

Student Handout: The Present Perfect Tense

Objective: To understand how to connect the past to the present and distinguish between specific and non-specific time.

1. What is the Present Perfect?

We use the **Present Perfect** to talk about an action that happened at an unspecified time in the past or started in the past and continues now. It is the "Bridge" between the past and the present.

The Structure:

Subject + Have / Has + Past Participle (V3)

- **Affirmative:** *I have visited Algiers.*
- **Negative:** *She has not (hasn't) finished her tea.*
- **Question:** *Have you seen that movie?*

2. Present Perfect vs. Past Simple

This is the most important distinction in English.

Feature	Present Perfect	Past Simple
Time	Unspecified. We don't know exactly when.	Specific. We know exactly when.
Focus	On the experience or the result .	On the finished action .
Keywords	<i>Ever, never, already, yet, since, for.</i>	<i>Yesterday, ago, in 2010, last week.</i>

Example:

- **Past Simple:** "I **went** to France in 2022." (Specific date).
- **Present Perfect:** "I **have been** to France." (It's an experience in my life).

3. Real-Life Contexts

When do people actually use this?

- **Sharing Experiences:** "I **have traveled** to three different countries."
- **Announcing News:** "Look! I **have bought** a new car!" (The result is visible now).
- **Checking Progress:** "I **haven't finished** the report **yet**."
- **Duration:** "I **have been** a student **for** three years."

Practice Activities

Activity 1: The Time Detective

Choose the correct tense (Present Perfect or Past Simple) for each sentence.

1. I (see) _____ that film three times; it's my favorite!
2. Yesterday, I (see) _____ my friend at the mall.
3. She (live) _____ in this city since she was a child.
4. They (not / arrive) _____ yet. We are still waiting.
5. In 2015, my family (move) _____ to a new house.

Activity 2: "Find Someone Who..." (Speaking)

Stand up and interview your classmates. When you find someone who says "Yes," ask a follow-up question using the **Past Simple**.

- **Prompt:** Find someone who **has eaten** something unusual.
 - *Question:* "Have you ever eaten something unusual?"
 - *Follow-up (if yes):* "What **did** you eat? **Did** you like it?"
- **Prompt:** Find someone who **has met** a famous person.
 - *Question:* "Have you ever met someone famous?"
 - *Follow-up (if yes):* "Who **was** it? Where **did** you meet them?"

Quick Irregular Verb Reminder:

- **Go** → Gone
- **See** → Seen
- **Eat** → Eaten
- **Be** → Been
- **Buy** → Bought