

UNIT 3 HOME

Perfect tenses

Present perfect simple and present perfect continuous

We use the present perfect simple to focus on the result of an action, and we use the present perfect continuous to focus on the doing of the action itself. *I've been practising this piece for weeks, but still haven't learned it.*

We use the present perfect simple to talk about how much or how many. When we focus on how long something has taken, we use the present perfect continuous.

I've done three tests this term.

We've seen that show three times.

I've been working on this project for a month now. I need to finish it by the end of the week.

We use the present perfect simple to talk about how many times. But we use the present perfect continuous for repeated actions when we don't say specifically how many times they have happened. We often use phrases such as *all day* and *recently* in these sentences.

We've seen that show three times.

I've been trying to contact him all morning.

We usually use the present perfect simple, not the present perfect continuous, to talk about states rather than actions with state verbs such as: *be, have, know, seem.*

We've known each other since university.

NOT *We've been knowing each other since university.*

She's had that laptop for over ten years!

NOT *She's been having that laptop for over ten years!*

Past perfect simple and past perfect continuous

We use the past perfect simple to describe completed events that happened before another event in the past, often with time expressions, such as: *by the time, when, before, after* and *until.*

She had already learned how to read and write by the time she started school.

We use the past perfect continuous:

- ▶ to describe ongoing activities leading up to a past event.

They had been walking for hours when they saw the house in the distance.

- ▶ to give background information about an event.

She was concerned because he hadn't been sleeping well recently.

1 Match the sentence beginnings (1–6) with their correct endings (a or b).

- By the time he reached the prison gates, ...
 - a large crowd had already gathered to greet him.
 - a large crowd had already been gathering to greet him.
- When the visitors arrived at the island ...
 - they had travelled for many days.
 - they had been travelling for many days.
- His head ached and his eyes were sore because ...
 - he had studied since five o'clock in the morning.
 - he had been studying since five o'clock in the morning.
- Until I read Mandela's autobiography ...
 - I hadn't realized that he had spent twenty-seven years in prison.
 - I hadn't been realizing that he had spent twenty-seven years in prison.
- We heard about the riot ...
 - after we had left the building.
 - after we had been leaving the building.
- How much studying had you done ...
 - before you took the exam?
 - before you had been taking the exam?

2 Complete the sentences using the past perfect simple or past perfect continuous form of the verbs from the box.

climb look for not expect not finish swim work

- She _____ for thirty minutes before she realized that she couldn't see the shore.
- He _____ the speech before the crowd began to cheer.
- By the time we reached the top of the mountain, we _____ over 300 metres.
- She was surprised to see the room so full – she _____ so many people to come.
- He was extremely tired because he _____ hard all day.
- How long _____ the book before you found it?

3 Match the sentence beginnings (1–5) with their correct endings (a or b).

- I'd been cutting ...
 - I'd cut ...
 - wood all morning.
 - my finger.
- I've been thinking about you ...
 - I've thought about you ...
 - several times this week.
 - a lot recently.
- I've seen a lot of good films ...
 - I saw a lot of good films ...
 - this year.
 - last year.

- 4
- 1 You've been wearing the same socks ...
 - 2 You're wearing the same socks ...
 - a since Monday!
 - b as me! Look!
- 5
- 1 How long have you been ...
 - 2 How many times have you been ...
 - a to Spain?
 - b going to Spain for the winter?

4 Complete the text with the correct form of the verbs from the box. Use the past simple, present perfect simple, present perfect continuous or past perfect simple.

be (x2) get improve introduce kill
not cook not live result rise

Who wants to live for ever? In wealthy countries, the number of years people can expect to live ¹_____ over the last 200 years. Most babies born in 1900 ²_____ past the age of 50, but many babies born these days will live to over 80. There are three main reasons why people are living longer these days.

Firstly, public health ³_____ dramatically. In the 20th century, thanks to developments in medical science, a large proportion of the population were protected against diseases which ⁴_____ many people, such as smallpox, polio and measles. In addition, medical research ⁵_____ in cures being found for many other illnesses.

Secondly, there is a much greater understanding of the importance of good hygiene than there ⁶_____ in the past. People wash their hands more often than they used to and are much more aware of food hygiene. In the past, for example, people often ⁷_____ ill because they ate food that they ⁸_____ properly. Awareness of the importance of keeping people safe and well at school and at work has grown, too, and laws for ensuring health and safety at work ⁹_____ in place for several decades now.

Finally, people generally lead more healthy lifestyles these days. Fewer people smoke and in many countries governments ¹⁰_____ smoking bans in public places.

5 Complete the text with the correct form of the verbs in brackets. More than one option may be possible.

My life ¹_____ (**change**) dramatically in 2010, when I ²_____ (**lose**) my job as an accountant. My father ³_____ (**die**) the year before, and he ⁴_____ (**leave**) me some money. I ⁵_____ (**look**) at some travel magazines and I ⁶_____ (**think**) about spending the money on an exotic holiday, when I ⁷_____ (**hear**) a programme on the radio about orphanages in India. 'I ⁸_____ (**want**) to make a difference,' I thought to myself. 'Why ⁹_____ (**I/dream**) about holidays when I can help other people?' Since then, I ¹⁰_____ (**travel**) several times to India and I ¹¹_____ (**help**) to rebuild an orphanage in Calcutta. It ¹²_____ (**be**) an amazing experience.

UNIT 4 SCHOOL

Would rather, would prefer, had better

Would rather, would prefer

We use both *would rather (do something)* and *would prefer (to do something)* to talk about general preferences.

We use *would rather* + infinitive without *to* and *would prefer* + infinitive with *to*. Compare:

I'd rather play basketball than play tennis.

I'd prefer to play basketball than play tennis.

The negative form is *would rather not (do something)* or *would prefer not (to do something)*.

Martha's tired so she'd prefer not to go out/she'd rather not go out.

'Will you take the dog for a walk now?' 'I'd prefer not to./I'd rather not.'

Would rather (but NOT *would prefer to*) is followed by a verb in the past tense when other people are involved in a present or future action and the sentence has two subjects.

I'd rather you made lunch today.

'Who's going to drive?' 'I'd rather you did.'

Is Max going to do the shopping or would he rather we did it?

'Shall I talk to your teacher, or will you?' 'I'd rather you talked to her.'