

finished actions: present perfect or simple past?

PRESENT PERFECT: WE THINK ABOUT THE PAST AND THE PRESENT TOGETHER
 When we think about the past and present together, we normally use the present perfect.

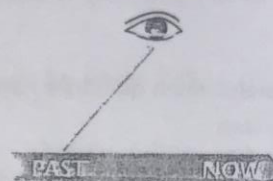
I've written to John, so he knows what's happening now.
I've made a cake. Would you like some?
Look - I've bought a new dress.



FINISHED ACTION	PRESENT PERFECT	PRESENT
letter (yesterday)	→ I've written to John.	← John knows now.
cake (this morning)	→ I've made a cake. Would you like some?	← I'm offering you some now.
new dress (last Tuesday)	→ Look - I've bought a new dress.	← I'm showing you now.

SIMPLE PAST: WE THINK ONLY ABOUT THE PAST, NOT THE PRESENT
 When we think only about the past, we most often use the simple past.

My grandfather wrote me a lot of letters.
 (He's dead now; I'm not thinking about the present.)
I made a cake for the children, but they didn't like it.
 (I'm not talking about the present.)
I bought a new dress for the party last Tuesday.
 (I'm thinking only about last Tuesday.)



1 Read the sentences and the questions, and circle the correct answers.

- > Ann has bought a new coat. *Has she got the coat now?* YES / PERHAPS
- > Grandma came to stay with us. *Is Grandma with us now?* YES / PROBABLY NOT
- 1 I made a cup of tea. *Is there tea now?* YES / PROBABLY NOT
- 2 Eric has made a cake. *Is there a cake now?* YES / PROBABLY NOT
- 3 Jane went to France. *Is she there now?* YES / DON'T KNOW
- 4 Alan has gone to Scotland. *Is he there now?* YES / DON'T KNOW
- 5 Pat and Al started a business. *Is the business still running?* YES / DON'T KNOW
- 6 Sue has started guitar lessons. *Is she taking lessons now?* YES / DON'T KNOW
- 7 The cat has run away. *Is the cat at home now?* NO / DON'T KNOW
- 8 The doctor sent Bill into hospital. *Is he there now?* YES / DON'T KNOW
- 9 Pete lost his glasses. *Has he got his glasses now?* NO / DON'T KNOW
- 10 Ann has cut all her hair off. *Has she got any hair now?* NO / DON'T KNOW

We don't normally use the present perfect with words for a finished time.

I've seen Ann. OR *I saw Ann yesterday.* BUT NOT ~~*I've seen Ann yesterday.*~~

present perfect: news

We've found oil in the garden.

We often use the present perfect to give news: to tell people about new things that have happened.
The Prime Minister has arrived in Washington for talks with the President. Ann has bought a new car.
A plane has crashed at Heathrow Airport. Some new people have moved into the house next door.

When John Wells arrived home from work, his family gave him a lot of news. Complete the sentences.

come die eat find ✓ go steal win

> Hello, dear. We ~~have found~~ oil in the garden!



3 Dad! You a lot of money in the lottery!

4 Hi! Somebody the car!

1 Dad! The cat your supper!



5 Surprise! Grandma to stay for a month!

6 Daddy! The goldfish!



2 Hi, John. Mary to Australia with a soldier!



Here are some sentences from radio news broadcasts. Put in the correct verbs.

arrive ✓ close die leave marry stop

- > England footballers ~~have arrived~~ back in Britain after their match in Rome.
- 1 Singer Alex Haverly his long-time girlfriend Katy Bowen.
- 2 Charles Blackstock, Member of Parliament for East Chilbury, at the age of 57.
- 3 Once again, bad weather the tennis final at Wimbledon.
- 4 The Foreign Minister London for a two-day visit to Berlin.
- 5 Heavy snow hundreds of roads in Scotland.

We don't normally use the present perfect with words for a finished time.

We've found oil in the garden. BUT NOT ~~We've found oil in the garden yesterday.~~

A plane has crashed at Heathrow Airport. BUT NOT ~~A plane has crashed at 3.15 this afternoon.~~

Circle the words for a finished time.

a few days ago always this week last week never now then today yesterday in 1990

Correct (✓) or not (✗)?

> My father has changed his job. ...

> Andy has gone to Scotland last week. ...

1 Look what Peter has given me yesterday! ...

2 I've seen a great programme last night. ...

3 I think everybody has arrived now. ...

4 Mary has written to me three weeks ago. ...

5 Sorry - I've forgotten your name. ...

6 I've forgotten Mike's birthday last Tuesday. ...

7 Everybody has gone home at 10 o'clock. ...

8 There's nobody here! What has happened? ...

4 What are the people saying? Look at the pictures and complete the sentences with verbs from the box. Use the present perfect.

break buy cut send stop

- > 'Somebody ~~has broken~~ the window.'
- 1 'John us a postcard.'
 - 2 'I a hat.'
 - 3 'I my finger.'
 - 4 'The rain



5 Put the beginnings and ends together, and put in the present perfect verbs.

break / forget leave lose see

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Joe has broken his leg, | A 'Sorry. I know him, but I his name.' ... |
| 2 Ann can't get into her house | B 'Yes, his girlfriend him.' ... |
| 3 'He's looking unhappy.' | C because she her keys. ... |
| 4 'Who's that?' | D 'No, I it.' ... |
| 5 'That's a good film. Shall we go?' | E so he can't go skiing. ... |

Note the difference between *gone (to)* and *been (to)* in present perfect sentences.

'Where's John?' 'He's *gone to Paris*.' (He's there now.) Mary's *gone swimming*. She'll be back at 6.00.
I've *been to Italy* lots of times (and come back) but I've never *been to Spain*.

6 Put in *been* or *gone*.

- 1 'Where's Ann?' 'She's shopping.'
- 2 Peter's shopping: the fridge is full.
- 3 Have you ever to China?
- 4 They're not here. They've all out.
- 5 I haven't to the cinema for weeks.
- 6 Joe's to live in Greece.

We use the simple past, not the present perfect, in stories (see page 46).

GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY: housework

Put simple past verbs into the story. Use a dictionary if necessary.

Once upon a time there was a beautiful girl called Cinderella. Her two sisters made her do all the housework. Every day she (*get*) > ~~got~~ up early, she (*sweep*) > ~~sweep~~ the floors, she (*make*) 1 the beds, she (*polish*) 2 the furniture, she (*wash*) 3 and (*iron*) 4 the clothes, she (*wash up*) 5 all the dishes and (*put*) 6 them away. She (*tidy*) 7 all the rooms, and she (*do*) 8 hundreds of other jobs.

7 Now put present perfect verbs into the conversation.

- SISTERS: Well, Cinderella, > ~~has done~~ everything? 1 the floors? 2 the beds? 3 the furniture? 4 the clothes? 5 them? 6 the dishes? And 7 them away? 8 all the rooms?
- CINDERELLA: No, I 9 anything. I'm going to marry the Prince. Goodbye!