

# Present Perfect and Past (*I have done* and *I did*)

**A** It is often possible to use the *present perfect* (*I have done*) or the *simple past* (*I did*). For example, you can say:

- I've lost my key. Have you seen it? or I lost my key. Did you see it?

But do not use the present perfect when you talk about a finished time (for example, *yesterday / ten minutes ago / in 1985*). Use the simple past:

- I lost my key yesterday. (*not I've lost*)
- It was very hot last summer. (*not has been*)
- They arrived ten minutes ago. (*not have arrived*)
- "Did you see the news on TV last night?" "No, I went to bed early."

Use the simple past to ask *When . . . ?* or *What time . . . ?*:

- What time / When did you finish work yesterday? (*not have you finished*)

**B** Do not use the present perfect if there is no connection with the present (for example, things that happened a long time ago):

- The Chinese invented printing. (*not have invented*)
- Beethoven was a great composer. (*not has been*)

Compare:

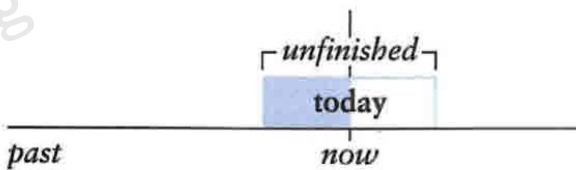
- Shakespeare wrote many plays.
- My brother is a writer. He has written many books. (He still writes books.)

**C** Compare *present perfect* and *simple past*:

*Present perfect* (have done)

- I've done a lot of work today.

We use the present perfect for a period of time that continues from the past until now. For example: *today / this week / since 1985*.



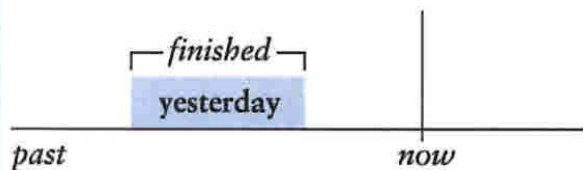
- It hasn't rained this week.
- Have you seen Lisa this morning? (It is still morning.)
- Have you seen Lisa recently?
- We've been waiting for an hour. (We are still waiting now.)
- John lives in Los Angeles. He has lived there for seven years.
- I have never played golf. (in my life)

The present perfect always has a connection with now. See Units 7–12.

*Simple past* (did)

- I did a lot of work yesterday.

We use the simple past for a finished time in the past. For example: *yesterday / last week / from 1985 to 1991*.



- It didn't rain last week.
- Did you see Anna this morning? (It is now afternoon or evening.)
- Did you see Anna on Sunday?
- We waited (*or were waiting*) for an hour. (We are no longer waiting.)
- John lived in New York for ten years. Now he lives in Los Angeles.
- I didn't play golf last summer.

The simple past tells us only about the past. See Units 5–6.

# Exercises

**13.1** Are the underlined parts of these sentences right or wrong? Correct the ones that are wrong.

1. I've lost my key. I can't find it anywhere. RIGHT
2. Have you seen the news on television last night? Did you see
3. Did you hear about Sue? She's quit her job. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where have you been last night? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Maria has graduated from high school in 1999. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I'm looking for Mike. Have you seen him? \_\_\_\_\_
7. I'm very hungry. I haven't eaten anything today. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Aristotle has been a Greek philosopher. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Erica hasn't been at work yesterday. \_\_\_\_\_
10. When has this book been published? \_\_\_\_\_

**13.2** Make sentences from the words in parentheses. Use the present perfect or simple past.

1. (it / not / rain / this week) It hasn't rained this week.
2. (the weather / be / cold / recently) The weather \_\_\_\_\_.
3. (it / cold / last week) It \_\_\_\_\_.
4. (I / not / read / a newspaper yesterday) I \_\_\_\_\_.
5. (I / not / read / a newspaper today) \_\_\_\_\_.
6. (Kate / earn / a lot of money / this year) \_\_\_\_\_.
7. (she / not / earn / as much / last year) \_\_\_\_\_.
8. (you / take / a vacation recently?) \_\_\_\_\_.

**13.3** Put the verb into the correct form, present perfect or simple past.

1. What time did you finish (you / finish) work yesterday?
2. When I \_\_\_\_\_ (get) home last night, I \_\_\_\_\_ (be) very tired, so I \_\_\_\_\_ (go) straight to bed.
3. Robert \_\_\_\_\_ (not / be) very busy last week.
4. Mr. Lee \_\_\_\_\_ (work) in a bank for 15 years. Then he quit.
5. Kelly lives in Toronto. She \_\_\_\_\_ (live) there all her life.
6. " \_\_\_\_\_ (you / go) to the movies last night?" "Yes, but it \_\_\_\_\_ (be) a mistake. The movie \_\_\_\_\_ (be) awful."
7. My grandfather \_\_\_\_\_ (die) 30 years ago. I \_\_\_\_\_ (never / meet) him.
8. I don't know Karen's husband. I \_\_\_\_\_ (never / meet) him.
9. A: Where do you live? B: In Rio de Janeiro.  
A: How long \_\_\_\_\_ (you / live) there? B: Five years.  
A: Where \_\_\_\_\_ (you / live) before that? B: In Buenos Aires.  
A: And how long \_\_\_\_\_ (you / live) in Buenos Aires? B: Two years.

**13.4** Write sentences about yourself using the ideas in parentheses.

1. (something you haven't done today) I haven't eaten any fruit today.
2. (something you haven't done today) \_\_\_\_\_
3. (something you didn't do yesterday) \_\_\_\_\_
4. (something you did last night) \_\_\_\_\_
5. (something you haven't done recently) \_\_\_\_\_
6. (something you've done a lot recently) \_\_\_\_\_