Unit 13

# Present perfect and past 1 (I have done and I did)

## A

Study this example situation:



Tom is looking for his key. He can't find it.
He **has lost** his key. *(present perfect)*
This means that he doesn't have his key *now*.

Ten minutes later:



Now Tom **has found** his key. He has it now.
**Has** he **lost** his key? No, he **has found** it.
**Did** he **lose** his key? Yes, he **did**.
He **lost** his key *(past simple)*
but now he **has found** it. *(present perfect)*

The present perfect (something **has happened**) is a *present* tense. It always tells us about the situation *now*. 'Tom **has lost** his key' = he doesn't have his key *now* (see Unit 7).

The past simple (something **happened**) tells us only about the *past*. If somebody says 'Tom **lost** his key', this doesn't tell us whether he has the key now or not. It tells us only that he lost his key at some time in the past.

Do *not* use the present perfect if the situation now is different. Compare:

- They**'ve gone** away. They'll be back on Friday. (they are away *now*)
  They **went** away, but I think they're back at home now. (*not* They've gone)
- It **has stopped** raining now, so we don't need the umbrella. (it isn't raining *now*)
  It **stopped** raining for a while, but now it's raining again. (*not* It has stopped)

## B

You can use the present perfect for new or recent happenings:

- 'I**'ve repaired** the washing machine. It's working OK now.' 'Oh, that's good.'
- 'Sally **has had** a baby! It's a boy.' 'That's great news.'

Usually, you can also use the past simple:

- I **repaired** the washing machine. It's working OK now.

Use the past simple (*not* the present perfect) for things that are not recent or new:

- Mozart **was** a composer. He **wrote** more than 600 pieces of music.
  (*not* has been ... has written)
- My mother **grew** up in Italy. (*not* has grown)

Compare:

- Did you know that somebody **has invented** a new type of washing machine?
- Who **invented** the telephone? (*not* has invented)

## C

We use the present perfect to give new information (see Unit 7). But if we continue to talk about it, we normally use the past simple:

- A: Ow! I**'ve burnt** myself.
  B: How **did** you **do** that? (*not* have you done)
  A: I **picked** up a hot dish. (*not* have picked)
- A: Look! Somebody **has spilt** something on the sofa.
  B: Well, it **wasn't** me. I **didn't do** it. (*not* hasn't been ... haven't done)

Past simple → Unit 5 Present perfect → Units 7–8 Present perfect and past 2 → Unit 14
American English → Appendix 7

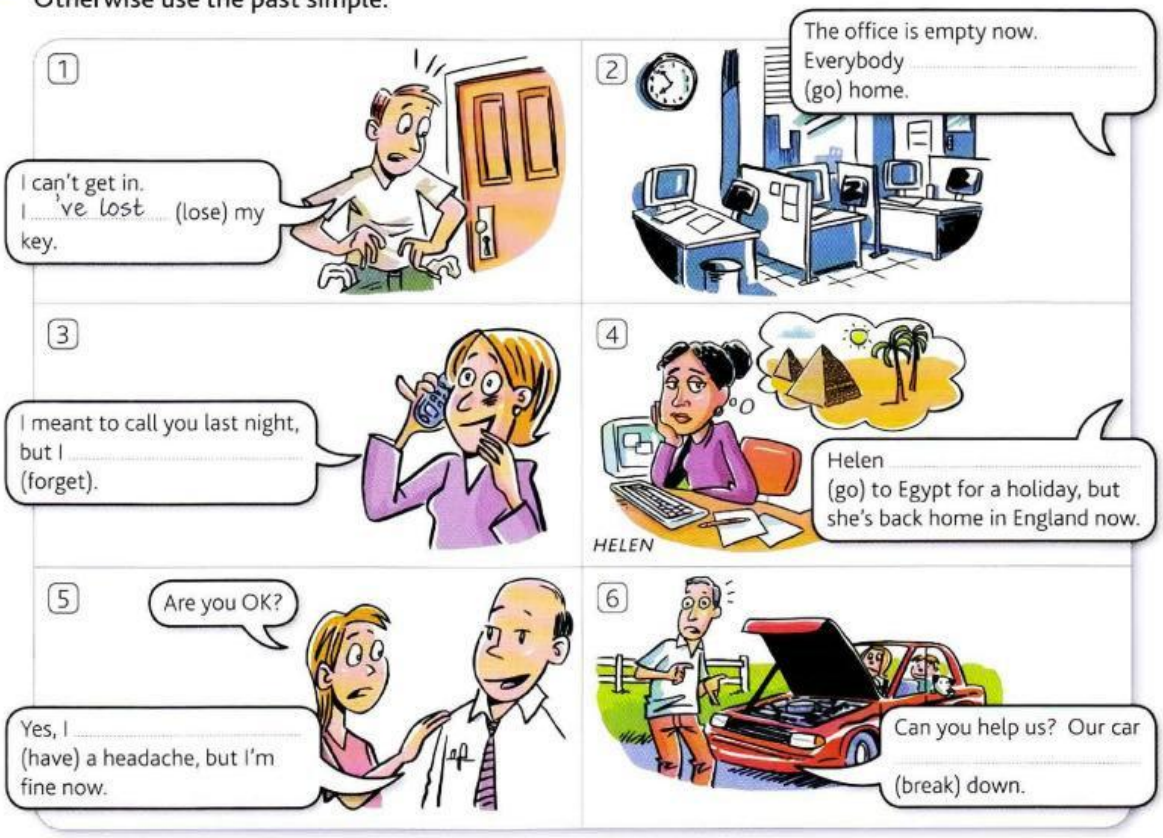


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# Exercises



**13.1** Complete the sentences using the verbs in brackets. Use the present perfect where possible. Otherwise use the present simple.




**13.2** Are the underlined parts of these sentences right or wrong? Correct them where necessary.

1 Did you hear about Sue? She's given up her job. OK
2 My mother has grown up in Italy. grew
3 How many poems has William Shakespeare written? .....
4 Ow! I've cut my finger. It's bleeding. .....
5 Drugs have become a big problem everywhere. .....
6 Who has invented paper? .....
7 Where have you been born? .....
8 Ellie isn't at home. She's gone shopping. .....
9 Albert Einstein has been the scientist who has developed the theory of relativity. .....

**13.3** Put the verb into the correct form, present perfect or past simple.

1 It stopped raining for a while, but now it's raining again. (it / stop)
2 The town where I live is very different now. It has changed a lot. (it / change)
3 I studied German at school, but ..... most of it now. (I / forget)
4 The police ..... three people, but later they let them go. (arrest)
5 What do you think of my English? Do you think ..... ? (it / improve)
6 A: Are you still reading the paper?
B: No, ..... with it. You can have it. (I / finish)
7 ..... for a job as a tourist guide, but I wasn't successful. (I / apply)
8 Where's my bike? ..... outside the house, but it's not there now. (it / be)
9 Quick! We need to call an ambulance. ..... an accident. (there / be)
10 A: Have you heard about Ben? ..... his arm. (he / break)
B: Really? How ..... ? (that / happen)
A: ..... off a ladder. (he / fall)



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