



Beginner Present Perfect Tense

We use the Present Perfect to say that an action happened at an unspecified time before now. The exact time is not important.

You CANNOT use the Present Perfect with time expressions such as; "yesterday," "one year ago," "last week," "when I was a child," "when I lived in Japan," "at that moment," "that day" or "one day."

We CAN use the Present Perfect with expressions like; "ever," "never," "once," "many times," "recently," "often," "several times," "before," "so far," "already" and "yet."

Examples:

I have seen that movie twenty times.

I think I have met him once before.

There have been many earthquakes in Kyoto.

Has there ever been a war in the United States?

Yes, there has been a war in the United States.

People have traveled to the moon.

Kojo has just arrived in Chuo. (recent)

How do you actually use the Present Perfect?

You can use the Present Perfect to describe your experience. It is like saying, "I have the experience of..." You can also use this tense to say that you have never had a certain experience. The Present Perfect is NOT used to describe a specific event.

Example: *I think I have seen that movie before.*
He has never traveled by train.
Maya has studied two foreign languages.

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We often use the Present Perfect to talk about change that has happened over a period of time.

Example: *You have grown since the last time I saw you.*
The government has become more interested in arts education.
My English has really improved since I moved to Australia.

We often use the Present Perfect to list the accomplishments of individuals and humanity. You cannot mention a specific time.

Example: *Man has walked on the moon.*
Our son has learned how to read.
Doctors have cured many deadly diseases.

We often use the Present Perfect to say that an action which we expected has not happened. Using the Present Perfect suggests that we are still waiting for the action.

Example: *Kitaru has not finished his homework yet.*
Ota has still not arrived.
The rain hasn't stopped.

We also use the Present Perfect to talk about several different actions which occurred in the past at different times. Present Perfect suggests the process is not complete and more actions are possible.

Example: *The army has attacked that city five times.*
I have had four quizzes and five tests so far this semester.
We have had many major problems while working this project.

With Non-continuous Verbs and some non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, we use the Present Perfect to show that something started in the past and has continued up until now. "For five minutes," "for ten years," "for two weeks" and "since Tuesday" are all durations which can be used with the Present Perfect.

Example: *I have had a cold for two weeks.*
She has been in England for six months.
Toya has loved chocolate since she was a little girl.