PESSIMISTIC

-
-
-

Life in the future

Student 2

```
graph TD;
    OP((OPTIMISTIC)) --- SP[serious problems];
    OP --- LE[life expectancy];
    OP --- WP[world population];
    PS((PESSIMISTIC)) --- WG[world government];
```

serious problems

- always found ways to deal with problems – can do same in future
- life could become better – healthcare and technology

life expectancy

- already big improvements
- 50–80 USA
- 100 in future
- grow new body parts
- fit and healthy

world population

- worry if people live longer
- educated and richer, don't need or want so many children
- use technology, educate better
- robots create wealth, share more equally

world government

- people demanding independence
- need other direction
- world government – problems and resources, managed at global level

Present Perfect Simple and Continuous

Form

has/have + been + -ing (present participle)

Positive and negative

I/You/We/They	've (have) haven't	been studying.
He/She/It	's (has) hasn't	

Question

How long	have has	I/You/We/They He/She/It	been studying?
----------	---------------------------	----------------------------	----------------

Short answer

Have you been running? - Yes, I **have**. / No, I **haven't**.

Use

The *Present Perfect Continuous* is used:

1. to express an activity which began in the past and continues to the present.

He's **been studying** Italian for years.
It's **been snowing** for days.

2. to refer to an activity with a result in the present.

I'm sweat because I've **been training**.

I haven't got any money because I've **been shopping**.

Note:

1. Sometimes there is little or no difference in meaning between the *Present Perfect Simple* and *Continuous*.

How long **have** you **lived** here?

How long **have** you **been living** here?

2. Some verbs have the idea of a long time - wait, work, learn, travel, play.

These verbs can often be found in the *Present Perfect Continuous*.

I've **been speaking** for hours. I feel tired now.

Some verbs don't have the idea of a long time - find, start, buy, die, lose, break, stop. It is unusual to find these in the *Present Perfect Continuous*.

I've **brought** some chocolate for the cake.

My dog **has broken** the sofa!

My car **has broken**.

3. Verbs that express a state - like, love, know, have (for possession), are not found in the *Present Perfect Continuous*.

We've **known** each other for a few weeks.

NOT ~~We've been knowing each other for a few weeks.~~

4. If the sentence gives a number or a quantity, the *Present Perfect Simple* is used. The *Continuous* is not possible.

I've **been writing** emails all morning.

I've **written** twenty. NOT ~~I've been writing 20.~~

