

# Intermediate grammar exercise: present perfect simple

English grammar practice exercise, intermediate level.

This exercise focuses on the difference between the **present perfect simple** and **present perfect continuous**.

## Instructions:

Complete the sentences below by putting the verb in brackets into the **present perfect simple** or **present perfect continuous**.

- 1 Paul, (you/be)  to Egypt?
  - 2 How long (you/have)  that car, David?
  - 3 I (know)  Jana for ten years. We're best friends.
  - 4 Sorry I'm late, Peter. (you/wait)  long?
  - 5 How long (you/play)  the guitar? - Five years.
  - 6 She's in the kitchen preparing the food for the party. So far she (make)  about 20 sandwiches.
  - 7 I (like)  football ever since I first watched Liverpool play when I was eight years old.
  - 8 Our neighbours (make)  a noise all day.
  - 9 The price of petrol (go down)  by about 1%.
  - 10 The price of petrol (go down)  since last April.
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# Structure of present perfect simple

positive

I / you / we / they  
**have gone.**

he / she / it  
**has gone.**

Negative

I / you / we / they  
**haven't gone.**

he / she / it  
**hasn't gone.**

question

**Have**

I / you / we / they  
**gone?**

**Has**

he / she / it  
**gone?**

positive

I / you / we / they  
**have been working**

he / she / it  
**has been working**

Negative

I / you / we / they  
**haven't been working**

he / she / it  
**hasn't been working**

question

**Have**

I / you / we / they  
**been working?**

**Has**

he / she / it  
**been working?**

Common mistakes

I worked every day this week.

Steven has wrote a new book.

Did you have seen him before?

I didn't have seen him before.

I am here since last week.

I've been knowing him for 5 years.

Correct version

**I have worked** every day this week.

Steven has **written** a new book.

**Have you seen** him before?

**I haven't seen** him before.

**I have been** here since last week.

**I've known** him for 5 years.

Why?

We use the present perfect (*have worked*) when we speak about an unfinished time period (*this week, this year, etc.*).

We use the past participle of the verb – *written* is the past participle, *wrote* is the past simple.

The helping verb *have* is used in the present perfect and it is inverted with the person (*you have* becomes *have you*).

The helping verb *have* is used in the present perfect – to make it negative we simply add *not* (*n't*).

The present perfect is used to show an action which continues to the present (an unfinished action).

Verbs such as *know, want, like, etc.* (called [stative verbs](#)) suggest permanent states, not actions, so are used in the simple form, NOT the *-ing* form.

Common mistakes	Correct version	Why?
It has been rain heavily all day.	It has <b>been raining</b> heavily all day.	The structure of the present perfect continuous is <b>have/has + been + verb + -ing</b> .
I have sat here for two hours.	I have <b>been sitting</b> here for two hours.	Verbs such as <i>sit, wait, speak</i> , etc. ('non-stative' verbs) suggest continuity and so are mostly used in the continuous (-ing) form.
<b>Which?</b> <i>I have worked here for five years.</i> <i>I have been working here for five years.</i>		When BOTH the simple and continuous forms are possible, native speakers prefer to use the continuous.