

Grammar Reference

Present perfect with just, already and yet

Meaning and use

The present perfect is often used to say whether an action has happened or not at the present time. The action might be necessary or expected by someone, and we want to say if it is complete or not.

I've done the washing up, so come and sit down.

The words **just**, **already** and **yet** are very common with this use of the present perfect.

Nell's just phoned with her exam results.

'Can you lock the back door?' **I've already locked** it.'

We can still catch the bus. **It hasn't left yet**.

Just = a very short time ago

Already = before now or earlier than you/I expected

Yet = before now / until now

We use **just** and **already** mainly in positive sentences.

She's just finished her second year at university.

'**I've already done** that module.' 'Wow, that's quick!'

We use **yet** in negative sentences and in questions.

Steve hasn't decided which course to apply for **yet**.

Has your tutor approved your research topic **yet**?

Form

The present perfect is made with **subject + have/has/haven't/hasn't + past participle**. We put **just** and **already** between **have/has** and the past participle.

We usually put **yet** at the end of a negative sentence or question.

Positive

'I think **the lecture has just started** so we haven't missed much.'

'No, **it's already finished**. It was an hour earlier than usual.'

Negative

I haven't started the final assignment **yet**.

Question

Have you handed in your end-of-year assignment **yet**?

Take note: already

It is possible to put **already** at the end of a positive sentence. This is more common in American English.

The lecture has **already** finished!

The lecture has finished **already**.

Spoken English

In sentences with **just** and **already**, there is usually no stress on **has/have** or on **just/already**. The stress is on the subject and the past participle.

The **lecture** has already **finished**.

Nell has just **phoned**.

But we can put stress on **just/already** if we want to emphasise how recently or early something happened.

'Has Nell phoned?' 'Yes, you've **just** missed her.'

'Call me back when the lecture finishes.' 'It's **already** finished.'

We can also put **already** at the end of a question and stress it to show surprise.

Wow! Has the lecture finished **already**?

In sentences and questions with **yet**, there is stress on the past participle and also some stress on **yet**.

I haven't **missed** a lecture **yet** this year.

Have you **handed** in your end-of-year assignment **yet**?