

# Contrast: Past Simple and Present Perfect

Read the dialogue:



- Beth** Have you ever been to Bulgaria?  
**Fred** Yes, I went there last year with my family. Have you been there?  
**Beth** No, I haven't. What cities did you visit?  
**Fred** We didn't visit any cities. We went skiing.  
**Beth** Sounds great. I've never been skiing, but I'd love to go. Was it good?  
**Fred** Not really. I fell and broke my leg on the first day, so I spent the rest of the holiday in hospital!

## LEARN THIS! Past simple and present perfect contrast



- a** We use the present perfect to talk about an experience at any time in the past. The exact time of the experience is not stated.

*I've read 'The Hobbit' three times.*

*Have you ever travelled by helicopter?*

- b** We use the past simple to talk about a specific occasion in the past.

*I watched a good film on TV last night.*

*Did you go to Newcastle last weekend?*

- c** We often use the present perfect to ask and answer questions about an experience, and then use the past simple to give specific information about it.

*'Have you ever been to the USA?'*

*'Yes, I have. I went to New York last winter.'*

Read the **Learn this!** box. Why are some verbs in the dialogue in the **past simple** and others in the **present perfect**? Use rules a-c to explain.

## LOOK OUT!



We often use *been* (instead of *gone*) as the past participle of *go*. It means the person has gone and come back.

*She's been to a museum.* (She's now back at the hotel.)

*She's gone to a museum.* (She's still there.)

## Complete the sentences with *been* or *gone*.

- 1 I'm sorry, Adam isn't here. He's \_\_\_\_\_ to the shops.
- 2 My parents have \_\_\_\_\_ on holiday. They'll be back next week.
- 3 My hair is wet because I've \_\_\_\_\_ to the swimming pool.
- 4 Bess was here earlier, but now she's \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 I've \_\_\_\_\_ to Paris but I don't remember it very well.

Some of the sentences are incorrect. Rewrite them correctly.

- 1 I've read six books last year. ✗  
I read six books last year.
- 2 Jo washed her hair last night.
- 3 I had this watch since March.
- 4 Have you ever been to Spain?
- 5 'Tidy your room, please.' 'I already tidied it.'
- 6 We've eaten at that restaurant last Tuesday.
- 7 Peter has gone to the shops on Friday morning.
- 8 I've been kayaking twice in the last year.
- 9 'Did you do your homework yet?' 'No, not yet.'

Complete the sentences. Use the past simple form of the verb in one sentence, and the present perfect in the other.

- 1 have
  - a I \_\_\_\_\_ this laptop since my birthday.
  - b We \_\_\_\_\_ dinner in the garden last night.
- 2 not buy
  - a I \_\_\_\_\_ a new jacket in the sale last weekend.
  - b I \_\_\_\_\_ any new clothes for months.
- 3 leave
  - a I \_\_\_\_\_ home at seven and arrived at school at eight.
  - b I \_\_\_\_\_ your dinner in the fridge. You can heat it up later.



#### 4 not text

- a I \_\_\_\_\_ you last night because I don't have your number.
- b Jim \_\_\_\_\_ his girlfriend since Monday. She's a bit upset about it.

#### 5 go

- a I \_\_\_\_\_ to Turkey three times. The last time was in 2011.
- b Liam \_\_\_\_\_ to Morocco last summer.

Complete the dialogues with the verbs. Use the past simple or the present perfect.

go go never go not have stay visit

Max 1 \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ to Portugal?

Lucy Yes, I 2 \_\_\_\_\_ there last summer.

Max 3 \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ Porto?

Lucy No, we 4 \_\_\_\_\_ time. We 5 \_\_\_\_\_ in Lisbon.

Max I'd like to see Lisbon. I 6 \_\_\_\_\_ there.

be be not go see see

Tom I 7 \_\_\_\_\_ the new *Iron Man* film last Saturday.

8 \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ it?

Sarah No, I haven't. I 9 \_\_\_\_\_ to the cinema for ages.

10 \_\_\_\_\_ it good?

Tom Yes, it 11 \_\_\_\_\_ great. You should see it.

### LOOK OUT!



We use finished-time phrases (e.g. *yesterday*, *last week*, *at 2 p.m.*) with the past simple but not with the present perfect.

*I went to London last May.* ✓

~~*I've been to London last May.*~~ ✗

Read the **Look out!** box. Circle the correct words to complete the sentences.

- 1 I **travelled** / I've travelled to Paris on the Eurostar last May.
- 2 Tom loves the *Hunger Games* books. He **read** / He's read them all.
- 3 'Did you ever eat / Have you ever eaten at the Chinese restaurant in town?' 'No, never.'
- 4 I **bought** / I've bought this scarf on Saturday. Do you like it?
- 5 Where's my maths homework? Oh, no! I **forgot** / I've forgotten it!
- 6 Amy went on holiday to France last week. She **met** / She's met some really nice people.

Complete the dialogue with the verbs below. Use the present perfect or the past simple. Remember the difference between *been* and *gone*.

be go go not see spend take visit visit watch

A <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ you ever \_\_\_\_\_ abroad?

B Yes, I <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ the USA last summer with my family.

A What <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ it like? I <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ never \_\_\_\_\_ to America.

B Really interesting. We <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ a week in New York.

We <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ a boat trip round Manhattan and we

<sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ a basketball game at Madison Square Garden.

A Cool! <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ the Empire State Building?