

English Ladder

Student Workbook

Understanding the Use of "Recently" and "Lately" in Present Perfect Progressive Tense



A polished self-study handout designed for print or tablet use. Read the concept, notice the pattern, and then complete the matching practice set on your own.

Grammar Concepts	Concept #16: Recently/L	Additional Examples for Better Unde	Practice Exercis	Answers:
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Visual anchor

Use the concept poster to spotlight the main language pattern in **Understanding the Use of "Recently" and "Lately" in Present Perfect Progressive Tense** and keep the explanation visible during practice and discussion.

ENGLISH LADDER

Concept #16 ► Recently/Lately

The words **recently** and **lately** often signal the need for the present perfect progressive tense. This tense indicates something was started in the past, is happening now, and is likely to continue into the future.

This tense is emphasizing how the activity is continuous. Introducing a specific past period of time is not allowed.

- Recently, I have been dieting.
- I have been dieting over the past few days.
- I have been dieting since last month.
- ✗ I have been dieting last month.

- She has been exercising (ever) since she graduated.
- Lately, she has been exercising a lot.
- She has been exercising (on) Saturdays.
- ✗ She has been exercising Saturday.

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Core Idea

The words "recently" and "lately" are often used to signal the need for the present perfect progressive tense. This tense indicates that an action started in the past, is continuing in the present, and is likely to continue into the future. It emphasizes the continuous nature of the activity.

Quick reference

Present Perfect Progressive Tense	Recently, I have been dieting. This sentence means that the speaker started dieting in the past and is still dieting now.
Present Perfect Progressive Tense	I have been dieting last month. (Incorrect)
Using "Recently" and "Lately"	Recently, I have been studying English. This indicates the speaker started studying English in the recent past and continues to study.
Avoiding Specific Past Times	She has been exercising ever since she graduated. This sentence indicates she started exercising at the time of her graduation and continues to exercise.
Avoiding Specific Past Times	She has been exercising Saturday. This sentence is incorrect because it specifies a particular past time.

Concept #16: Recently/Lately

Present Perfect Progressive Tense

The present perfect progressive tense is formed using the following structure: [subject] + have/has + been + [verb] + -ing

Example Sentences:

- Recently, I have been dieting. This sentence means that the speaker started dieting in the past and is still dieting now.
- I have been dieting over the past few days. This indicates the action started a few days ago and is still ongoing.
- I have been dieting since last month. This shows that the speaker started dieting last month and continues to diet.

It is incorrect to specify a specific past period using this tense. For example:



- I have been dieting last month. (Incorrect)

Using "Recently" and "Lately"

Recently and lately are used to highlight that the activity is continuous without specifying a precise past time period.

Example Sentences:

- Recently, I have been studying English. This indicates the speaker started studying English in the recent past and continues to study.
- Lately, she has been feeling very tired. This shows that she started feeling tired in the recent past and continues to feel tired.
- I have been watching a lot of movies lately. The speaker started watching movies in the recent past and continues to do so.

Avoiding Specific Past Times

Introducing a specific past period is not allowed in the present perfect progressive tense.

Correct Sentences:

- She has been exercising ever since she graduated. This sentence indicates she started exercising at the time of her graduation and continues to exercise.
- Lately, she has been exercising a lot. This shows she started exercising more in the recent past and continues to do so.
- She has been exercising on Saturdays. Indicates that she started exercising on Saturdays in the past and continues this routine.

Incorrect Sentence:

- She has been exercising Saturday. This sentence is incorrect because it specifies a particular past time.

Additional Examples for Better Understanding

- Recently: Correct: Recently, I have been learning French. Incorrect: Recently, I have been learning French last week.
- Lately: Correct: Lately, they have been traveling a lot. Incorrect: Lately, they have been traveling last month.
- General Usage: Correct: He has been reading a lot of books recently. Incorrect: He has been reading a lot of books last year.

Practice Exercises



- Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb: Recently, I _____ (exercise) every morning. Lately, she _____ (feel) very happy. They _____ (work) on a new project since January.
- Identify if the sentences are correct or incorrect. Correct the incorrect sentences: Recently, I have been cooking Italian food. I have been traveling to Europe last summer. Lately, we have been studying for our exams.

Answers:

1. Answers below:

- Recently, I have been exercising every morning. - Lately, she has been feeling very happy. - They have been working on a new project since January.

2. Answers below:

- Recently, I have been cooking Italian food. (Correct)
- I have been traveling to Europe last summer. (Incorrect - Correct: I traveled to Europe last summer.)
- Lately, we have been studying for our exams. (Correct)

By understanding and practicing these examples, you can become more comfortable using the present perfect progressive tense with "recently" and "lately" to indicate continuous actions.



Practice Check

Answer the quiz questions below with responses consistent with the grammar concepts taught on the left.

ITEM 01

Recently, I _____ (exercise) every morning.

Answer: _____

ITEM 02

Lately, she _____ (feel) very happy.

Answer: _____

ITEM 03

They _____ (work) on a new project since January.

Answer: _____

ITEM 04

For the past few days, it _____ (rain) a lot.

Answer: _____

ITEM 05

Recently, he _____ (watch) a lot of movies.

Answer: _____

ITEM 06

I _____ (read) this book since last week.

Answer: _____

ITEM 07

She _____ (cook) a lot of new recipes lately.

Answer: _____

ITEM 08

We _____ (discuss) this topic for the past few days.

Answer: _____

ITEM 09

Lately, he _____ (think) about moving to another city.

Answer: _____

ITEM 10

Recently, they _____ (plan) their summer vacation.

Answer: _____



ITEM 11

For the past few days, I _____ (feel) a bit under the weather.

Answer: _____

ITEM 12

She _____ (take) online courses lately.

Answer: _____

ITEM 13

Recently, I _____ (try) to eat healthier.

Answer: _____

ITEM 14

Lately, he _____ (study) a lot for his exams.

Answer: _____

ITEM 15

They _____ (build) a new house for the past few months.

Answer: _____

ITEM 16

I _____ (practice) yoga recently.

Answer: _____

ITEM 17

Lately, she _____ (write) a lot of articles.

Answer: _____

ITEM 18

Recently, we _____ (explore) new places in our city.

Answer: _____

ITEM 19

He _____ (learn) a new language for the past few weeks.

Answer: _____

ITEM 20

For the past few days, she _____ (try) to fix her computer.

Answer: _____



ITEM 21

I _____ (improve) my cooking skills recently.

Answer: _____

ITEM 22

Lately, he _____ (drive) to work instead of taking the bus.

Answer: _____

ITEM 23

They _____ (visit) many museums since they arrived in the city.

Answer: _____

ITEM 24

She _____ (train) for a marathon for the past few months.

Answer: _____



Self-check Answer Key

Use the key after you have completed every item on your own.

ITEM 01

Recently, I have been exercising every morning.

ITEM 02

Lately, she has been feeling very happy.

ITEM 03

They have been working on a new project since January.

ITEM 04

For the past few days, it has been raining a lot.

ITEM 05

Recently, he has been watching a lot of movies.

ITEM 06

I have been reading this book since last week.

ITEM 07

She has been cooking a lot of new recipes lately.

ITEM 08

We have been discussing this topic for the past few days.

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Lately, he has been thinking about moving to another city.

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Recently, they have been planning their summer vacation.

ITEM 11

For the past few days, I have been feeling a bit under the weather.

ITEM 12

She has been taking online courses lately.

ITEM 13

Recently, I have been trying to eat healthier.

ITEM 14

Lately, he has been studying a lot for his exams.

**ITEM 15**

They have been building a new house for the past few months.

ITEM 16

I have been practicing yoga recently.

ITEM 17

Lately, she has been writing a lot of articles.

ITEM 18

Recently, we have been exploring new places in our city.

ITEM 19

He has been learning a new language for the past few weeks.

ITEM 20

For the past few days, she has been trying to fix her computer.

ITEM 21

I have been improving my cooking skills recently.

ITEM 22

Lately, he has been driving to work instead of taking the bus.

ITEM 23

They have been visiting many museums since they arrived in the city.

ITEM 24

She has been training for a marathon for the past few months.