il y a (in relation to time) = “ago” (three weeks ago = il y a trois semaines – in French, “il y a” goes before the time expression, whereby in English, “ago” goes after the time expression)
 I washed the dishes two hours ago. *J’ai fait la vaisselle il y a deux heures*.

pendant = a particular period of time that has ended in the past (used with the passé composé)
 I washed the dishes for two hours. *J’ai fait la vaisselle pendant deux heures.*

depuis = period of time that started in the past that continues into the present (hence, the French necessitate the entire sentence is in the present tense)
I have washed the dishes for the past two hours (and, at this moment that I’m speaking, I’m still washing them). *Je fais la vaisselle depuis deux heures*.

VOULOIR (to want) - used with an infinitive

veux

veux

veut

voulons

voulez

veulent

I want to go to the movies. Je veux aller au cinéma.

POUVOIR (to be able to/can) - used with an infinitive

peux

peux

peut

pouvons

pouvez

peuvent

Je peux aller au cinéma. I can go to the movie.

DEVOIR (to have to/must) - used with an infinitive

dois

dois

doit

devons

devez

doivent

Je dois aller au cinéma. I must go to the movies.

VENIR (to come), REVENIR (to come back), DEVENIR (to become)

viens, viens, vient, venons, venez, viennent

reviens, reviens, revient, revenons, revenez, reviennent

deviens, deviens, devient, devenons, devenez, deviennent

Je viens dans la chambre.

Le passé récent

venir de + infinitive = JUST

The recent past IS the expression “venir de” + infinitive

I just went to the movies. Je viens d'aller au cinéma.

She just cooked. Elle vient de cuisiner.

venir + infinitive = describes purpose

Je viens manger le pain.

VENIR IN SUMMARY:

1) le passé récent - venir de – JUST – I just learned well. *Je viens d’apprendre bien.*

2) to describe the act of coming (to come) – I came to the park. *Je suis venu au parc.*

3) venir + infinitive describes purpose – I come to see you (I come for the purpose of seeing you. I come in order to see you.). *Je viens te voir.*