

The Present Perfect Tense




The Mystery Tense of the English Language

The Present Perfect Tense is not easy!




- ⌘ The Present Perfect Tense in English is one of those grammar structures that would not exist in languages that are designed by people.
- ⌘ Unfortunately, languages evolve with use and the Present Perfect Tense has evolved into a tense that deals with three totally different segments of time that have practically nothing to do with one another.

Situation 1 to use the Present Perfect Tense



- ⌘ An event begins in the past and continues up to the present moment
- ⌘ Example: I **have been** here since 7 a.m.
- ⌘ Key Words that indicate this situation:
 - ⊞ **since** + date, **for** + a period of time, **all** + a period of time

Situation 2 to use the Present Perfect Tense




⌘ When a portion of time is not completed

⌘ Example: I **have spoken** to Lise many times this week.

⌘ Key Words that indicate this situation:


☑ **today, this semester, this winter, this year**

Situation 3 to use the Present Perfect Tense



- ⌘ When there is an action or repeated action in the past with **NO SPECIFIC** time (the exact time that the event happened is **NOT** important)
- ⌘ Examples: They **have moved** into a new apartment. I **have seen** that movie 10 times.

Situation 3 to use the Present Perfect Tense (continued)



- ⌘ Notice how in this sense of the tense, the action can happen **one or several** times.
- ⌘ Key Words that indicate this situation:
 - ☑ **already, just, lately, of late, recently, always, never, yet, once, twice, three times, many times, often, several times**

The Present Perfect and the Simple Past Tenses.



- ⌘ These two tenses occupy a very similar place in time. It is very easy to confuse them. The major difference between them is that the Present Perfect Tense doesn't mention exact times of actions.
- ⌘ The Simple Past mentions or **implies** an exact time of an action.

Examples of the Simple Past:



⌘ **Last month** he **went** shopping.

⌘ He **went** to Boston **yesterday**.

⌘ He **gave** her the gift there.

☑ Notice that the indication of time is not **directly** mentionned in the last sentence.

Example of the Present Perfect:



⌘ He **has gone** to Boston several times.

☐ Notice that the precise time of these trips cannot be determined.

The Structure of the Present Perfect Tense.



⌘ Part One of the Tense is the present tense of the auxiliary 'to have'

☑ I have, You have, He She or It **has**, We have, You have, They have.

⌘ Part Two of the Present Perfect Tense is the Past Participle Form of the verb.

Possible Past Participle Problems



⌘ In irregular verbs the Past Participle is often different from the Past Form of the verb.

⌘ To run - *Ran* - **Run**,

To begin - *Began* - **Begun**,

To eat - *Ate* - **Eaten**


Real Past Participle Problems



⌘ In regular verbs the Past Participle form of the verb and the Past Form of the verb are identical.

⌘ To revolt - *Revolted* - **Revolted**,
To like - *Liked* - **Liked**,
To work - *Worked* - **Worked**

Here are declarative sentences in the Present Perfect Tense using these examples:



⌘ He **has run** to the store all his life.


⌘ He **has begun** to get tired of always being the one who does it.

⌘ They **have eaten** well since he arrived because of all of his work.

⌘ You **have revolted** everyone who **has worked** with you this year.

⌘ No one **has liked** you since you *started* this project.

Why don't we put *started* into the Present Perfect Tense.



- ⌘ No one **has liked** you since you *started* this project.
- ⌘ The action of starting is completely in the past!

Questions in the Present Perfect



⌘ **Question word (optional) + Part 1 + Subject
+ Part 2 + Rest of Sentence**

⌘ Where have you gone to do the work?

⌘ Have you gone to do the work?

⌘ What have you done to change the situation?

⌘ Where has he been since the accident?

⌘ Has he been sad for a long time?

'Who' and 'What' in questions



- ⌘ Note that sometimes 'Who' and 'What' can be the subject of the sentence which changes the word order.
- ⌘ Who has done the work since she left?
- ⌘ What has happened for all this period?

In negative sentences the word **not** goes between the Part One and the Part Two of the verb tense.

⌘ Examples: We **have not worked** there.
She **has not liked** him since that day.

⌘ These answers can be contracted in the following way:

We **haven't worked** there.

She **hasn't liked** him since that day.