

Present Perfect: Experience

Grammar Lesson, Examples & 30 Practice Questions

Present Perfect: Experience

Have you ever eaten sushi? Have you ever visited another country? When we talk about **experiences in our life** — things we have done or have never done — we use the **present perfect**.

The present perfect for experience tells us *whether something has happened at some point in a person's life*. We do **not** say exactly when it happened. The important thing is the experience itself, not the time.

Look at these simple examples:

- *I have visited Paris.* (At some point in my life, I went to Paris.)
- *She has never eaten sushi.* (In her whole life, she has not eaten sushi.)
- *Have you ever ridden a horse?* (At any point in your life, did you ride a horse?)

In this lesson, you will learn how to form the present perfect for experience, when to use it, and how to avoid common mistakes.

A Quick Grammar Note: What Is the Present Perfect?

Before we look at rules, let's understand the words we will use.

- **Subject** — the person or thing doing the action (e.g. *I, you, he, she, we, they*)
- **Auxiliary verb** — a "helper" verb. For the present perfect, the auxiliary verb is **have** or **has**.
- **Past participle** — a special form of the main verb (e.g. *eat* → *eaten*, *visit* → *visited*, *see* → *seen*)

How to Form the Present Perfect for Experience

The present perfect is built with three parts:

Subject + have / has + past participle

Here is a simple situation to show you how it works:

Tom is 30 years old. In his life, he tried skydiving once. It is not important when — maybe five years ago, maybe last year. The important thing is that he has this experience.

So we say: **Tom has tried skydiving.**

We use **have** with *I, you, we, they*.

We use **has** with *he, she, it*.

Positive (Affirmative) Sentences

Pattern: Subject + have/has + past participle

Subject	have / has	Past Participle	Full Example Sentence
I	have	visited	I have visited London.
You	have	tried	You have tried sushi.
He	has	seen	He has seen that film.
She	has	eaten	She has eaten Thai food.
It	has	happened	It has happened before.
We	have	travelled	We have travelled to Spain.
They	have	met	They have met a famous person.

Negative Sentences

Pattern: Subject + have/has + not + past participle

We add **not** after *have* or *has* to make a negative sentence. We often use the word **never** in negative experience sentences. *Never* means "not at any time in my life."

Pattern with "never": Subject + have/has + never + past participle

Subject	have/has + not / never	Past Participle	Full Example Sentence
I	have not / have never	visited	I have never visited Australia.
You	have not / have never	tried	You have not tried this cake.
He	has not / has never	flown	He has never flown in a plane.
She	has not / has never	eaten	She has never eaten oysters.
We	have not / have never	seen	We have never seen snow.
They	have not / have never	met	They have never met before.

Question Sentences

Pattern: Have/Has + subject + ever + past participle?

To ask about someone's experience, we move **have** or **has** to the beginning of the sentence. We often use the word **ever** in questions. *Ever* means "at any time in your life."

Have / Has	Subject	ever	Past Participle	Full Question
Have	you	ever	visited	Have you ever visited Japan?
Has	he	ever	tried	Has he ever tried surfing?
Has	she	ever	seen	Has she ever seen a whale?
Have	they	ever	lived	Have they ever lived abroad?
Have	we	ever	met	Have we ever met before?

Short Answers to Experience Questions

When someone asks a present perfect question, we often give a short answer. We do **not** repeat the whole sentence.

Question: *Have you ever eaten sushi?*

Yes: Yes, I have.

No: No, I haven't. (*I have never eaten sushi.*)

Question: *Has she ever visited Paris?*

Yes: Yes, she has.

No: No, she hasn't. (*She has never visited Paris.*)

Question	Positive Short Answer	Negative Short Answer
Have you ever...?	Yes, I have.	No, I haven't.
Has he ever...?	Yes, he has.	No, he hasn't.
Has she ever...?	Yes, she has.	No, she hasn't.
Have they ever...?	Yes, they have.	No, they haven't.
Have we ever...?	Yes, we have.	No, we haven't.

Contractions in the Present Perfect

In everyday spoken and informal written English, we often shorten (contract) *have* and *has*.

Full Form	Contraction	Example
I have	I've	I've visited France.
You have	You've	You've tried sushi before.

Full Form	Contraction	Example
He has	He's	He's seen that film.
She has	She's	She's never eaten oysters.
We have	We've	We've never been to Asia.
They have	They've	They've met a famous actor.
have not	haven't	I haven't visited Canada.
has not	hasn't	She hasn't tried skiing.

Regular and Irregular Past Participles

To use the present perfect, you need the **past participle** of the verb. There are two types of verbs: **regular** and **irregular**.

Regular Verbs

Regular verbs form the past participle by adding **-ed** to the base verb. This is the same as the simple past form.

Base Verb	Past Participle	Example Sentence
visit	visited	I have visited Rome.
try	tried	She has tried yoga.
travel	travelled	We have travelled to Asia.
work	worked	He has worked abroad.
cook	cooked	She has cooked Thai food.
climb	climbed	They have climbed a mountain.

Irregular Verbs

Irregular verbs do **not** follow the **-ed** rule. Their past participle form is different. You need to learn these separately.

Base Verb	Past Participle	Example Sentence
eat	eaten	I have eaten sushi.
see	seen	She has seen that film.

Base Verb	Past Participle	Example Sentence
go	gone / been	He has been to Japan.
meet	met	They have met a celebrity.
fly	flown	I have never flown first class.
ride	ridden	She has ridden a horse.
swim	swum	He has swum in the sea.
speak	spoken	Have you ever spoken to her?
drive	driven	I have never driven a bus.
read	read	She has read that book.

Important Differences: "Been" and "Gone"

The verb *go* has two past participle forms in the present perfect: **been** and **gone**. They have different meanings.

Have been to

We use **have/has been to** to say that someone visited a place and came back. This is very common for talking about **life experiences**.

- *I have been to Paris.* (I visited Paris in my life. I am not there now.)
- *She has been to Japan twice.* (She visited Japan two times. She is back home now.)

Have gone to

We use **have/has gone to** to say that someone went to a place and is **still there**. They have not come back.

- *He has gone to Paris.* (He is in Paris now. He has not returned.)
- *They have gone to the shops.* (They are at the shops right now.)

For talking about **life experiences**, use **been to**, not *gone to*.

Key Words for Present Perfect Experience

Certain words are very common when we use the present perfect for experience. Learn these words — they are strong signals!

Word	Used In	Meaning	Example
ever	Questions	at any time in your life	Have you ever eaten snails?

Word	Used In	Meaning	Example
never	Negative sentences	not at any time in my life	I have never eaten snails.
before	Positive & negative	at some earlier time	I have seen this film before.
once / twice / three times	Positive sentences	the number of times something happened	She has visited Italy twice.

Present Perfect for Experience vs. Simple Past

Students often wonder: when do I use the present perfect and when do I use the simple past? Here is a simple rule:

Use the **present perfect** when you do **not** say a specific time.

Use the **simple past** when you **do** say a specific time (yesterday, last year, in 2010, etc.).

Present Perfect (no specific time)	Simple Past (specific time)
I have visited Paris.	I visited Paris last summer.
She has eaten sushi.	She ate sushi yesterday.
Have you ever tried skiing?	Did you try skiing last winter?
He has never seen snow.	He didn't see snow in 2020.

Common Mistakes

Here are the most common errors students make with the present perfect for experience.

- ✗ I have visited Paris last year.
- ✓ **I visited Paris last year.** (Use simple past with a specific time like "last year.")
- ✗ She has never ate sushi.
- ✓ **She has never eaten sushi.** (Use the past participle "eaten," not the simple past "ate.")
- ✗ Have you ever visit London?
- ✓ **Have you ever visited London?** (Always use the past participle after "have/has.")
- ✗ He have been to Japan.
- ✓ **He has been to Japan.** (Use "has" with he, she, it.)
- ✗ I have went to Spain twice.
- ✓ **I have been to Spain twice.** (For life experiences with a place, use "been to," not "gone to.")

✗ Yes, I have visited. / No, I have not visited.

✓ **Yes, I have.** / **No, I haven't.** (In short answers, only use have/haven't — do not repeat the past participle.)

Present Perfect Experience: Quick Summary

Let's look at the key points from this lesson:

- We use the **present perfect for experience** to talk about things that happened at some point in a person's life. The exact time is not important.
- The structure is: **Subject + have/has + past participle**
- Use **have** with *I, you, we, they* and **has** with *he, she, it*.
- Use **ever** in questions: *Have you ever tried sushi?*
- Use **never** in negative sentences: *I have never tried sushi.*
- Do **not** use a specific time (yesterday, last year) with the present perfect. Use the simple past instead.
- Use **been to** (not *gone to*) for life experience with places: *I have been to Rome.*
- Regular verbs: add **-ed** for the past participle. Irregular verbs must be learnt individually.

Now practise **present perfect for experience** in the exercises below.

Present Perfect: Experience – Practice Test

A2 | 30 Questions: Multiple Choice, Fill-in-the-Gap & Fill-in-the-Blank

Part 1: Multiple Choice (Questions 1–10)

1 I ____ never eaten sushi before. It looks delicious!

- A** have
- B** has
- C** had
- D** did

2 She ____ visited Paris twice in her life.

- A** have
- B** did
- C** has
- D** is

3 Have you ever ____ a famous person?

- A** meet
- B** met
- C** meeting
- D** meets

4 They ____ never seen snow before.

- A** has
- B** did
- C** do
- D** have

5 He has ____ ridden a horse.

- A** ever
- B** never
- C** yet
- D** already

6 Have you ever ____ to Japan?

- A** went
- B** go
- C** going
- D** been

7 My parents have ____ tried Thai food. They love it!

- A** never
- B** already
- C** yet
- D** ever

8 ____ she ever worked in another country?

- A** Did
- B** Does
- C** Has
- D** Is

9 I have never ____ a scary movie before.

- A** watch
- B** watched
- C** watching
- D** watches

10 We use the word 'ever' in Present Perfect questions about experience. Which sentence is correct?

- A** Did you ever been to London?
- B** Have you ever been to London?
- C** Are you ever been to London?
- D** Do you ever been to London?

Part 2: Fill in the Gap (Questions 11–20)

11 I ____ never eaten sushi before.

- A** have
- B** has
- C** had

12 She ____ visited Paris twice.

- A** has
- B** have
- C** had

13 They have never ____ a plane.

- A** taken
- B** take
- C** took

14 Have you ever ____ to London?

- A** been
- B** go
- C** went

15 He has never ____ a horse.

- A** ridden
- B** rode
- C** ride

16 We ____ already seen that movie.

- A** have
- B** has
- C** are

17 She has ____ tried Thai food.

- A** never
- B** ever
- C** always

18 ____ you ever met a famous person?

- A** Have
- B** Has
- C** Did

19 My parents have ____ been to Australia.

- A** never
- B** yet
- C** just

20 I have ____ eaten a mango. It was delicious!

- A** already
- B** never
- C** yet

Part 3: Fill in the Blank (Questions 21–30)

21 She _____ visited Paris twice in her life.

22 I have never _____ sushi before. It looks interesting!

23 Have you ever _____ a horse?

24 They _____ tried Thai food many times.

25 My brother has never _____ the ocean.

26 We have _____ to a concert before. It was amazing!

27 Has she ever _____ a competition?

28 I have already _____ this game. It's really fun!

29 He _____ never flown on an airplane. He is nervous!

30 I have _____ a famous actor. It was so exciting!

Answer Key & Explanations

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Part 1: Multiple Choice

1. **A** Correct Answer: have ☒ Explanation: We use have with I in the Present Perfect. The structure is I + have + past participle. I have never eaten sushi.
2. **C** Correct Answer: has ☒ Explanation: We use has with she in the Present Perfect. The structure is she + has + past participle. She has visited Paris twice.
3. **B** Correct Answer: met ☒ Explanation: After have or has, we use the past participle. The past participle of meet is met. Have you ever met a famous person?
4. **D** Correct Answer: have ☒ Explanation: We use have with they in the Present Perfect. They have never seen snow talks about a life experience.
5. **B** Correct Answer: never ☒ Explanation: We use never in the Present Perfect to say someone has not had an experience. He has never ridden a horse means he has no experience of riding a horse.
6. **D** Correct Answer: been ☒ Explanation: In the Present Perfect, we use been (not went) to talk about visiting a place as an experience. Have you ever been to Japan?
7. **B** Correct Answer: already ☒ Explanation: We use already in positive sentences to say something has happened. My parents have already tried Thai food means they have the experience of eating it.
8. **C** Correct Answer: Has ☒ Explanation: To make a Present Perfect question with she, we use Has + she + past participle. Has she ever worked in another country?
9. **B** Correct Answer: watched ☒ Explanation: After have never, we use the past participle. The past participle of watch is watched. I have never watched a scary movie.
10. **B** Correct Answer: Have you ever been to London? ☒ Explanation: We use Have + subject + ever + past participle to ask about life experiences. Have you ever been to London? is the correct Present Perfect question form.

Part 2: Fill in the Gap

11. **A** Correct Answer: have ☒ Explanation: With I, we use have in the Present Perfect. I have never eaten sushi before.
12. **A** Correct Answer: has ☒ Explanation: With she, we use has in the Present Perfect. She has visited Paris twice.

13. **A** Correct Answer: taken ✓ Explanation: After have/has, we use the past participle. The past participle of take is taken. They have never taken a plane.
14. **A** Correct Answer: been ✓ Explanation: After have in a question, we use the past participle. The past participle of go is been when talking about visiting. Have you ever been to London?
15. **A** Correct Answer: ridden ✓ Explanation: After has, we use the past participle. The past participle of ride is ridden. He has never ridden a horse.
16. **A** Correct Answer: have ✓ Explanation: With we, we use have in the Present Perfect. We have already seen that movie.
17. **A** Correct Answer: never ✓ Explanation: Never is used in the Present Perfect to say someone has not had an experience at any time. She has never tried Thai food.
18. **A** Correct Answer: Have ✓ Explanation: To make a Present Perfect question with you, we use Have. Have you ever met a famous person?
19. **A** Correct Answer: never ✓ Explanation: Never means not at any time and is used to talk about experiences that have not happened. My parents have never been to Australia.
20. **A** Correct Answer: already ✓ Explanation: Already means the experience has happened before now. I have already eaten a mango. It confirms the experience took place.

Part 3: Fill in the Blank

21. **has** Correct Answer: has ✓ Explanation: We use has with she, he, it in the Present Perfect. The structure is has + past participle to talk about past experiences.
22. **eaten|eat** Correct Answer: eaten ✓ Explanation: After have/has, we use the past participle. The past participle of eat is eaten. We use never to talk about experiences we have not had.
23. **ridden|ride** Correct Answer: ridden ✓ Explanation: After Have you ever, we use the past participle. The past participle of ride is ridden. We use ever in questions about life experiences.
24. **have** Correct Answer: have ✓ Explanation: We use have with I, you, we, they in the Present Perfect. The structure is have + past participle to describe experiences.
25. **seen|see** Correct Answer: seen ✓ Explanation: After has never, we use the past participle. The past participle of see is seen. This tells us it is something he has not experienced in his life.
26. **been|gone** Correct Answer: been ✓ Explanation: We use been (past participle of be/go) when we visited a place and came back. Been to is used to describe a past experience.
27. **won|win** Correct Answer: won ✓ Explanation: After Has she ever, we use the past participle. The past participle of win is won. We use ever in questions to ask about someone's experiences.

28. **tried|try** Correct Answer: tried  Explanation: After have, we use the past participle. The past participle of try is tried. We use already to say we have had an experience before now.
29. **has** Correct Answer: has  Explanation: We use has with he, she, it in the Present Perfect. The structure has never + past participle shows he has not had this experience in his life.
30. **met|meet** Correct Answer: met  Explanation: After have, we use the past participle. The past participle of meet is met. The Present Perfect is used here to talk about a past experience in the speaker's life.

Score Guide

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|----------------------|--|
| 27–30 Correct | Excellent! You have mastered this topic. |
| 23–26 Correct | Very good! Review the rules you missed. |
| 18–22 Correct | Good start. Re-read the lesson and examples. |
| 0–17 Correct | Study the lesson again before retaking the test. |