

GRAMMAR REFERENCE AND PRACTICE

UNIT 16

PRESENT PERFECT AND PAST SIMPLE

➤ FOR THE PAST SIMPLE, SEE UNIT 3 PAGE 149

➤ FOR THE PRESENT PERFECT, SEE UNITS 13, 14 AND 15 PAGES 159–161

We use the **present perfect**:

- to talk about an action that finished in the past, but the result is important now. We are not interested in when the action happened.
My brother's happy because he has won a competition.

We can also use the **present perfect**:

- with *ever* and *never* to talk about our experiences until now.
I've never learned French. (= until now, but I may learn it in the future)
- with *just*, *already* and *yet* to talk about things we have or haven't done recently.
We've just finished eating. I haven't read that book yet.
- to talk about an action or situation which started in the past and continues into the present. We use *for* and *since* to say how long it has been happening.

How long have you lived here?

I've lived here since 2005.

We use the **past simple**:

- to talk about an action that happened in the past.
My brother won a competition.
- when we are interested in when the action happened.
My brother won the competition last week.
- We can also use the **past simple**:
to talk about experiences which happened over a time in the past.

When my dad lived in France for a month, he didn't learn French. (= this time is finished. My dad doesn't live in France now.)

Remember, when we ask questions about a time in the past, we use *When ...?*

When did you learn to ride a bike?

I learned to ride a bike when I was five years old.

1 Complete the table with these time expressions.

already ever for 18 weeks in 2008
just last week never recently
since 5th May three days ago
when I was younger yesterday yet

Present perfect

just

Past simple

yesterday

2 Complete the sentences with the present perfect or past simple form of the verb in brackets.

- I _____ (buy) this bag when I was on holiday.
- I _____ (not be) ill for a long time.
- My best friend was late for school this morning because she _____ (miss) the bus.
- We _____ (send) an email to our teacher three days ago, but she _____ (not answer) yet.
- My mum and dad _____ (know) each other since they were children. They _____ (go) to school together.
- You _____ (make) a lot of mistakes! Please write this story again.

3 Write complete questions with *How long ... ?* and the present perfect. Then, write your own answer with the present perfect.

0 How long / live here?

How long have you lived here?

I've lived here for six years.

1 How long / know your English teacher?

2 How long / like your favourite band?

4 Now, write complete questions with *When ... ?* Then, write your own answer with the past simple.

0 When / start learning English?

When did you start learning English?

I started learning English four years ago.

1 When / learn to swim?

2 When / use a computer for the first time?