

Focus: Periods of time, How long questions, Duration vs When, Noun phrases, Subject-verb clauses, Simultaneous actions, Present tense for future, Avoiding future will, Time connectors, Information questions

1. Expressing Duration: *For* vs. *During* vs. *While*

These words answer the question "How long?" or tell us *when* something happened in relation to another event.

FOR (Duration)

- **Rule:** Use **for** + a **period of time** (a number or quantity of time). It answers "How long?".
- **Examples:** for 10 minutes, for two weeks, for a long time.
 - *I have lived here **for** six years.*

DURING (Noun Phrase)

- **Rule:** Use **during** + a **noun phrase**. It tells us *when* something happened within an event. It does not tell us the length of time, just the period.
- **Examples:** during the movie, during the flight, during the night.
 - *She fell asleep **during** the meeting.*

WHILE (Subject + Verb)

- **Rule:** Use **while** + a **clause** (Subject + Verb). It indicates two actions happening simultaneously (at the same time).
- **Examples:** while I was sleeping, while she is working.
 - *He called **while** I was cooking dinner.*

2. Future Time Clauses with *While* & *When*

When talking about the future using time connectors (*while*, *when*, *before*, *after*), we follow a special rule.

- **Main Clause:** Uses **Future** (*will / be going to*).
- **Time Clause (after while/when):** Uses **Present Simple** (or Present Continuous). **NEVER** use "will" in the time clause.

Main Clause (Future Result)	Time Connector	Time Clause (Present Verb)
I will wait here	while	you finish your coffee.
He won't leave	while	she is not ready.
Will you help me	while	I cook dinner?

3. Questions: *When* vs. *How Long*

- **When:** Asks for a specific point in time (a date, a time, a year).
 - A: **When** did you arrive? B: At 5:00 PM.
- **How long:** Asks for the duration (amount of time).
 - A: **How long** did you wait? B: For two hours.

Practice

Instruction: Complete the sentences. Use **for**, **during**, **while**, **when**, **how long**, or the **correct form of the verb** in parentheses (paying attention to Future Time Clauses).

1. We have waited in line _____ over three hours.
2. I promise I won't use my phone _____ the movie starts.
3. _____ (you/look) after my dog while I am on vacation next week?
4. She didn't speak to anyone _____ the break.
5. We will stay indoors while it _____ (rain) this afternoon.
6. _____ did the meeting start? Was it at 2:00 PM?
7. I can't believe they talked _____ the entire concert!
8. Please don't interrupt me while I _____ (speak).
9. _____ have you been working at this company? Since 2010?
10. He won't sign the contract while he _____ (not/understand) the terms.
11. Did you meet anyone interesting _____ your stay in New York?
12. What _____ (she/do) while she waits for the train tomorrow?
13. My parents visited us _____ two weeks last summer.
14. The teacher gets angry when students _____ (not/listen) to instructions.
15. _____ were you living in Japan before you moved here?

Answer Key

1. for
2. when / while (context dependent, usually 'when' for a start point, 'while' for duration)
3. Will you look
4. during
5. rains / is raining
6. When
7. during / for (during implies specific event, for implies duration)
8. am speaking / speak
9. How long
10. does not understand / doesn't understand
11. during
12. will she do
13. for
14. do not listen / don't listen
15. How long