

Session 2

We use the present perfect in several ways. In this session we explain how to form present perfect sentences so that we can talk about our experiences in the past.

Activity 1

Past participles and present perfect

Looking back

Let's hear from people in London again, talking about their life experiences. Listen carefully to the verbs they use.



Show transcript

Explanation

Did you understand what they said? We heard people talking about things they have - and haven't - done in their lives. They don't say **when** these things happened, because they are interested in the **experience**, not the time or date.

For example:

Sara and Carl have travelled all over the world.

I have read that book.

We sometimes say how many times the experience has happened.

For example:

I've met her three times, I think.

Form

Positive

The present perfect is made with **subject + have/has + past participle**.

I've taught English in Italy and in Russia.

Johnny Depp has starred in lots of brilliant films.

Negative

The negative present perfect is made with **subject + have/has not + past participle**.

I **haven't seen** the first Bond film.

Questions

Present perfect yes / no questions are made from **have/has + subject + past participle?**

Present perfect question word questions are made from **question word + have/has + subject + past participle?**

Ever and never

We often use the present perfect with the words **ever** or **never**. **Ever** mean **at any time in someone's life**. We usually use **ever** in questions.

'Has he **ever worked** in China?' 'No, he **hasn't**.'

Never means **not at any time in someone's life**.

I've **never seen** the first Bond film.

Sometimes we ask questions with **never**. Often we do this to express surprise.

Have you never eaten a banana?

Past participles

The **past participle** is the third form of the verb. For example, with the verb **to see**, the three forms are: **see, saw, seen**.

We use the past participle in present perfect sentences with **ever** and **never**.

Have you ever eaten sushi?

I've **never seen** the first Bond film.

Regular and irregular verbs

Many verbs are regular. The past participle ends with -ed

look - looked - looked
climb - climbed - climbed
want - wanted - wanted

Some verbs are irregular. Here are some of them:

become - became - become
eat - ate - eaten
forget - forgot - forgotten
give - gave - given
go - went - gone / been
have - had - had
know - knew - known
meet - met - met
read - read - read
ride - rode - ridden
run - ran - run
say - said - said
see - saw - seen
sell - sold - sold
sing - sang - sung
win - won - won
write - wrote - written

Some verbs have two possible forms for the past participle. Here are two examples:

learn - learnt/learned - learnt/learned
dream - dreamt/dreamed - dreamt/dreamed

To do

Try this activity to test your knowledge of regular and irregular past participles. All of them appear in this unit. There are 10 questions - how many will you get right?

Download

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Next

We've learnt about talking in the present perfect but next we find out how to ask questions in the same tense. Off we go then!

