

Present Perfect vs Past Simple



1. Read the story below.

A loud, friendly voice woke Remi up. “Ladies and Gentlemen, we have arrived in Sydney, thank you for flying with French Airways, we hope you enjoy your stay.” Remi and the other passengers slowly got off the plane.

The flight from Paris to Sydney took 14 hours, 20 including the stopover in Dubai, and Remi was exhausted. “I feel like I haven’t slept in days” he thought to himself “I’m pretty sure I didn’t sleep for more than an hour on the flight. As soon as I get to the hotel, I’m going to sleep.” He picked up his suitcase and started walking towards passport control. A bored looking guard greeted Remi as he handed her his passport: “Hello sir, where did your flight depart from today?”

“We left from Paris” he answered.

“And have you filled out your entry form?”

“Yes I have, but I didn’t fill out the part at the bottom, I didn’t really understand it.”

“No problem sir, that part isn’t necessary.” The guard looked at Remi’s passport for a few seconds before waving him through the gates. His backpack was going through a scanner when a red light started flashing. A border guard picked out his bag, opened it, and looked at Remi. “Is this your bag sir?”

“Ummm, yes, is anything wrong?” Remi asked.

“Please come with me sir”

Remi followed the guard through the airport, no longer tired but nervous. “What is this all about?” thought Remi “I haven’t done anything wrong, why do they want to talk to me?”

Eventually they arrived in a small room. A woman with cold blue eyes looked up at Remi. “Remi Lemieux?” she said, looking him up and down “please take a seat.”

(Find out how the story ends at the end of the worksheet)



Past simple is used to talk about events in the past that are finished.

Eg “*I arrived in Sydney yesterday*” or “*Did you have a nice flight?*”

Present perfect is used to talk about events that started in the past and continue in the present.

Eg. “*I have been on this flight for 6 hours!*” It can also be used for something that can change in the future. Eg. “*I have never driven a Ferrari before*”



2. Find three examples of present perfect and three examples of past simple in the story.

3. Put the past simple questions in the correct order and then ask them to your partner

- a) school? / Where / you / go / did / to
- b) last / was / your / holiday? / Where
- c) yesterday? / Did / breakfast / you / eat
- d) you / were / What / like / as / a / teenager?
- e) you / Did / grow up / small / town? / a / in
- f) book/ was / your / kid? / when / favourite/ What / you/ a / were
- g) was / last / went / party? / you / When / the / time / to / a

4. Now tell your class what you found out about your partner.

e.g. "He went to school in Hamburg"

5. Read about the life of Marilyn Monroe. Student A is missing some information and must write and ask questions to get that information from student B. Student B is missing different information, and must do the same on the next page.

Student A

Marilyn Monroe was born in (a) on the 1st of June, 1926. She was a famous actress and icon, and her films made over \$..... (b) by the time of her death. Monroe did not know her parents, and grew up in foster homes until she got married at age (c). In World War 2 she worked in a factory where she met a (d) who worked for 20th Century Fox. Her career as an actress started with several comedies including "Monkey Business" and "As Young as You Feel," but soon moved to films which focussed on her sex appeal, such as "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" and "How to Marry a Millionaire." Monroe was frustrated that the studio was (e) her, so in 1955 she started her own film production company, called Marilyn Monroe Productions. In her personal life Monroe struggled with addiction and mental illness. Monroe married baseball star (f) in 1954, but then divorced him in 1955. In 1962 she died at age 36 of an (g) in her home in Los Angeles.



- a) *E.g. Where was she born?*
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)
- g)

Student B

Marilyn Monroe was born in Los Angeles on the 1st of June, (a). She was a famous actress and icon, and her films made over \$2 billion by the time of her death. Monroe did not know her parents, and grew up in (b) until she got married at age 16. In World War 2 she worked in (c) where she met a photographer who worked for 20th Century Fox. Her career as an actress started with several comedies including “Monkey Business” and “As Young as You Feel,” but soon moved to films which focussed on her sex appeal, such as “Gentlemen Prefer Blondes” and “How to Marry a Millionaire.” Monroe was frustrated that the studio was underpaying her, so in 1955 she started her own film production company, called (d) In her personal life Monroe struggled with (e). Monroe married baseball star Joe DiMaggio in 1954, but then divorced him in (f). In 1962 she died at age 36 of an overdose in her home in (g).



- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)
- g)

The word “for” is used with present perfect when we are talking about a duration.
 Eg. *“I haven’t seen my family for 8 months.”*

The word “since” is used with present perfect when we are talking about a specific time.
 Eg. *“I haven’t seen my family since Christmas.”*



6. Complete the sentences below with either “for” or “since”.

- a) I haven’t eaten 10 hours!
- b) We have lived here 2002.
- c) He’s worked for this companyOctober last year.
- d) I haven’t seen her high school!
- e) Has he driven a car the accident?
- f) My brother has stayed at homethe last few days.
- g) I haven’t heard this song ages!

 **7. Put the present perfect questions in the correct order and ask them to your partner**

- a) ever / a / famous / Have / you / person? / met
- b) worst / What / movie / ever / is/ seen? / have / the / you
- c) today? / Have / coffee / you / had / a
- d) you / flight / taken / What / the / is / longest / have / ever
- e) ridden / horse? / you / Have / ever / a
- g) city? / long / in / lived / this / How / have / you

 **8. Now tell your class what you found out about your partner.**

e.g. "The longest flight he has ever taken was from France to Egypt"

 **9. Read the conversations and choose between the past simple and the present perfect.**

Conversation 1.

Sasha: Have you ever flown / Did you ever fly in a helicopter?

Josh: No I haven't / didn't, but I have gone / went skydiving on my 21st birthday.

Sasha: Seriously? Has it been / Was it fun?

Josh: Nope, I have hated / hated it, I'm scared of heights.

Sasha: Why on earth have you gone / did you go then?

Josh: It has been / was a gift from my parents. I still haven't forgiven / didn't forgive them.



Conversation 2.

Greg: So, do you like Berlin?

Lisa: Oh I love it here, but I still haven't found / didn't find a nice apartment.

Greg: Yeah it's tough to find one in Berlin. How long have you lived / did you live here for?

Lisa: Only 6 months, but it feels like I've been / I was here for years!

Greg: That's not unusual, it has taken / took me years to find an apartment I'm happy with. But eventually I have found / found a nice one in a great location a few years ago.

Lisa: Is there any chance you need a new housemate?

Greg: I'm sorry I haven't lived / didn't live in a share house for ages, and I'm very happy living alone.



10. Read the conversation below between Remi and the border guards and complete the conversation with the verb in brackets.

Guard 1: "Remi Lemieux, have a seat"

Remi: "May I ask what this is all about?"

Guard 2: "We'll get to that in a second, just answer the questions"

Guard 1: "Mr Lemieux, (leave) Paris yesterday on flight number F301?"

Remi: "Yes I did"

Guard 1: Mr Lemieux, how many times (be) to Australia?

Remi: "Umm I think I (be) here 6 times. I (be) here twice last year to visit my mother."

Guard 1: "And (pack) your own bags?"

Remi: "Umm. "I (pack) my suitcase but my wife (pack) my backpack."

Guard 2: "And (see) her pack your backpack?"

Remi: "I don't know, I think so, but I exactly (not/watch) her carefully, she's my wife!"

Guard 1: "Well that might be a problem Mr Lemieux, we have found an illegal substance in your suitcase"

Remi: "What? That's... that's not possible."

Guard 2: "I'm afraid it is Mr Lemieux."

Remi: "I don't understand... my wife would never do that, and I swear I (not/do) that either. Maybe somebody (put) something in my bag in Dubai? I (fall) asleep in the airport!"

Guard 2: "So you're saying somebody (put) bananas in your backpack in Dubai airport?"

Remi: "Maybe! I(be) asleep for a long time, anybody could have.... Wait(say) bananas?"

Guard 1: "Yes he did Mr Lemieux. We found two bananas in your backpack. You (be) to Australia 6 times before, you should know that taking fruit and vegetables into the country is illegal."

Remi: "Oh my god, I (think) you found drugs in my baggage!"

Guard 2: "Are there drugs in your bag Mr Lemieux?"

Remi: "What? No! Listen, my wife never (be) to Australia before. She doesn't know about the law against taking fruit and vegetables into the country. She knows I love bananas and I guess she (decide) to put them in my backpack to surprise me."



11. Now listen to the audio file and check your answers.