TALK ABOUT SPECIFIC MOMENTS ALONG PERIOD OF TIME

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COMPETENCE:

To talk about specific moments along a period of time

PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE
Present Perfect

Subject + Auxiliary (have / has) + Past Participle form of Verb + Complement + Time expression = Present Perfect

EXAMPLE:

I / You / We / They + have + been + sick + since last week = Present Perfect

He / She / It + has + been + sick + for three days = Present Perfect
Present Perfect + ever

Use the present perfect + ever to ask questions about experiences in someone’s life.

- “Have you ever taken dance classes?”
  “Yes, I have. I took 6 weeks of lessons before my wedding!”
- “Has your brother ever been to India?”
  “No, he hasn’t.”
- “Have your friends ever helped you move to a new apartment?”
  “Yes – twice!”
Don’t use “ever” in the answer. Only use it in questions. If you want, you can use before in the answer:

- Yes, I’ve ever taken dance classes.
- Yes, I’ve taken dance classes before.
  (or simply “Yes, I have.”)
Present Perfect + never

Use the **present perfect + never** to talk about things you have NOT done at any time in your life.

- I’ve **never** failed a test. I’ve always gotten 80% or more.
- He’s **never** heard of Michael Jackson. I can’t believe he doesn’t know the King of Pop!
- Samantha has **never** been surfing. She’s afraid of the ocean.
- We’ve **never** studied Italian. We studied French and Spanish in school, but Italian wasn’t available.
- They’ve **never** told a lie. I know we can trust them.
The words already, yet, recently, lately, and just all refer to a recent and non-specific time. (A specific time would be “yesterday” or “three hours ago” or last Friday,” and in these cases we would use the simple past).
Present Perfect + already

Already can be used in positive statements and questions.

- “I’ve already read today’s newspaper.”
- “Have you already paid the electric bill?”
- “She’s finished the test already.”

Note: Already can go in between “have/has” and the past participle (as in the first two examples) or at the end of the sentence.
Present Perfect + yet

Yet can be used in negative statements and questions.

- “We haven’t cleaned the house yet."
- “Has he told you the good news yet?"  
- “Have they booked their tickets yet?"

Note: Yet usually goes at the end of the sentence or phrase.
Present Perfect + recently / lately

Recently and lately can be used in positive statements, negative statements, or questions:

Recently
- “He’s **recently** lost some weight.”
- “I haven’t seen her **recently**.”
- “Have you spoken to Beth **recently**?”

Lately
- “I’ve gotten a lot of spam e-mails **lately**.”
- “Adam and Jessica haven’t been to church **lately**.”
- “Have you seen any good movies **lately**?”
Present Perfect + just

Just (usually means very recent) is typically only used in positive statements and questions:

- “Don’t touch the walls. I’ve just painted them; they’re still wet.”
- “What book have you just finished reading?”
Present Perfect + since / for

The present perfect is also used with for and since to talk about actions that began in the past and continue to the present.

- “I’ve lived here since 2004.”
- “I’ve lived here for 8 years.”
Present Perfect + since

**Since** is used with a **point in time**, and means “from that point in time until the present.” Use **since** with dates (2011, January, Tuesday, etc.), times (6:15, noon, this morning, etc.), and past events (I was a child, he graduated from college, etc).

**Since** is always used with the present perfect, and not the simple past:

- **“I’ve gone** to the beach every year **since** I was a child.”
  (repeated action that continues until today)
- **“I went** to the beach when I was a child.”
  (finished action at a specific time in the past; I don’t go to the beach nowadays)
Present Perfect + for

*For* is used with a *time period*, and means “for that period of time until the present.” Use *for* with times of any length (five seconds, eight hours, two days, six weeks, nine months, ten years, a decade, centuries, etc.)

Be careful with *for*, because using the present perfect or the simple past can change the meaning:

- “*We’ve lived* in Berlin for 6 months.” (and we live in Berlin now)
- “*We lived* in Berlin for 6 months.” (and we don’t live in Berlin now)
REFERENCE:

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