

Present Perfect Simple

Two things are always true about all uses of the Present Perfect:

- (i) there is always a connection with the present.
- (ii) if we talk about an action in the past, we do not know when the action happened.

In other words, the Present Perfect Simple is a *present* tense. Although reference is sometimes made to events that happened at an unspecified time in the past, we are only interested in the effect they have in the *present*.

Two categories of use

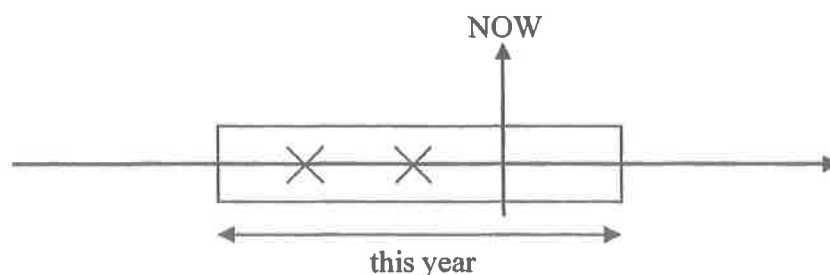
The Present Perfect Simple has two categories of use called the *Unfinished Past* and the *Indefinite Past*. Each category has two sub-categories.

1 Unfinished Past

(i) Unfinished Period of Time Use

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about things which have happened in an unfinished period of time that includes the present. It is used with expressions such as *this morning, this week, this month, this year*.

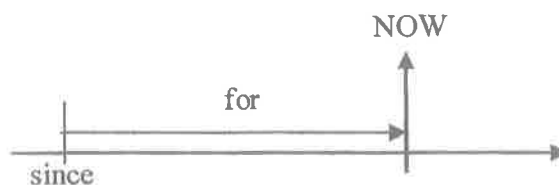
eg I've visited Paris twice this year.



(ii) Duration Use

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about the duration of an action that started in the past and continues up to and includes the present. It is often used with *for* and *since*. To ask questions we use "How long ... ?"

eg I've worked here for 10 years (and I still work here).

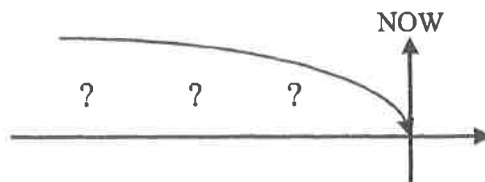


2 Indefinite Past

(i) Result Use

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about the *present* result of an action completed at an unspecified time in the past.

eg I've repaired the car (so it now works).



This use of the Present Perfect is often used to report news events:

eg Six people have been rescued.

Sometimes the result of the past action is evident in the present:

eg Oh, you've dyed your hair!

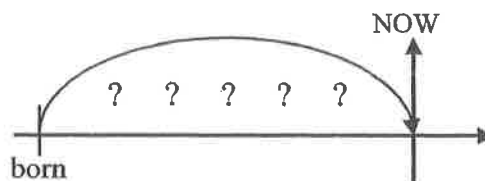
To highlight the result of something in the very recent past, we add the word *just*:

eg They've just arrived and are taking off their coats.

(ii) Experience Use

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about experiences people have had at some time in their lives. When the action happened is not specified and is not important.

eg She has travelled all round the world.



It is used with *ever* and *never* to ask questions and give answers about experiences:

eg "Have you ever ...?" "No, I've never ..."

eg Have you ever driven a racing car?

eg I've never eaten frogs legs.

It is also used with superlatives and expressions such as "This is the first time ...":

eg You're the most wonderful person I've ever met.

eg This is the first time I've drunk champagne.

Present Perfect with adverbs

The Present Perfect can be used with adverbs such as *already* and *yet*.

Note: *already* = earlier than expected

yet = later than expected

eg There's no need to introduce us – we've already met.

eg Haven't you finished yet? I did it in five minutes!

eg We asked her to be here at six but she hasn't arrived yet.