

Present Perfect vs Past Simple Exercises

Level: A2, B1

Name: _____ Date: _____

Present perfect or past simple?

Use the past simple for finished actions at a finished time. Use the present perfect when the time is not finished, or when the result matters now.

Past simple: finished time: yesterday, last year, in 2015, two days ago → I saw him yesterday.

Present perfect: unfinished time or no time given: today, this week, ever, never → I have seen him today.

The time test: a finished-time expression in the same clause, such as last spring, calls for the past simple

Life experience: Have you ever...? uses the present perfect; the details after it use the past simple

Signal words: present perfect: ever, never, just, already, yet, since, for — past simple: yesterday, ago, last..., in + past year

Exercise 1: Choose the correct tense

Select the correct option to complete each sentence.

- I ___ my homework two hours ago.
a) have finished b) finished c) finish
- I ___ never seen snow.
a) have b) did c) was
- ___ you ___ to the cinema last night?
a) Did / go b) Have / been c) Have / gone
- My grandmother ___ born in 1948.
a) was b) has been c) is
- This is the best pizza I ___!
a) have ever eaten b) ever ate c) ever eat

Exercise 2: Complete the sentences

Type the correct form of the verb in brackets — present perfect or past simple.

- We ___ that museum when we were in Paris. (visit)
- She ___ in this school since 2020. (study)
- I ___ him three times this week. (see)
- They ___ to Portugal last summer. (move)
- ___ you ever ___ a horse? (ride)

Exercise 3: Put the words in order

Click the words in the correct order to build the sentence.

11. Put the words in the correct order: **never / I / sushi / have / eaten**

12. Put the words in the correct order: **did / last night / what / you / do / ?**

13. Put the words in the correct order: **just / the bus / has / left**

14. Put the words in the correct order: **you / how long / have / here / lived / ?**

Exercise 4: True or false?

Decide if each statement is true or false.

15. "I have seen him yesterday" is correct. True / False

16. "Have you ever been to Japan?" asks about your whole life up to now. True / False

17. After answering "Yes, I have", we usually give the details in the past simple. True / False

18. American and British English always use these two tenses in exactly the same way. True / False

Answer key

Exercise 1: Choose the correct tense

1. b) finished
2. a) have
3. a) Did / go
4. a) was
5. a) have ever eaten

Exercise 2: Complete the sentences

6. visited
7. has studied / 's studied
8. have seen / 've seen
9. moved
10. have / ridden / have ridden

Exercise 3: Put the words in order

11. I have never eaten sushi
12. what did you do last night ?
13. the bus has just left
14. how long have you lived here ?

Exercise 4: True or false?

15. False
16. True
17. True
18. False