Present Perfect vs Past Simple

B1–B2 grammar practice • 60 questions • 35–45 minutes

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Quick grammar guide

Present perfect have / has + past participle	A past action with a connection to now; life experience; an unfinished time period. *I have lost my keys.*
Past simple past verb / did + base verb	A finished action at a finished or stated past time. *I lost my keys yesterday.*

Useful clues: Present perfect: *ever, never, yet, already, for, since, so far.* Past simple: *yesterday, last week, in 2020, ago, when?*

Remember: A time expression is a clue, not the whole rule. Ask whether the period is finished and what the speaker wants to emphasise.

1. Choose the correct form | 10 marks

Circle the correct verb phrase in each sentence.

1. I **have read / read** that novel last summer.

2. Have you ever tried / Did you ever try Korean food?

3. We **haven't seen / didn't see** the new manager yet.

4. She **has left / left** the office at six yesterday.

5. My parents **have lived / lived** in Bristol since 2012.

6. I **have broken / broke** my glasses. I can't read the timetable now.

7. When have you met / did you meet your best friend?

8. He **has finished / finished** the report two hours ago.

9. This is the first time I **have flown / flew** alone.

10. I **haven't spoken / didn't speak** to the new receptionist yet.

Practise the forms

2. Complete the sentences | 10 marks

Use the present perfect or past simple form of the verb in brackets.

1. Maya _____ (work) at the same school since 2021.
2. We _____ (visit) Edinburgh during our holiday in August.
3. _____ you ever _____ (lose) your passport?
4. I _____ (not finish) my homework yet.
5. What time _____ the film _____ (start) last night?
6. They _____ (move) to a new flat in March.
7. He _____ (never / ride) a horse.
8. I _____ (spill) coffee on my shirt. Look at this stain!
9. We _____ (not go) to the concert on Saturday.
10. How long _____ you _____ (know) your neighbour?

3. Read about a community garden | 10 marks

Complete the story with the correct tense of the verbs in brackets.

Two years ago, our neighbourhood **(1)** _____ (turn) an empty plot into a garden. Since then, dozens of volunteers **(2)** _____ (join) the project. Last spring, we **(3)** _____ (build) six raised beds and **(4)** _____ (plant) tomatoes and beans. I **(5)** _____ (work) there every Saturday since May. Yesterday, my friend Ellis **(6)** _____ (bring) some old tools. We **(7)** _____ (not / buy) any new equipment yet because neighbours keep lending us things. So far this week, the garden **(8)** _____ (attract) three new volunteers. Last Friday, the local newspaper **(9)** _____ (publish) a story about us. I **(10)** _____ (never / feel) so proud of a community project!

Use the tenses in conversation

4. Complete the mini-dialogues | 10 marks

Write the correct present perfect or past simple form in each numbered gap.

A: **(1)** _____ you ever _____ (see) a shooting star?
B: **(2)** Yes, I _____ (see) one while camping last July.
A: **(3)** _____ your keys? (you / lose)
B: **(4)** Yes, I _____ (look) everywhere, but I still can't find them.
A: **(5)** _____ you _____ (speak) to Nina yesterday?
B: **(6)** Yes, I _____ (call) her after lunch.
A: **(7)** How long _____ your brother _____ (live) in Leeds?
B: **(8)** He _____ (move) there in 2020.
A: **(9)** _____ you _____ (finish) the article yet?
B: **(10)** Not yet. I _____ (start) it at nine this morning.

5. Find and correct the mistake | 10 marks

Each sentence contains one tense or time-expression mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. I have seen that film last Sunday.

_____

2. She didn't finish the assignment yet.

_____

3. Have you ever went to a music festival?

_____

4. We live here since 2018.

_____

5. When have you bought your laptop?

_____

6. I have never ate sushi.

_____

7. They have arrived two hours ago.

_____

8. He hasn't called me yesterday.

_____

9. I have known Zara for I was at university.

_____

10. The concert has started at eight yesterday.

_____

Challenge and review

6. Rewrite the sentences | 10 marks

Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first. Use the word in CAPITALS. Write 2–5 words. Do not change the word given.

1. I started studying Italian three years ago. **FOR**

I _____ three years.

2. It is Sam's first visit to Wales. **NEVER**

Sam _____ before.

3. We last saw Peter in February. **SINCE**

We _____ February.

4. They moved into this flat in 2020. **LIVED**

They _____ 2020.

5. How long ago did you meet Olivia? **KNOWN**

How long _____ Olivia?

6. I last ate seafood two months ago. **FOR**

I _____ two months.

7. Has anybody told you the news? **HEARD**

_____ the news?

8. I saw that play in 2023, and I have not seen it again. **ONLY**

I _____ once, in 2023.

9. She has not finished her essay. **STILL**

She _____ her essay.

10. She sent the email a moment ago. **JUST**

She _____ the email.

A little more practice (optional)

Write **two** sentences about something you have done in your life and **two** about things you did at a specific time. Compare your choices with a partner.

_____

_____

My score: ____ / 60 **One thing I can now explain:** _____

Answer key

Use this section after completing the worksheet. Common alternative spellings and valid equivalent answers are noted where useful.

1. Choose the correct form

1 mark for each correct choice.

1. read
2. Have you ever tried
3. haven't seen
4. left
5. have lived
6. have broken
7. did you meet
8. finished
9. have flown
10. haven't spoken

2. Complete the sentences

1 mark per correctly formed answer.

1. has worked
2. visited
3. Have ... lost
4. haven't finished
5. did ... start
6. moved
7. has never ridden
8. have spilt / have spilled
9. didn't go
10. have ... known

3. Community garden

1 mark per correctly formed answer.

1. turned
2. have joined
3. built
4. planted
5. have worked
6. brought
7. haven't bought
8. has attracted
9. published
10. have never felt

Teacher note: *Have worked* in Exercise 3 is used because the activity began in May and continues. *Has attracted* refers to progress so far in the current week. The past simple is used for definite finished times such as *last spring* and *last Friday*.

Answer key (continued)

4. Mini-dialogues

1 mark for each numbered gap.

1. Have ... seen

2. saw

3. Have you lost

4. have looked

5. Did ... speak

6. called

7. has ... lived

8. moved

9. Have ... finished

10. started

5. Correct the mistake

Equivalent grammatically correct rewrites are acceptable.

1. I saw that film last Sunday.

2. She hasn't finished the assignment yet.

3. Have you ever been to a music festival?

4. We have lived here since 2018.

5. When did you buy your laptop?

6. I have never eaten sushi.

7. They arrived two hours ago.

8. He didn't call me yesterday.

9. I have known Zara since I was at university.

10. The concert started at eight yesterday.

6. Sentence transformations

The key word must be used; 2–5 words per answer.

1. have studied Italian for

2. has never visited Wales

3. haven't seen Peter since

4. have lived here since

5. have you known

6. haven't eaten seafood for

7. Have you heard

8. have only seen that play

9. still hasn't finished

10. has just sent

Quick check: Present perfect is formed with *have/has + past participle*. Past simple normally refers to a completed past time. In British English, *just, already* and *yet* are often used with the present perfect, although usage varies by context and variety.