

Time Expressions with Hacer

The verb “hacer” can be used in a number of ways to indicate the length of time an action has been taking place. The first way uses the formula:

Hace + time + **que** + present tense form of the verb

Hace un año que estudio español..... I have been studying Spanish for one year.

Hace dos años que ellas estudian inglés They have been studying English for two years.

To make this type of expression negative, just add the word “no” before the verb, as in the following formula:

Hace + time + **que** + **no** + present tense form of the verb

Hace un año que no estudio español..... I haven't studied Spanish for a year.

Hace dos años que ellas no estudian inglés They haven't studied English for two years.

Another way to use the verb “hacer” to express how long something has been taking place is to use the following formula:

Present tense form of the verb + **desde hace** + time

Estudio español desde hace un año..... I have been studying Spanish for one year.

Ellas estudian inglés desde hace dos años..... They have been studying English for two years.

To make this type of expression negative, again simply add the word “no” before the verb, as in the following formula:

No + present tense form of the verb + **desde hace** + time

No estudio español desde hace un año I haven't studied Spanish for a year.

Ellas no estudian inglés desde hace dos años..... They haven't studied English for two years.

So, when it comes to using the verb “hacer” to express the length of time an action has been taking place, there are two ways to say the same thing:

Estudio español desde hace un año.

Hace un año que estudio español.

I have been studying Spanish for one year.