

Present Perfect: Problems with Use

The **past tense** is used for events that happened at a specific time in the past, or were entirely completed in the past. The **Present Perfect** is used to describe events that began in the past but are still important in the present. These events may be related to the present in the several ways.

Uses of the Present Perfect

Situations that are still true in the present

I have lived in this house for four years. (I still live there now.)
I have been renovating the house since I bought it. (I am still renovating.)

Contrast with the Past Tense:

I lived in this house for four years. (I don't live there now.)

Events/Situations that began in the past and continue into the present

- Sentences with *since*, *ever*, *never*:
I ve been friends with Kate since university. (We are still friends.)

- Very recent events with *just*:
I ve just made some coffee. It's still hot. (recent past, still important now)

- Number of times an event has happened so far:
Al has traveled to Europe three times. (He may go again.)

Events completed in the past, but still related to present situation in some way

- Past Event(s) with Present Result:
Tom has lied so many times that I don't believe him anymore.

- Past Event(s) with Implied Present Result:
He has spilled wine on the carpet. (There's a mess now.)
I have forgotten her name. (I don't remember her name now.)

- Past Event Related to Speaker's Attitude:
Have you seen my keys? (Speaker is still looking for keys.)
Scientists have found that Vitamin E is good for your skin. (And I believe that this is true.)

NOTES: The **present perfect progressive** is used to express temporary situations, continuous actions or uncompleted actions.
Example: *It has been raining for three days.*

The simple past must be used with a specific point in time in the past.

Example: *Joe traveled to Europe last month.* (specific time reference)

Choose between the PAST TENSE or PRESENT PERFECT for the verbs provided. More than one answer may be possible.

1. I _____ (see) that movie so I'd rather go see a different one.
2. The dog _____ (chew) up my shoes last week, but I bought a new pair.
3. Henry _____ (work) here for five years, but he left last month to start his own business.
4. My favourite band _____ (release) a new CD. I want to buy it this weekend.
5. Cheryl _____ (go) to Toronto last week.
6. Oh no! Someone _____ (spill) coffee on my jacket. I'll have to get it cleaned.
7. We _____ (live) here for years. It's a nice place, so we don't plan to move.
8. She loves books. She _____ (read) four novels so far this month.
9. _____ you ever _____ (eat) eel? I love it.
10. He _____ (make) so many mistakes that I don't trust him anymore.
11. My mother _____ (arrive) on Saturday.
12. She _____ (be) here for six days.
13. So far this year, I _____ (miss) five days of school. Last week, I _____ (miss) two days because I _____ (have) the flu.
14. Ken lives in Saskatchewan. He _____ (never see) the ocean.
15. The class _____ (write) an difficult exam this morning.
16. I love that book. I _____ (read) it three times.
17. _____ you ever _____ (play) ice hockey?

Complete the paragraphs with the SIMPLE PAST or PRESENT PERFECT or PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE.

1. My boyfriend and I _____ (see-neg.) each other since last weekend. On Monday we were supposed to get together, but he _____ (get) sick. Then on Wednesday night, I _____ (have) to work. I _____ (work) at the *Bay Street Grill* for two years. Although my boyfriend and I _____ (talk) on the phone every day this week, I miss him. Last night when he _____, (call) we _____ (make) plans to go out for dinner on Saturday night.

Advanced 1 – Exercise 24 – Present Perfect: Problems with Use

2. Since we _____ (buy) our new house, we _____ (have-neg.) much free time. Every weekend, we _____ (paint) inside the house. And my wife _____ (work) in the garden whenever she has time. Last night, we finally _____ (decide) to take a break. We _____ (order) pizza and _____ (watch) a movie.
3. It _____ (rain) for a week. The rain is ruining all my plans. For example, I _____ (want) to go to the beach last Saturday. Sunday, I _____ (cancel) my tennis lesson. Today, I _____ (have) to take the bus to school instead of walking. I hope the rain stops soon. I _____ (plan) a big barbecue in the park for next weekend, so I want the weather to be nice.
4. A: _____ you ever _____ (be) to Europe?
B: Yes, I _____ (be) twice.
A: What countries _____ you _____ (visit)?
B: Last summer, I _____ (go) to Greece and Turkey.
A: _____ you _____ (like) it?
B: Oh yes, I _____ (love) the food and the historical sites. How about you? _____ you _____ (travel) to Europe?
A: No, I _____ (go) to Mexico last winter, but I _____ never _____