

Past Simple vs. Present Perfect: The "Box" vs. The "Bridge"

Past Simple (The Box): Use this for actions that started and completely finished in the past. It is usually tied to a specific time (yesterday, last year, in 2015).

Present Perfect (The Bridge): Use this for actions that connect the past to the present. The exact time doesn't matter; what matters is the life experience or the result right now.

Read each sentence carefully. Choose the correct form of the verb.

Part 1: Everyday Situations & Immediate Results.

1. I can't get into my house because I **lost** / **have lost** my keys.
2. We **visited** / **have visited** Paris in 2022. It was a beautiful trip.
3. Hey, look! Someone **spilled** / **has spilled** coffee all over your desk.
4. Alexander Graham Bell **invented** / **has invented** the telephone.
5. I **lived** / **have lived** in New York for three years when I was a child.
6. She is an amazing author. She **wrote** / **has written** five books so far.
7. I'm not hungry. I **already ate** / **have already eaten** lunch.
8. Columbus **crossed** / **has crossed** the Atlantic in 1492.
9. Maya isn't at her desk. She **went** / **has gone** home.
10. Ouch! I **cut** / **have cut** my finger! It's bleeding.

Part 2: Life Experiences vs. Specific Past Times

11. I **never saw** / **have never seen** a real elephant in my life.
12. My grandfather **met** / **has met** the President when he was a young man.
13. She **tried** / **has tried** sushi for the first time last week.
14. We **moved** / **have moved** to this city ten years ago.
15. They **travelled** / **have travelled** to four different continents so far.
16. The Titanic **sank** / **has sunk** in the year 1912.
17. I **read** / **have read** that book three times already because I love it.
18. Shakespeare **wrote** / **has written** many famous plays.
19. Last night, I **slept** / **have slept** for nine hours straight.
20. **Did you ever ride** / **Have you ever ridden** a motorcycle?

Part 3: Finished Actions vs. Present Consequences

21. The rain **stopped / has stopped**, so we can go outside now without umbrellas.
22. I bought / **have bought** a new laptop yesterday because my old one broke.
23. Look at your shoes! You **walked / have walked** through the mud.
24. My phone battery **died / has died**, so I can't call a taxi right now.
25. He **broke / has broken** his leg last summer during a soccer match.
26. The mechanic **fixed / has fixed** my car, so it runs perfectly today.
27. I **spent / have spent** all my money at the mall, so my wallet is empty.
28. They **built / have built** this school back in 1985.
29. Shh! The baby **just fell / has just fallen** asleep, so please be quiet.
30. The clean-up crew **washed / has washed** the kitchen floor, so watch your step!