

PRESENT PERFECT / PAST SIMPLE

PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE

RULES FOR PRES. PERFECT & PAST SIMPLE	EXERCISES
<u>PRESENT PERFECT</u> Simple / Present perfect continuous Present perfect simple refers to: 1) Recent events, without a definite time given. The recentness may be indicated by 'just'. <i>We've missed the turning. I've just seen a ghost!</i> 2) Indefinite events, which happened at an unknown time in the past. No definite time is given. <i>Jim has had three car accidents, (up to the present)</i> 3) Indefinite events which may have an obvious result in the present. <i>I've twisted my ankle, (that's why I'm limping)</i> 4) With STATE verbs, a state which lasts up to the present. <i>I've lived here for the past ten years.</i> 5) A habitual action in a period of time up to the present. <i>I've been jogging every morning for the last month.</i> <u>CONTRAST WITH PAST SIMPLE</u> 1) Past simple is used with time expressions which refer to definite times. The time may be <u>stated</u> (given in sentence) or <u>understood</u> (not given). Compare: <i>I've bought a new car.</i> (indefinite) <i>/ I bought the car after all.</i> (Implied definite: the car we talked about) The choice between past simple and present perfect for recent events may depend on the <u>attitude</u> of the speaker. This in turn may depend on <u>whether the speaker feels distant in time or place from the event</u>. <i>I've left my wallet in the car. I'm going back to get it.</i> Here the speaker may be about to return, and feels that the event is connected with the present. <i>I left my wallet in the car. I'm going back to get it.</i>	1) CIRCLE © the correct word or phrase in each sentence. a) I can't believe it, Inspector. You mean that Smith <u>stole/has stolen/has been stealing</u> money from the till (Kasse) all this time! b) You three boys look very guilty! What <u>did you do/have you done/have you been doing</u> since I <u>left/have left</u> the room? c) Why on earth <u>didn't you tell/haven't you told</u> me about that loose floorboard? I <u>tripped/have tripped</u> over it just now and hurt myself. d) It's a long time since I <u>saw/have seen/have been seeing</u> your brother Paul. What <u>did he do/has he done/has he been doing</u> lately? e) I can't believe that you <u>ate/have eaten/have been eating</u> three pizzas already! I only <u>brought/have only brought</u> them in fifteen minutes ago! f) Don't forget that you <u>didn't see/haven't seen</u> Mrs Dawson. She <u>has waited/has been waiting</u> outside since 10.30. g) What <u>did you think/have you thought</u> of Brighton? <u>Did you stay/Have you stayed</u> there long? h) I feel really tired. I <u>weeded/have weeded/have been weeding</u> the garden for the last three hours and I <u>didn't rest/haven't rested</u> for a single moment. i) I'm having problems with David. He <u>has called/has been calling</u> me up in the middle of the night and <u>told/telling</u> me his troubles. j) How long <u>did you have/have you had/have you been having</u> driving lessons? And <u>did you take/have you taken/have you been taking</u> your test yet?

The speaker may feel separated in time from the event, or be further away.

I left my wallet in the car. I won't get it back, so I reported it to my bank.

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

This tense can refer to a range of meanings, depending on the time expression used and the context.

- 1) A state which lasts up to the present moment
I've been waiting for you for three hours!
- 2) An incomplete activity
I've been cleaning the house but I still haven't finished.
- 3) To emphasise duration
I've been writing letters all morning.
- 4) A recently finished activity
I've been running. That's why I look hot.
- 5) A repeated activity
I've been taking French lessons this year.

CONTRASTS WITH PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE

There may be little contrast when some state verbs are used.

How long have you lived here?

How long have you been living here?

Some verbs (especially sit, lie, wait and stay) prefer the continuous form.

There may be a contrast between completion and incompleteness, especially if the number of items completed is mentioned.

- 1) Completed: emphasis on achievement
I've ironed five shirts this morning.
- 2) Incomplete, or recently completed: emphasis on duration
I've been ironing my shirts this morning.

Meaning with present perfect verb forms is associated with certain time expressions. Contrast with past simple may depend on the choice of time expression.

- 1) Past simple: referring to a specific finished time.

yesterday, last week, on Sunday

- 2) Present perfect: with 'indefinite' time expressions meaning '*up to now*', *since 1968*, *already*

2 Decide how many different endings (1-10) you can find for sentences (a-j). Write the NUMBERS on the lines after the sentences.

The sentences you make must make sense!

a) EXAMPLE: <i>I haven't been feeling very well.</i> ANSWER: 5,8...	1) time and time again
b) I went to the dentist's _____	2) all my life
c) I've lived here _____	3) so far
d) Don't worry. I haven't been waiting _____	4) for the time being
e) I've written two pages _____	5) for the past hour or so
f) I waited outside your house _____	6) yet
g) I've warned you about this _____	7) till half past eight
h) I haven't made a decision _____	8) for a while
i) The repair worked _____	9) the other day
j) I've decided to believe you _____	10) long

3 Put each verb in (brackets) into the most appropriate perfect or past verb form.

- a) So far, we haven't noticed. (not/notice) anything unusual, but we (not/pay) very close attention.
- b) I'm sorry I (not/come) to class lately.
- c) I (work) late in the evenings for the past fortnight.
- d) I wonder if Mary (reach) home yet? She (leave) too late to catch the bus.
- e) Here is the news. The Home Office (announce) that the two prisoners who (escape) from Dartmoor prison earlier this morning (give themselves up) to local police.
- f) (you/make up) your minds? What (you/decide) to do?
- g) Harry (leave) home rather suddenly and we (not/hear) from him since.
- h) Recent research (show) that Columbus (not/discover) America, but that Vikings (land) there five hundred years before him.

a) Many time expressions are not associated with a specific verb form, since they refer both to finished time or time up to the present, depending on the speaker's perspective.

I haven't seen Helen recently. I saw Jim recently.

b) Other time expressions include:

for, never, before, all my life, for a long time, today, all day, every day

These may be used with either past simple or present perfect.

i) I think that people (become) tired of the poor quality of television programmes, though they (improve) lately.

j) (something/happen) to the phone lines? I (try) to get through to Glasgow for the past hour.

k) Bill (get) that new job, but he (complain) about it ever since.

4) Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the *word given. Do not change the word given.

EXAMPLE: a) This has been my home for thirty years.

**lived*

I have lived here for thirty years.

b) Eating Chinese food is new to me.

never

I _____ before.

c) Tony hasn't been to Paris before.

first

It's _____ to Paris.

d) We haven't been swimming for ages.

since

It's _____ swimming.

e) Mary started learning French five years ago.

has

Mary _____ five years.

f) I am on the tenth page of this letter I am writing.

ten

So far, _____ I of this letter.

g) It's over twenty years since they got married.

for

They have _____ than twenty years.

h) The last time I saw Dick was in 1995.

seen

	I haven't _____ 1995. i) There is a definite improvement in your work. has Lately, _____ improved. j) This is my second visit to Hungary. visited This is the _____ Hungary.
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