

UNIT 2

Past simple and present perfect simple

Form

Past simple

We add *-ed* to regular verbs to form the past simple.

Affirmative	Negative
I/you/he/she/it/we/they worked	I/you/he/she/it/we/they didn't work (didn't = did not)

Interrogative	Short answer
did I/you/he/she/it/we/they work?	Yes, I/you/he/she/it/we/they did . No, I/you/he/she/it/we/they didn't .

Note the spelling rules for other regular verbs:

- for verbs ending in *-e*, we add *-d*: *realise* → *realised*
- for verbs ending in *-y*, we change the *-y* to *i* and add *-ed*: *carry* → *carried*
- for verbs ending in vowel + consonant (not *-w*, *-x* or *-y*), we double the consonant: *plan* → *planned*

Some verbs have an irregular affirmative form in the past simple:

be → *was/were*; *do* → *did*; *go* → *went*; *see* → *saw*;
write → *wrote*

Present perfect simple

We form the present perfect simple with the present simple of the verb *to have* + past participle.

See page 156: Present perfect simple

Use

Past simple

We use the past simple to talk about finished actions in the past when there is a clear link to a specific time in the past. We often use a time phrase (*yesterday, last week, five years ago*) with the past simple.

He finished the film script two hours ago.

They didn't go to the cinema last night.

Did you meet Alex at the meeting earlier?

We use the past simple to talk about someone's life, when they are dead.

Sharpe fought as a soldier in the army during the Napoleonic wars.

Present perfect simple

We use the present perfect simple to talk about a recent action or situation which started at some time in the past. The situation may also continue into the present or have a result in the present. We use the present perfect simple when the experience is more important than the time and the time is not stated.

I've seen a lot of different films in the last five years.

She's visited a lot of interesting places in her life.

He hasn't seen the new Lord of the Rings film yet.

We also use the present perfect simple to talk about people's life experiences (when the person is still alive).

I've never been to New Zealand.

Have you ever been to the North Pole?

When we talk about a period of time that is not finished, we use the present perfect simple, even if the action itself is finished.

Have you talked to the producer this afternoon? (It is still afternoon.)

When the period of time is finished, we use the past simple.

Did you talk to the producer this afternoon? (It is the evening, the afternoon has finished.)

Practice

1 Choose the correct option.

- 1 I saw / *have seen* a very gripping film yesterday.
- 2 *Did you ever read* / *Have you ever read* an Agatha Christie story?
- 3 I *didn't like* / *haven't liked* the end of his new novel. It was too sentimental.
- 4 They *enjoyed* / *have enjoyed* watching the play last night.
- 5 Elena *didn't study* / *hasn't studied* literature for a long time.
- 6 The students *wrote* / *have written* some very original short stories on last year's creative writing course.
- 7 His parents *told* / *have told* him a lot of funny anecdotes from when he was a child.
- 8 When *did you find out* / *have you found out* about the stories of Borges?

Past tenses review

Form

See page 158: Past simple

Past continuous

Interrogative	Short answer
was I/he/she/it working there?	Yes, I/he/she/it was . No, I/he/she/it wasn't .
were you/we/they working there?	Yes, you/we/they were . No, you/we/they weren't .

Past perfect simple

Affirmative	Negative
I'd/you'd/he'd/she'd/ it'd/we'd/they'd worked	I/you/he/she/it/we/they hadn't worked (hadn't = had not) ('d = had)

Interrogative	Short answer
had I/you/he/she/it/we/they worked?	Yes, I/you/he/she/it/we/they had . No, I/you/he/she/it/we/they hadn't .

Past perfect continuous

Affirmative	Negative
I'd/you'd/he'd/she'd/ it'd/we'd/they'd been working	I/you/he/she/it/we/they hadn't been working (hadn't = had not) ('d = had)

Interrogativehad I/you/he/she/it/we/
they **been working?****Short answer**had I/you/he/she/it/we/they **been working?****Use****Past simple**

We use the past simple to talk about the sequence of the main events of a story.

*Giles **got up** at six o'clock and **left** the location early.*

Past continuous

We use the past continuous to describe a background event which was in progress around the time of the main event. We often use the past continuous with the past simple.

*The sun **was coming up** as Paul arrived at the park.*

We don't usually use stative verbs in the past continuous.

*I **knew** the route well. (Not I ~~was knowing~~ the route well.)*

Past perfect simple

We use the past perfect simple to talk about something that happened before the main event, i.e. to talk about something that happened earlier.

*When Juliet saw the animals, she remembered what the trainer **had said** the day before.*

Past perfect continuous

We use the past perfect continuous to describe an action that was in progress before or up to the main event in the past.

*When Becky arrived, the other actors **had already been rehearsing** for two hours.*

We don't usually use stative verbs in the past perfect continuous.

*I **had known** him for ten years. (Not I ~~had been knowing~~ him for ten years.)*

Practice

2 Complete the text with the correct past tense form of the verbs.

Esther ¹ (walk) in the park near her home. It ² (be) a beautiful evening. The sun ³ (shine) all day and now it ⁴ (set) behind some tall trees by the river. Suddenly she ⁵ (hear) a scream. She thought that it ⁶ (come) from the direction of the river so she ⁷ (run) there as fast as she could. When she ⁸ (reach) the river she ⁹ (see) a young boy in the water. He ¹⁰ (slip) on the muddy bank and ¹¹ (fall) head first into the water. Now he ¹² (struggle) and unable to swim. Esther quickly ¹³ (take) off her shoes and she ¹⁴ (jump) in. She ¹⁵ (catch) the boy by the arm and ¹⁶ (drag) him out.