

# Present perfect

## Definition of the present perfect tense

The present perfect is used to indicate a link between the present and the past. The time of the action is **before now but not specified**, and we are often more interested in the **result** than in the action itself.

## The present perfect is used to describe

- An action or situation that started in the past and continues in the present. *I **have lived** in Bristol since 1984* (= and I still do.)
- An action performed during a period that has not yet finished. *She **has been** to the cinema twice **this week*** (= and the week isn't over yet.)
- A repeated action in an unspecified period between the past and now. *We **have visited** Portugal several times.*
- An action that was completed in the very recent past, expressed by 'just'. *I **have just finished** my work.*
- An action when time is not important. *He **has read** 'War and Peace'.* (= the result of his reading is important)

**Note:** When we want to give or ask details about when, where, who, we use the simple past. Read more about [choosing between the present perfect and the simple past tenses](#).

## Actions started in the past and continuing in the present

- They **haven't lived** here for years.
- She **has worked** in the bank for five years.
- We **have had** the same car for ten years.
- **Have you played** the piano since you were a child?

## When the time period referred to has not finished

- *I **have worked** hard **this week**.*

- It ***has rained*** a lot ***this year***.
- We ***haven't seen*** her ***today***.

## Actions repeated in an unspecified period between the past and now.

- They ***have seen*** that film six times
- It ***has happened*** several times already.
- She ***has visited*** them frequently.
- We ***have eaten*** at that restaurant many times.

## Actions completed in the very recent past (+just)

- ***Have you just finished*** work?
- I ***have just eaten***.
- We ***have just seen*** her.
- ***Has he just left?***

## When the precise time of the action is not important or not known

- Someone ***has eaten*** my soup!
- ***Have you seen*** 'Gone with the Wind'?
- ***She's studied*** Japanese, Russian, and English.

Read more about [using the present perfect with the words "ever", "never", "already", and "yet"](#), and about [using the present perfect with the words "for" and "since"](#).

## Forming the present perfect

The present perfect of any verb is composed of two elements : the appropriate form of the auxiliary verb **to have** (present tense), plus the past participle of the main verb. The past participle of a regular verb is **base+ed**, e.g. *played, arrived, looked*. For irregular verbs, see the **Table of irregular verbs** in the section called '**Verbs**'.

<b>Affirmative</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>+to have</b>	<b>+past participle</b>
She	has	visited.
<b>Negative</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>+to have + not</b>	<b>+past participle</b>
She	has not (hasn't)	visited.
<b>Interrogative</b>		
<b>to have</b>	<b>+subject</b>	<b>+past participle</b>

Has	she	visited?
<b>Negative interrogative</b>		
<b><i>to have +</i> not</b>	<b>+subject</b>	<b>+past participle</b>
Hasn't	she	visited?

### To Walk, present perfect

<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Interrogative</b>
I have walked	I haven't walked	Have I walked?
<b>You</b> have walked	You haven't walked.	Have you walked?

<b>He, she, it</b> has walked	He, she, hasn't walked	Has he, she, it walked?
<b>We</b> have walked	We haven't walked	Have we walked?
<b>You</b> have walked	You haven't walked	Have you walked?
<b>They</b> have walked	They haven't walked	Have they walked?