Present perfect

The **present perfect** is formed from the present tense of the verb ***have*** and the [past participle](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/verbs)of a verb.

We use the present perfect:

* for something that **started in the past**and **continues in the present**:

*They****'ve been married****for nearly fifty years.  
She****has lived****in Liverpool all her life.*

* when we are talking about our **experience up to the present**:

*I****'ve seen****that film before.  
I****'ve played****the guitar ever since I was a teenager.  
He****has written****three books and he is working on another one.*

We often use the adverb***ever***to talk about experience up to the present:

*My last birthday was the worst day I****have ever had****.*

and we use***never***for the [negative form](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/questions-and-negatives):

***Have****you****ever met****George?  
Yes, but I****'ve never met****his wife.*

* for something that **happened in the past** but is **important in the present**:

I can't get in the house. I***'ve lost***my keys.Teresa isn't at home. I think she ***has gone***shopping.

## have been**and**have gone

We use**have/has been**when someone has**gone**to a place and**returned**:

A: Where ***have*** you ***been***?B: I***'ve*** just ***been*** out ***to*** the supermarket.

A: ***Have*** you ***ever been to***San Francisco?B: No, but I***'ve been to*** Los Angeles.

But when someone **has not returned**, we use ***have/has gone***:

A: Where's Maria? I haven't seen her for weeks.B: She***'s gone to*** Paris for a week. She'll be back tomorrow.

## **Present perfect with time adverbials**

We often use the present perfect with [adverbials](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/adverbials-of-time) **which refer to the recent past**:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| recently | just | only just |

Scientists ***have*** ***recently*** ***discovered***a new breed of monkey.We ***have*** ***just*** ***got*** back from our holidays.

or **adverbials which include the present**:

|  |
| --- |
| so far     until now     up to nowever (in questions) yet (in questions and negatives) |

***Have****you****ever******seen****a ghost?  
Where****have****you****been******up to now****?  
A:****Have****you****finished****your homework****yet****?  
B: No,****so far****I****'ve****only****done****my history.*

After a clause with the present perfect we often use a clause with *since* to show when something started in the past:

*I****'ve worked****here****since I left school****.  
I****'ve been watching****that programme every week****since it started****.*

| Be careful! |
| --- |
| We do not use the present perfect with [**adverbials which refer to a finished past time**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/adverbials-of-time): |
| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | yesterday | last week/month/year | in 2017 | when I was younger | etc. |   I ***have seen*** that film ***~~yesterday~~***.We ***have*** just ***bought*** a new car ***~~last week~~***.***~~When we were children~~*** we ***have been*** to California. |
| but we can use the present perfect with **adverbials which refer to a time which is not yet finished**: |
| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | today | this week/month/year | now that I am 18 | etc. |   ***Have*** you ***seen*** Helen ***today***?We ***have bought*** a new car ***this week***. |

[Present perfect and past simple 1](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/present-perfect)

[Present perfect and past simple 2](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/present-perfect)

**Level: intermediate**

## **Present perfect continuous**

The **present perfect continuous** is formed with **have/has been** and the [-ing form](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/ing-forms) of the verb.

We normally use the present perfect continuous to **emphasise that something is still continuing in the present**:

She ***has been living*** in Liverpool all her life.It***'s been raining*** for hours.I'm tired out. I***'ve been working*** all day.They ***have been staying*** with us since last week.

We do **not** normally use the present perfect continuous with **stative verbs**. We use the **present perfect simple** instead:

I***'ve*** always ~~been liking~~ ***liked*** John.

[Present perfect continuous 1](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/present-perfect)

[Present perfect continuous 2](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/present-perfect)

## **Present perfect for future**

We normally use the [present simple](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/present-simple) to talk about the [future](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/english-grammar-reference/talking-about-the-future) in clauses with before, after, until, etc.:

I'll keep looking ***until I find*** my book.We'll begin ***when everyone arrives***.

but we can also use the **present perfect**:

I'll keep looking ***until I have found***my book.We'll begin ***when everyone has arrived***.