

PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE/ PROGRESSIVE

THE BRIDGE OF TIME

Form

Present Perfect Simple	Present Perfect Progressive
irregular verbs: form of 'have' + 3rd column of irregular verbs <i>Example:</i> I / you / we / they have spoken he / she / it has spoken regular verbs: form of 'have' + infinitive + ed <i>Example:</i> I / you / we / they have worked he / she / it has worked	form of 'have' + been + verb + ing <i>Example:</i> I / you / we / they have been speaking he / she / it has been speaking
Exceptions	
Exceptions when adding 'ed' : ■ when the final letter is e, only add <i>d</i> <i>Example:</i> love - loved ■ after a short, stressed vowel, the final consonant is doubled <i>Example:</i> admit - admitted ■ final <i>t</i> is always doubled in British English (not in American English) <i>Example:</i> travel - travelled ■ after a consonant, final <i>y</i> becomes <i>i</i> (but: not after a vowel)	Exceptions when adding 'ing' : ■ silent e is dropped. (but: does not apply for -ee) <i>Example:</i> come - coming ■ double ee:: agree - agreeing ■ after a short, stressed vowel, the final consonant is doubled <i>Example:</i> sit - sitting ■ after a vowel, the final consonant <i>t</i> is doubled in British English (but not in American English). <i>Example:</i> travel - travelling ■ final <i>ie</i> becomes <i>y</i>. <i>Example:</i> lie - lying

Example: worry - worried but: play - played	
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Use

Both tenses are used to express that an action began in the past and is still going on or has just finished. In many cases, both forms are correct, but there is often a difference in meaning: We use the *Present Perfect Simple* mainly to express that an action is completed or to emphasise the result. We use the *Present Perfect Progressive* to emphasise the duration or continuous course of an action.

Result or duration?

Do you want to express what has happened so far or how long an action has been going on yet?

Present Perfect Simple	Present Perfect Progressive
Result (what / how much / how often) I have written 5 letters. / I have been to London twice.	Duration (how long) I have been writing for an hour.

Certain verbs

The following verbs are usually only used in Present Perfect Simple (not in the progressive form).

- **state:** be, have (for possession only)
 - Example: We have been on holiday for two weeks.
- **senses:** feel, hear, see, smell, taste, touch
 - Example: He has touched the painting.
- **brain work:** believe, know, think, understand
 - Example: I have known him for 3 years.

Emphasis on completion or duration?

Do you want to emphasise the completion of an action or its continuous course (how has somebody spent his time)?

Present Perfect Simple	Present Perfect Progressive
Emphasis on completion I have done my homework. <i>(Meaning: My homework is completed now.)</i>	Emphasis on duration I have been doing my homework. <i>(Meaning: That's how I have spent my time. It does not matter whether the homework is completed now.)</i>

Result or side effect?

Do you want to express that a completed action led to a desired result or that the action had an unwanted side effect?

Present Perfect Simple	Present Perfect Progressive
desired result I have washed the car. <i>(Result: The car is clean now.)</i>	unwanted side effect Why are you so wet? - I have been washing the car. <i>(side effect: I became wet when I was washing the car. It does not matter whether the car is clean now.)</i>

Permanent or temporary?

If an action is still going on and we want to express that it is a permanent situation, we would usually use the Present Perfect Simple. For temporary situations, we would prefer the Present Perfect Progressive. This is not a rule, however, only a tendency.

Present Perfect Simple	Present Perfect Progressive
permanent <i>James has lived in this town for 10 years. (Meaning: He is a permanent resident of this town.)</i>	temporary <i>James has been living here for a year. (Meaning: This situation is only temporary. Maybe he is an exchange student and only here for one or two years.)</i>

Signal words

Present Perfect Simple	Present Perfect Progressive
■ how often ■ ... times	■ how long ■ since ■ for

A.