Lesson Objectives

1. How do you ask about length of time, or duration?
2. What verb tenses can you use with How long...?
3. How do you explain length of time with take and last?
4. How do you ask about frequency?
5. What verb tense do you usually use with How often...?
Length of Time (Duration)

How do you talk about *length of time*?

**Asking about and explaining length of time**

- To ask about length of time, use the question *How long...?*
- To explain length of time, use the preposition *for*.
- You can also add *all* to a time word *without* a preposition.

  > *How long* did you sleep last night?
  > I slept *for seven hours*.

  > *How long* will you stay with your parents?
  > I will stay with them *all summer*.

*In conversational American English, the preposition *for* is often not spoken, but it is understood.*

**Verb Tense with How long...?**

- Verb tense is *not* connected to the idea of *duration*.
- The verb tense is controlled by other time words.

  > I *slept* for seven hours *last night*.
  > I *try* to sleep for at least seven hours *every night*.
  > I *am going to sleep* for seven or eight hours *tonight*.

Take and Last

What verbs do you use to talk about *length of time*?

**Take**

- To talk about length of time, *take* is commonly used.
- There a standard pattern with *take*.
  > it + (take) + time + infinitive (to do)
- Do *not* add a *preposition* with *take*.

  > It takes about thirty minutes to bake a cake.
  > It takes two or three days to drive from New York to Los Angeles.

- If it is important to say *who* did it, use the following pattern.
  > it + (take) + (person) + (time) + infinitive (to do)
- If you use a *pronoun*, use the *object* form.

  > It only took us half an hour to clean up after the party.
  > It took me a few minutes to figure out the answer.

*The *object pronouns* in English are me, you, her, him, it, us, them.*

**Last**

- If something is *out of your control*, use the verb *last*.
  > (something) + (last) + (time)
- Use *last* with events and other schedules.
- Do *not* add a *preposition* with *last*.

  > The movie lasts about ninety minutes.
  > The battery on an iPhone lasts about ten hours with normal usage.
## Frequency

*How do you talk about frequency?*

### Asking about and explaining frequency

- To ask about frequency, use the question *How often...?*
- To explain frequency, you can use the following **adverbs**.
  > always, often, sometimes, occasionally, rarely, never
- The word **every** can be added to time words.
  > every day, every week, every morning
- You can also use the following pattern.
  > (number)* + times + a + (time)**
    - *How often* do you eat dinner at a restaurant?
      > We usually eat dinner at home, but occasionally we go to a restaurant.
    - *How often* do you have quizzes in grammar class?
      > We have a quiz every Monday.
    - *How often* do you get an Uber?
      > I get an Uber two or three times a week**.

**Instead of one time / two times, you can use once / twice.**

**Do not add the preposition in to this phrase.**

### Verb Tense with How often...?

- When you talk about frequency, you should usually* use the **present simple** tense.
  > I *always* brush my teeth before I go to bed.
  > Skyler *always brushes* his teeth before he goes to bed.

*You can use the **past simple** tense if you add a clear past time, like when I was...*
  > I went to the beach once or twice a month when I lived in Hawaii.