

A

During, in, over, throughout

We use **during** or **in** to talk about a period of time within which an event or activity occurs. The activity may continue for the whole of the period of time:

- I stayed at home **during** the summer. (or ... **in** the summer.)
- The population of the city has actually fallen **during** the last decade. (or ... **in** the last ...)

or the event may happen at some time, or be repeated a number of times, in the period of time:

- We went to Turkey **during** the summer. (or ... **in** the summer.)
- He suffered a number of injuries **during** his career as a jockey. (or ... **in** his career ...)

We use **during**, rather than **in**, to mean 'at some time in the period of' before nouns such as **illness, holiday, meal, stay, treatment, and visit**, when we refer to an event which lasts some time:

- The President made the speech **during** a *visit* to Madrid.

and also with the phrase **the whole (of)**, emphasising duration of an entire period:

- No one was allowed to leave the ship **during** *the whole* of its time in port.

We can use **throughout** to emphasise that something happens over the whole of a period of time:

- We had enough firewood to keep us warm **throughout** the winter. (or ... warm **during** / **through** the winter.)

B

We can use **over** or **during** when we talk about something that goes on for a length of time within a *period of time*, either for some of that period or for the whole of it:

- Weather conditions have been improving **over** / **during** *the past few days*.
- I hit my head and can't remember anything that happened **over** / **during** *the next hour or so*.

However, if we talk about a short event that happens within a period of time, we prefer **during**:

- She sneezed* **during** the performance. (= once or a few times; *not* ... over the performance.)
- During** a pause in the conversation, *she left the room*. (*not* Over a pause ...)

C

Until, by, up to

There are a number of ways of saying when something that has continued for some time stops –

☆ We use **until** (or informally **till**) to say that something continued or will continue to a particular time, and **by** to say that something happened or will happen either before a particular time or at that time at the latest. Compare:

- We have to be at home **until** 2:30. (We must not leave home before 2:30) *and*
- We have to be at home **by** 2:30. (We must arrive home either before or at 2:30)

☆ In informal contexts we can use **up to** or **up till** instead of **until**. We commonly use **up to** / **till** with **now** and with **then**:

- I've just bought a tablet computer. I've always used a laptop **up to** *now*. (or ... **up till** *now* ...)

☆ We can use **until now** to talk about a situation that will not continue beyond now:

- Supermarkets say that **until now** there has been little consumer interest in buying organic produce. (The situation has changed or is going to change)

Note, however, that we don't use **until now** for a situation that will or may continue into the future. Instead we can use **so far** or, in formal contexts, **to date**:

- It was certainly the best match of the football season **so far**.
- When the contract is signed it will be the building company's biggest order **to date**.

Exercises

90.1 In which of the sentences can the word in brackets replace **during**? Write ✓ if it can replace it and X if it can't. (A & B)

- 1 I'm going to get a cup of coffee *during* the break. (*in*)
- 2 She lost more than 15 kilos *during* her illness and she was off work for two months. (*in*)
- 3 He twisted his ankle *during* the match and had to retire injured. (*over*)
- 4 The weather was terrible here *during* December. (*in*)
- 5 The meeting will be some time *during* January. (*over*)
- 6 People no longer expect to be employed in the same place *during* the whole of their working lives. (*in*)
- 7 Do you think standards of numeracy have fallen *during* the last 20 years? (*over*)
- 8 She sang in a choir *during* her childhood. (*throughout*)
- 9 The town was rebuilt *during* the early 16th century. (*over*)
- 10 It was impossible to buy bananas *during* the war. (*in*)
- 11 Karl had a phone call *during* the meal and had to leave early. (*in*)
- 12 My stomach ache got steadily worse *during* the evening. (*over*)

90.2 Complete the pairs of sentences with **by** and **until**. Use **by** in one sentence and **until** in the other. (C)

- 1 a I was feeling really hungry the time dinner was served.
b We sat around the fire talking the time dinner was served.
- 2 a Sorry I'm late. I've been in a meeting now.
b I thought Lars would have been here now.
- 3 a I've got to pay the money back the end of the month.
b I've got the end of the month to pay the money back.
- 4 a I put on an extra pair of socks. then my feet were freezing cold.
b I stood outside the cinema for an hour. then my feet were freezing cold.
- 5 a She was already a leading economist her early twenties.
b She studied economics her early twenties and then moved into law.
- 6 a I hope to finish the decorating the weekend.
b It will take me the weekend to finish the decorating.

90.3 Underline the correct or more likely option (or both if possible) in this email. (A-C)

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B I U F- T T T Plain Text Check Spelling

Hi Pete

(1) *Over / During* the last three weeks we've covered thousands of kilometres by train.
 (2) *So far / Until now* we've been to Stockholm, Berlin and Rome, and now we're in Amsterdam.
 (3) *So far / Until now* I thought Rome was the best city we'd been to, but I think I love Amsterdam even more. We've been here for three days, and have been very impressed with what we've seen
 (4) *so far / until now*. We spent the first two days in galleries, looking particularly at Van Gogh's paintings. I didn't know much about his work
 (5) *so far / until now*. Incidentally, we bumped into your friend Eleni
 (6) *in / during* our visit to the Van Gogh museum. We're staying here
 (7) *until / by* Saturday and then we're going to Paris. Must go now. We're off to The Hague for the day and have to be at the station
 (8) *until / by* 9:30.

Hope all is well with you.

Love, Keira