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The **Present Perfect** tense has a number of uses. One of them is to express situations which started in the past and continue into the present. Here are some examples:

## Meaning

We may use the **Present Perfect** to talk about actions or events that **started in the past** but **continue to the present** or to describe something we have done several times in the past and continue to do.



via <https://writingexplained.org/grammar-dictionary/present-perfect-tense>

Consider the following examples:

- *I'm a teacher.*
- *I started teaching ten year ago.*
- ***I've been** a teacher for ten years.*
- *(NOT: I am a teacher for ten years.*
- *NOT: ~~I've been a teacher ten years ago.~~)*
- *My best friend's name is Gary.*
- *met him three years ago.*
- ***I've known** him for three years.*
- *(NOT: I know him for three years.*

- *NOT: I've known him three years ago.)*
- *I have a car.*
- *My Dad gave it to me a long time ago.*
- *I've **had** it for ages.*
- *(NOT: I have it for ages.*
- *NOT: I've had a long time ago.)*

These examples indicate that the action began at a time before now. Additionally, these actions continue on into the present and will likely extend to the future.

*Note: 'Be', 'know' and 'have' are [state verbs](#) so we don't usually use them in their continuous forms.*

*- be → been- know → known*

With [action verbs](#), we can use Present Perfect Simple or [Present Perfect Continuous](#):

*- I've learned English for five years. - I've been learning English for five years.*

*- He **has worked** here since 2015. - He has been working here since 2015.*

## Present Perfect structure

Let's revise how Present Perfect is formed.

### Positive form

**[subject] + have/has + [Past Participle](#)**

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

### Negative form

**[subject] + haven't/hasn't + [Past Participle](#)**

- *I **haven't seen** my mother for 2 months.*
- *She **hasn't been** abroad for years.*

Questions

**have/has + [subject] + Past Participle**

- **Have** they **lived** here all their lives?
- **Has** he **known** Julie for ten years?

## Common signal words

We use:

**for +**                    ages / ten years / six months / two weeks / fifteen minutes  
**a period of time**

**since +**                2015 / March / last summer / yesterday / this morning / 10.00  
**a point in time**

## Present Perfect & Past Simple

We use the Present Perfect to talk about a situation or action which is not finished.

We use the Past Simple when we talk about completed past actions.

Compare:

- Tom lives in New York. He **has lived** there for two years. (*Present Perfect*)
- Before that, he **lived** in San Francisco for a year. (*Past Simple*)

Watch this short video to learn about the use of Present Perfect for unfinished past:

See also:

[Present Perfect or Past Simple?](#)

[Present Perfect: Statements](#)

[Present Perfect: Negative & Questions](#)

[Present Perfect for Experience](#)

[Present Perfect with 'Just' and 'Yet'](#)