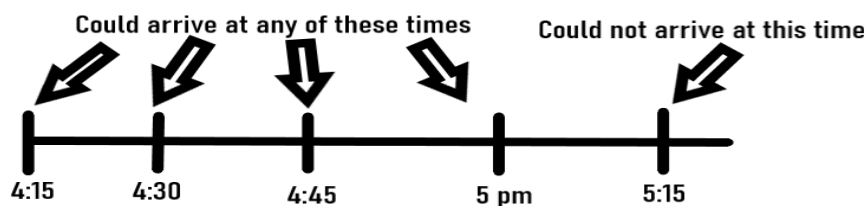


By vs Until

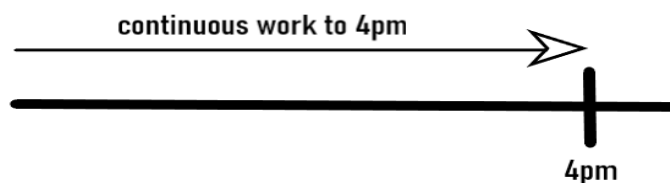
“By” and “until” are both words used to express a period of time, but they are commonly confused by English learners. “By” expresses that something will happen at or before a certain time. This thing happens *in a single moment*, not continuously.

Eg. *I will arrive home by 5pm.*



“Until” expresses that something will happen continuously from one point to another.

Eg. *I will work until 4pm.*



Note: “until” is often used with negative statements to express a continuous state of “not being.”

Eg. *The first package should arrive by tomorrow. But the second one will not arrive until next week.*



1. In the sentences below, choose whether “by” or “until” fits best.

- a) I have to wait by/until tomorrow for my internet to turn on.
- b) She wants the project finished by/until next week.
- c) The neighbours kept yelling at each other by/until someone called the police.
- d) Marie wants to work at the café by/until she finishes her degree.
- e) He won't quit his job by/until he finds a new one.
- f) The war continued by/until the two countries made peace.
- g) Could you please get back to me by/until this afternoon?
- h) The soccer match should be over by/until half past four.
- i) We have by/until Thursday to decide.

Sometimes both “by” and “until” can fit in a sentence, but it changes the meaning.
 E.g. “He’ll be at the party by 7.” He will arrive at or before 7.
 E.g. “He’ll be at the party until 7” He will leave the party at 7.



2. Match the sentences below with the logical follow up sentence.

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. She’ll be the CEO by next month. | 1. She plans to make a lot of changes. <i>a)</i> |
| b. She’ll be the CEO until next month. | 2. She’s looking forward to retirement. <i>b)</i> |
| a. It’s going to rain by the weekend. | 1. But it’s going to be sunny on Saturday. <i>b)</i> |
| b. It’s going to rain until the weekend. | 2. But it probably won’t rain today. <i>a)</i> |
| a. Mom will be home by 5. | 1. And after that we can do whatever we want <i>b)</i> |
| b. Mom will be home until 5. | 2. We should clean up before she gets here. <i>a)</i> |



3. James has a long flight on Friday. Read his travel plan below and complete the “by” and “until” statements about his plans.

4am	Wake up
5:00	Leave the house
5:15	Catch the bus to the airport
6:30	Go through customs
8:00	Flight leaves!!!!



- a) He has to wake up *by 4am.*
- b) He doesn’t have to leave the house *until 5:00.*
- c) He needs to be at the bus stop *by 5:15.*
- d) He should arrive at customs *by 6:30.*
- e) The flight won’t leave *until 8:00.*



4. James needs to catch a connecting flight at Heathrow airport, and then he needs to get to his hotel. Read the second half of his schedule and make your own “by” or “until” statements.

11am	Arrive at Heathrow
3pm	Flight to Istanbul leaves Heathrow
7:00	Flight arrives in Istanbul
7:45	Train to hotel leaves
8:45	Check in to hotel (they close at 9!)





5. Now make 5 “by” or “until” sentences about your own life.
