

1b

Past Simple, Present Perfect, Present Perfect Continuous

Past Simple and Present Perfect

The Present Perfect is the tense that links the past with the present.

Past Simple (past form)

We use the Past Simple:

- for past habits or states, whether continuous or repeated:
*Long ago, they **built** most houses out of wood.*
*He always **caught** the same train.*
- with periods of time that have finished:
*I **read** the newspaper this morning.* (= it is now afternoon or evening)
*He **did** a lot in his short life.* (= he's dead)
- for finished actions with time words like *a year ago*, *last Sunday*, *last week*, *yesterday*, etc.:
*Watson and Crick **identified** the structure of DNA in 1953.*
*The first modern Olympics **took place** in Athens more than a hundred years ago.*

Present Perfect (present of *have* + past participle)

We use the Present Perfect:

- for actions or states in the past which have a connection with the present:
*They **have bought** a new house.* (= they can now go and live in it)
*It's just **started** to rain.* (= now, so bring the washing in)
- when the results of an action or state are obvious now:
*You've **spilt** the coffee all over my trousers – look!*
*They've **polluted** the river.* (= the fish are dead)
- for repeated actions in the past, with words like *often*, *rarely*, *seldom*:
*He's often **been** to France.*
- with periods of time that have not finished yet:
*We've **built** 20 new schools this year.* (= it is still this year)
*He **has done** a lot in his short life.* (= he's alive and young)
- for actions with expressions like *already*, *before*, *ever*, *never*, *often*, *recently*, *still*, *yet*, etc.:
*Rain **has already** ruined the tomato crops.*
***Have** you ever seen a UFO?*
*We **still haven't discovered** life on other planets.*
*They **haven't sent** an astronaut to Mars yet.*



- The choice between the Past Simple or Present Perfect depends on whether the action links the past with the present:
*She often **took** the bus.* (= but doesn't any more)
*She **has** often **taken** the bus.* (= and so she might do it again)
- Regular verbs end in *-ed* in both the Past Simple and the past participle (the form we use for the Present Perfect): *worked*, *looked*, *played*.

Present Perfect Continuous

We use the Present Perfect Continuous (present form of *have + been + -ing*) to talk about actions which started in the past and which continue up to the moment of speaking. We use it especially when we are interested in the duration of the action:

I've been waiting for a whole hour!

- Notice the difference between the Present Perfect Continuous and the Present Perfect :

Present Perfect

I've done my homework.

Present Perfect Continuous

I've been doing my homework.

- The Present Perfect emphasises the idea of completion (= the homework is finished); we use the Present Perfect Continuous to indicate that the action has lasted for a period and is incomplete. Compare:

I've read the newspaper today. (= I've finished it)

I've been reading the Encyclopaedia Britannica. (= I haven't finished it yet)

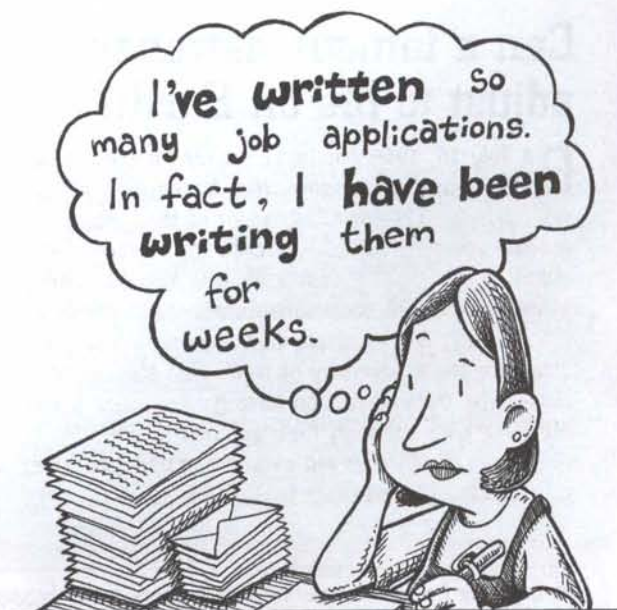
- We often use the Present Perfect Continuous with *for* and *since* (see 1d):

Those potatoes have been boiling for an hour. And the carrots have been boiling since three o'clock.

Practice

1 Underline the correct tense in the following sentences.

- I am writing in connection with the advertisement which *appeared* / *has appeared* on 3 December.
- I originally *studied* / *have studied* mechanical engineering at university and I *graduated* / *have been graduating* with a first-class degree.
- I now *completed* / *have now completed* a postgraduate degree in business and administration.
- I *ve been trying* / *ve tried* to find a permanent job for a considerable time.
- Indeed, I *have already worked* / *I have already been working* for several companies on a temporary basis.
- In my first job, I *was* / *have been* responsible for marketing.
- I *ve been applying* / *have applied* for several posts this year but I still *did not manage* / *have not managed* to find what I'm looking for.
- The last job I *applied* / *have applied* for required applicants to speak some Japanese.
- I *started learning* / *have been learning* Spanish a few months ago but I *did not obtain* / *have not obtained* a qualification in it yet.
- I *did not apply* / *have not applied* for a job with your company before.
- I *hoped* / *have hoped* that you would consider my application favourably.
- However, I *have been waiting* / *have waited* for a reply for several weeks and I still *have not received* / *did not receive* any answer.



- 2 Fill in the gaps with the correct verb. Use the correct form of the Past Simple or Present Perfect. Use each verb once.

arrive go have hear do read tell invite come explain buy visit take look at

Interview with Katerina Denuovo, film star

Interviewer: You've never been to our country before, right? What are your first impressions?

Katerina: I (1) many interesting things about your country in magazines and newspapers; before I (2), people (3) me you were all very friendly, and when I (4) at the airport everyone brought me flowers. And it's true, your shops are wonderful! I (already) (5) some shopping – I (6) a colourful scarf and some hand-painted china.

Interviewer: you (7) time to do any sightseeing yet?

Katerina: Yes, I (8) a stroll round the Old Town. At one restaurant the owner (9) me to try some of your specialities; he (10) to me some of the secrets of your cuisine – the way you prepare mushrooms is excellent.

Interviewer: What about the future? you (ever) (11) to see a fortune-teller, and do you read your horoscope?

Katerina: I (never) (12) my horoscope. All I know is I'm a Scorpio!

Interviewer: Will you come here again?

Katerina: As soon as I can. I (13) Kraków yet which I (14) so much about.

Which country is Katerina visiting? Underline it.

France Poland Greece Spain

- 3 Fill each gap in the following text with one suitable word. The first letter of each word is given.

Can a famous astronaut adjust to life on Earth?

On July 16, 1969 Apollo 11 set off for the moon. After four days in space, Neil Armstrong w..... (1) down the ladder of the lunar module and s..... (2) onto the surface of the moon. It w..... (3) a historic moment. Thirty years later, the three astronauts who made history h..... (4) never planned any reunion to celebrate the anniversary of man's first step on the moon. The three spacemen have g..... (5) a bit older and, although their attitude to life h..... (6) changed over the years, they have r..... (7) friends.

Armstrong has r..... (8) to give interviews about his private life. After Apollo 11, he w..... (9) at NASA; he l..... (10) in 1971 to become an engineering professor at Cincinnati University. In 1979 he g..... (11) up teaching, and since then he has b..... (12) working as a business consultant.

Andrew Chalkin, a space journalist, has been r..... (13) the lives of the Apollo astronauts and has h..... (14) unique access to them. He has just w..... (15) a book on the subject. He says that Armstrong is not a very easy man to know, although he is very warm once you do get to know him.

'Flying? I've **been** to almost as many places as my luggage!'

BOB HOPE