

54 Present perfect or past simple?



1 Use

PRESENT PERFECT	PAST SIMPLE
to talk now about finished actions in the past, when we don't know the time or it isn't important: <i>I've been to that beach before.</i> <div> <div style="text-align: right;">NOW</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="width: 100px; border-top: 1px solid black; position: relative; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="position: absolute; left: 0; top: -5px;"> </div> <div style="position: absolute; right: 0; top: -5px;"> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">before</div> </div> </div>	to talk now about finished actions that happened at a definite time in the past: <i>I went to that beach last summer.</i> <div> <div style="text-align: right;">NOW</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="width: 100px; border-top: 1px solid black; position: relative; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="position: absolute; left: 50%; top: -5px;">▼</div> <div style="position: absolute; left: 0; top: -5px;"> </div> <div style="position: absolute; right: 0; top: -5px;"> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">last summer</div> </div> </div>
to talk now about situations that started in the past and are still continuing: <i>James has worked at the gym for two years.</i> <div> <div style="text-align: right;">NOW</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="width: 100px; border-top: 1px solid black; position: relative; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="position: absolute; left: 0; top: -5px;"> </div> <div style="position: absolute; right: 0; top: -5px;"> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">2 years</div> </div> <p>= He is working there now.</p> </div>	to talk now about situations that started and finished in the past: <i>James worked at the gym for two years.</i> <div> <div style="text-align: right;">NOW</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="width: 100px; border-top: 1px solid black; position: relative; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="position: absolute; left: 0; top: -5px;"> </div> <div style="position: absolute; right: 0; top: -5px;"> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">2 years</div> </div> <p>= He isn't working there now.</p> </div>
to talk about one or more finished actions in a time period that is still continuing: <i>We've had three yoga lessons this month.</i> <div> <div style="text-align: right;">NOW</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="width: 100px; border-top: 1px solid black; position: relative; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="position: absolute; left: 33%; top: -5px;">▼</div> <div style="position: absolute; left: 66%; top: -5px;">▼</div> <div style="position: absolute; left: 100%; top: -5px;"> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">this month</div> </div> </div>	to talk about finished actions in a time period that is past: <i>We had three yoga lessons in July.</i> <div> <div style="text-align: right;">NOW</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="width: 100px; border-top: 1px solid black; position: relative; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="position: absolute; left: 33%; top: -5px;">▼</div> <div style="position: absolute; left: 66%; top: -5px;">▼</div> <div style="position: absolute; left: 100%; top: -5px;"> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">July → August →</div> </div> </div>
with time expressions: <i>ever, never, just, yet, already, since, for, this week/month/year</i>	with time expressions: <i>yesterday, in the summer/June/2007, ago, last week/month/year, for</i>



It is sometimes difficult to hear /v/ in *I've, we've, you've, they've* and /s/ in *he's* and *she's*.

PAST SIMPLE *I finished work. He started early. We carried the bags.*
 PRESENT PERFECT *I've finished work. He's started early. We've carried the bags.*

The other words around the verb can usually help you to understand which form you hear:
*I finished work **an hour ago**.*
I've finished my work.

Practice

1 Match each sentence 1–4 with A or B.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 0 Emma has lived with us for two years. | → A She's still living with us.
B She doesn't live with us anymore. |
| 1 Kieran lived in Tokyo for six months. | A He still lives there.
B He doesn't live there now. |
| 2 I didn't go to the Tutankhamun exhibition when it was on. | A It's finished and I missed it.
B I am planning to visit it soon. |
| 3 I haven't seen Alex this morning. | A It's too late to see him now.
B I hope I will see him before the morning ends. |
| 4 Lucy has been to Toronto. | A She's still in Toronto.
B She went there for a holiday in 2007. |

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Choose the correct words in *italics* in the text.



ACTION TOURS is a small, friendly company and we (0) *have provided* / *provided* many different specialist activity holidays for people since we started. We (1) *have begun* / *began* in 2006 with only two types of holiday, but we (2) *have grown* / *grew* every year since then and can now offer a wide range of tours.

Our most popular holidays are skiing and cycling. Our main ski trainer, Jules, (3) *has taught* / *taught* skiing for nearly twenty years. Suraya is our cycling tour leader – she (4) *has taken* / *took* part in the National Championships three times and she (5) *has finished* / *finished* fifth last year.

This year we (6) *have organised* / *organised* over twenty activity holidays – already more than we (7) *have done* / *did* last year, when we (8) *have provided* / *provided* a total of eighteen. Take a look at our website ...

3 GRAMMAR IN USE Complete the conversation. Use the verbs in the correct tense.

OFFICIAL Here are the details. Now, (0) *have you entered* (you / enter) a long-distance swimming race before?

DARRYL Yes, (1) (I / have). (2) (I / do) two.

OFFICIAL When (3) (you / do) those?

DARRYL In 2005 and 2008.

OFFICIAL And (4) (you / complete) both of them?

DARRYL Yes, (5) (I / do). I (6) (finish) them both easily.

OFFICIAL Good. Now, let's talk about your training for this race ...

4 Use the words below to write information about yourself.

1 join a club? / kind of club? / member since? / why join?

I've joined a tennis club. I've been a member since July. I joined it because I love tennis!

2 go on an activity holiday? / kind of holiday? / when? / where to?

.....

3 ever visited a foreign country? / how many? / where?

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