

“Essential IELTS Language: Since, For, During & While” @ <http://www.youtube.com/ESL4free>

In this movie we will look at words used to refer to periods of time. Terms looked at are: Since, For, During & While.

In these examples people are talking about a range of topics related to their personal lives in the IELTS Speaking Exam.

- 1: I have known Jane since 2003.
- 2: I have known Jane for seven years.
- 3: I met Jane during a holiday in Toronto.
- 4: I met Jane while I was having a holiday in Toronto.

1 to 4: All of these examples are talking about a period of time. The terms used to do this are “since”, “for”, “during” and “while”.

- 5: I have been studying at the university since 2009.
- 6: I haven't seen my brother since last December.
- 7: I haven't been back to the restaurant since I got food poisoning.
- 8: I haven't seen Tom since we met at a party last year.

5 to 8: “Since” is used to talk about a period of time that is not complete - from a specific time in the past until now.

5 & 6: “Since” can refer back to a date or time in the past, such as “2009” or “last December”, or even 8am or midday, for example.

7 & 8: “Since” can also refer to a specific event in the past - “I got food poisoning” or “we met at a party last year”. “Since” is often followed by a noun or a pronoun.

Special Note: The word “ever” can often go in front of “since” - for example, “I haven't had much spare time ever since starting my university course”.

- 9: I have been studying at the university for three years.
- 10: I haven't seen Tom for a long time.
- 11: I have been having French lessons for six months.
- 12: I was studying French for six months.
- 13: I fell asleep in the lecture for about 30 minutes.
- 14: I lived in Manchester for two years.

9 to 14: “For” is used to refer to a specific period of time, rather than back to a time in the past - “three years”, “30 minutes” or “a long time”, for example.

9, 10 & 11: “For” can be used to talk about a period of time that is not yet complete, but needs to be used with the present perfect (have). You cannot say, for example, “I am studying at the university for three years” or “I study at the university for three years”.

12, 13 & 14: For can also be used to talk about a period of time in the past that is complete, and can be used with any past tense.

- 15: I was so tired, I fell asleep during the movie.
16: I was so tired, I fell asleep while I was watching the movie.
17: I met a lot of interesting people during my holiday.
18: I met a lot of interesting people while I was on holiday.
19: I had a lot of part-time jobs during my university course.
20: I had a lot of part-time jobs while I was studying at university.

15 to 20: "During" and "while" are used to talk about an event (fell asleep) that occurred over a period when something else was happening (watching a movie).

15, 17 & 19: "During" is always followed by a noun - for example "the movie" and "my holiday".

16, 18 & 20: "While" is followed by a subject and verb. For example, "I was watching.." or "I was on holiday".