

“Dante has written about ten books” ... Is that right, or wrong?
... Well, it depends....

Are you talking about the historic Dante Alighieri, or about Dante King, a contemporary Sci-Fi writer?

The historic Dante wrote about ten books, while the current Dante has written about ten (times ten) books.

What's the difference (in the grammar, anyway)? ... We'll take a closer look, but first let's see how you do. ☺



1. The person we are interested in is on the horse. Drag and drop each image onto the right picture frame.

PAST SIMPLE



PRESENT PERFECT



DO THIS BEFORE GOING AHEAD!!!

What's past is past...or is it? – Past Simple vs Present Perfect by S.K. Meyer

Deciding between the simple past and the present perfect is pretty easy once you know the tricks.

TRICK n. 1: The names of the verb tenses tell you how to make them and use them.

Use the **SIMPLE PAST** for an action that (a) began and ended in a **CLOSED/FINISHED** time in the PAST, and (b) is **SIMPLE**; in other words, it is important enough to say / write, BUT it is a **MERE FACT WITHOUT** any particular importance **NOW / IN THIS PERIOD**.

The **FORM** is **SIMPLE**, too, at least for the regular verbs. Just add **–ED**, ex., walk - walked.

Even the irregular verbs are just **ONE WORD**, ex., run - ran; eat - ate; sleep - slept; buy - bought; see - saw; have - had; is - was;....



2. Type in the past simple tense using the verbs indicated in the parentheses. Be careful with your spelling!

a. Last month, we _____ (to go) to New York City for a quick vacation. (Lucky you!)

b. I _____ (to lose) my watch in New York City, but the hotel maid _____ (to find) it, whew!

TRICK N. 2, PRONUNCIATION: When do you say the **–ed** as a separate syllable, and when do you jump from the last sound of the verb, over the “e,” and straight to the “d”? That’s easy, too!

When the infinitive’s last **SOUND** (not letter) is a “t” or a “d,” you need to say the “-ed” as a separate syllable. **CLICK** on the icons to **LISTEN** to the past tenses, then **CLICK** on the red microphones to say them, and to check your pronunciation.

i. treat – treated   _____ ii. decide – decided   _____

Why do we do this? Because otherwise we can’t hear the “-d” of the past tense; the sound blurs with the end of the verb.

For verbs ending in any **SOUND** (not letter) other than “t” or “d,” you need to jump straight from the last sound, over the “e,” to the “d” of the past tense, like a kangaroo. **CLICK, LISTEN TO, and REPEAT** these:

i. ask – asked   _____ ii. answer – answered   _____



REMEMBER: You need to use **CHROME**. **TO LISTEN:** hover the cursor over the loudspeaker until the little blue icon appears, then click. **TO SPEAK:** **CLICK** on the red microphone; it blinks when recording. When you stop speaking, it stops.

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Use the **PRESENT PERFECT** for an action that (a) began and ended in the PAST, and (b) has particular importance NOW / IN THIS PERIOD, and/or (c) the current TIME PERIOD IS OPEN (i.e., it's still possible that it could / couldn't happen, even life experiences, too, if...the person is still alive, fingers crossed!).

TRICK n. 3: If you're not sure about the present perfect, just use the simple past in two separate sentences in real life. Better safe than sorry, and it's typical in AmE, too.

What's its form? First, there is the PRESENT tense of "to have" then there is the "PERFECTED" (i.e., "finished" / "completed") part, which is called the past participle, ex., painted, gone.

3. In the one space, type the present perfect tense using the verbs indicated in the parentheses. Be careful with your **SPELLING** and **SPACING**! N.B., In real life, use contractions when informal, but **DON'T** do it, here, or the system won't understand!

a. I _____ (to buy) a new laptop ... do you want to see it?

b. She _____ (to come, negative) in, yet?!



4. Now, YOU decide which one you need, the simple past, or the present perfect. READ the sentences, CAREFULLY, for clues. There is one space, but you may need to type 2 words! The system needs good SPELLING & SPACING, & NO CONTRACTIONS.

a. He _____ (to go) horsebackriding. He'll be back any minute, now, if you'd like to wait.

b. She _____ (to go) horsebackriding, yesterday.

c. Star _____ (to be) in India lots of times, already, but she still wants to go, again.

d. Ganesha long _____ (to be) one of India's principal gods (and will continue to be one).

e. Indra _____ (to be) one of India's principal gods (but is no more).

f. Carol _____ (to learn) how to use Excel, so she should be great for this project. (Careful!)



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- g. Carol _____ (to learn; *either* in AmE or BrE) to read when she was little, and she still loves it. (*Careful!*)
- h. Jason _____ (to see) me, already, this morning, so he doesn't need to do it, again. (*Careful!*)
- i. I _____ (to read) a great book, recently. How about you? (*Careful!*)
- j. I _____ (to read) a great book, last week. How about you? (*Careful!*)
- k-1. The boss _____ (to say) what?! (*Careful!*)
- k-2. She _____ (to lose) her marbles! (*idiom for: to be crazy*) (*Careful!*)

5. Now, try, again! The person we are interested in is on the horse. Drag and drop each image onto the right picture frame.

PAST SIMPLE



PRESENT PERFECT



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All images used in this exercise come from Microsoft Clipart.