



Grammar - Present Perfect vs. Past Perfect

In the real world, we all know what the word "**PERFECT**" means. But in the context of verbs, "**PERFECT**" means "**BEFORE**". All perfect tenses are made the following way:

auxiliary **HAVE** (have, has or had) + **PAST PARTICIPLE** verb.

Past Simple (a point in the past)

I **climbed** the mountain.

This communicates a **singular moment in the past**, even if that singular moment is not mentioned or specified.
(I **climbed**...)

last month, or a year ago, etc.

Present Perfect (before now)

I **have climbed** the mountain.

This communicates that it happened sometime **before now**, and that "when" or "how many times" is not the purpose of the communication.

Past Perfect (before a point in the past)

I **had climbed** the mountain.

This communicates that it happened **before a singular moment in the past**, even if that singular moment is not mentioned or specified.
(I **had climbed** the mountain **the previous summer**... so they **chose** me to lead the **expedition the following year**.)



A Use the verbs in parenthesis to fill in the spaces in each dialog using the correct conjugation of the three presented above, according to context.

1. **A:** _____ you ever _____ extreme cold?

B: Yes! Last winter, I _____ to Alaska, and it was -30°C!

A: That's freezing! But surely you _____ properly before the trip, hadn't you?

B: Not really. I _____ how cold it would be until I _____ there.

(prepare; travel; not realize; arrive; experience)

2. **A:** The desert is a dangerous place! You _____ there before, haven't you?

B: Yeah, and you're right. When I _____ the Sahara, we _____ caught in a sandstorm.

A: That's terrifying! _____ you ever _____ a sandstorm before?

B: No, and I _____ never _____ so scared in my life.

(feel; get; be; hike; see)

3. **A:** I _____ some time in the Amazon rainforest and it's full of surprises!

B: Absolutely. When we _____ it last year, a heavy rain storm _____ a flash flood.

A: That must have been scary!

B: It was! By the time we _____ what was happening, the water _____ already _____ around our camp.

(cause; rise; explore; spend; realize)

4. **A:** Your friends just _____ from climbing Mount Everest, didn't they?

B: Yeah I think so, but I _____ them since they got back. It's been a year now.

A: But it didn't take them that long to climb it, did it?

B: No, but before they _____ the climb, they _____ for months in Nepal to acclimate and avoid hypoxia at the upper levels.

A: That makes sense. When I _____ in the Alps, I _____ some months preparing for the cold, but it was still difficult!

(begin; hike; train; get back; spend)