

PAST SIMPLE or PRESENT PERFECT?

- Ⓜ We use the **Past Simple** to talk about an action that was completed at a definite time in the past.
- Ⓜ With the **Present Perfect** the action either happened at an indefinite time in the past and has a result in the present, or indicates multiple events that happened from the past to the present.

Compare these examples:

*I **went** to New York **in 1987**, it was fantastic.*

*I've **been** to New York **before**, it's a great city.*

*How long **did you live** in Venice for?*

*How long **have you lived** here?*

*We **saw** that film **last month**.*

*I've **watched** that film **three times**.*

*He **came** here **seven years ago***

*He **has lived** here **for seven years***

PRESENT SIMPLE, CONTINUOUS OR PERFECT?

- Ⓜ The **Present Simple** expresses regular or repeated actions in the present or permanent situations.
- Ⓜ The **Present Continuous** is used to talk about activities we are in the middle of doing
- Ⓜ The **Present Perfect** we are normally talking about an activity or multiple activities that started from the past until now, or something that happened at an indefinite time in the past which has an effect on the present.

Compare these examples:

*They **study** German **twice a week***

*They're **studying** German **this year**.*

*They've **studied** German **for one year**.*

*He **starts work** at 8.30 every week day.*

*This week **he's starting work** at 10am*

*He's **just started work** at a new company.*

*I **often read** on the train to work.*

*I'm **reading** a book by George Orwell*

*I've **read** several books by Toni Morrison*

*Water **boils** at 100 degrees centigrade*

*I'm **boiling** the water to make a cup of tea.*

*I've **boiled** the water, now I'll make the tea.*

Time Expressions

Time expressions are very important in indicating which tense or aspect to use.

| Present & Past Simple | Present Continuous | Present Perfect | Past Simple |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Usually | Now | Since/For | Last week/month/year |
| Always | Currently | Already/Yet | Ago |
| Often | At the moment | Just | Previously |
| Sometimes | Today | Today | In + month/year |
| Never | This week/month/year | This week/month/year | On + date |
| Every day/week/month | | Ever/Never | |

Exercise

Write sentences using the time expressions below with the appropriate tense – some can be used in more than one tense. Be careful to use the correct word order.

since 9am now every weekend last week two days ago

just at the moment in the evenings

I study English

I've been shopping

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I am eating my lunch

I visited John

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