



Espresso English
Learn English Online

Espresso English Grammar e-Book

BEGINNER

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This book teaches beginner-level grammar topics with links to grammar exercises on the website. Espresso English will publish intermediate and advanced level grammar books in the future – so sign up for the [e-mails](#) to get news about books, courses, and other products.

This Grammar e-Book is free – so please share it with your friends. I hope you enjoy it!

- **Shayna Oliveira**
EspressoEnglish.net

Present Simple: Be

Positive:

I am	I'm	from Japan.
you / we / they are	you're / we're / they're	from Brazil.
he / she / it is	he's / she's / it's	from India.

Negative:

I am not	I'm not	married.
you / we / they are not	You're not / You aren't We're not / We aren't They're not / They aren't	happy.
he / she / it is not	He isn't / He's not She isn't / She's not It isn't / It's not	a student.

Question:

Am	I	beautiful?
Are	you / we / they	a teacher?
Is	he / she / it	tall?

Present Simple: Be

Name:

- I'm Joanna.
- He's Paulo.
- They're Aki and Yuta.

Country:

- I'm from the U.S. I'm American.
- My husband is from Italy. He's Italian.
- She's not Korean, she's Vietnamese.
- Are they from Australia?

Age:

- I'm 27 years old.
- How old are you?
- She's 15.
- My mother is 65 years old.

Emotions:

- I'm sad.
- She's excited.
- You're angry.
- We're happy.

Jobs:

- I'm not a student. I'm a teacher.
- Are you a doctor?
- He's a journalist.
- They're artists.

Grammar Exercise: [Present Simple: Be](#)

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Possessives

NOUN	POSSESSIVE	EXAMPLE
I	my	My name is Sandra.
you	your	What's your name?
he	his	His name is John.
she	her	Her computer is fast.
it	its	My car is old, so its engine isn't powerful.
we	our	Our apartment is in the city center.
they	their	My parents sold their house.
Mary	Mary's	Mary's phone number is 555-4321.
Joe	Joe's	Joe's favorite color is green.
the boy	the boy's	The boy's clothes are dirty.
friends	friends'	My friends' names are Patrick and Gloria.
cat	cat's	My cat's name is Ginger.
country	country's	My country's flag is red, white, and blue.

Don't confuse its (possessive) with it's (contraction for "it is")!

- ~~The cat ate it's food~~
- **The cat ate its food.**
- ~~Its illegal for a 17-year-old to buy alcohol.~~
- **It's illegal for a 17-year-old to buy alcohol.**

Grammar Exercise: [Possessives](#)

Articles: A, An, The



I'm going to eat **an** apple.



I'm going to eat **the** red apple.

a / an	general (one of many)	I want to buy a car. He's eating an apple. Do you have a bike? She is an old woman. I'm reading a book.
the	specific (one specific)	Tokyo is the capital of Japan. The new Chinese restaurant is very good. We like the blue car. The girl in the red dress is beautiful. I'm reading the new book by J.K. Rowling.

Articles: A, An, The

Use "an" if the word starts with the sound of a, e, i, o, u:

- **an** apple
- **an** egg
- **an** ice cream shop
- **an** open door
- **an** umbrella
- **an** hour

Use "a" if the word starts the sound of any other letter.

Do not use "the" with countries or cities:

- ~~I live in the China.~~
I live in China.

Do not use "the" with things in general:

- ~~She likes the pizza.~~
She likes pizza.
She like the pizza from Tony's Restaurant. (specific)

Grammar Exercise: [A, An, The](#)

This, That, These, Those

This	1 thing - near
That	1 thing - far
These	2+ things - near
Those	2+ things - far



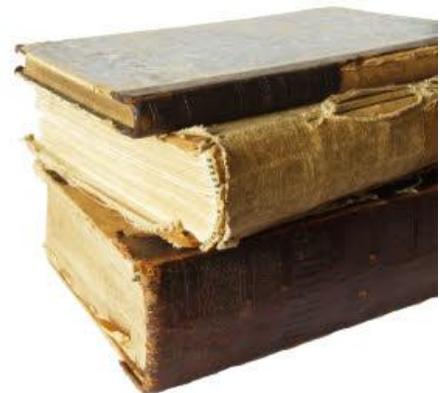
This apple is green.



That apple is red.



These books are new.



Those books are old.

Present Simple: Positive

Use the **present simple** for things that happen regularly or things that are generally true.

I / you / we / they	work
he / she / it	works

Examples:

- I **work** in a bank.
- He **works** at the university.
- We **work** every day.
- My sister **works** at the hospital.

Special Case 1

For verbs that end in consonant + -y, we remove the -y and add -ies:

- I **study** English at school.
- Dana **studies** English at school.
- ~~Bill studys English at school~~

Other verbs like this: cry, try, fly, carry

Special Case 2

For verbs that end in -o, -sh, -s, -ss, -ch, -x, we add -es.

- They go to English class on Wednesday.
- She goes to cooking class on Saturday.
- ~~She gos to cooking class on Saturday.~~

Other verbs like this: watch, kiss, teach, fix

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Present Simple: Negative

Use the **present simple** for things that happen regularly or things that are generally true.

I / you / we / they	don't	like
he / she / it	doesn't	like

Examples:

- I **don't like** coffee.
- John **doesn't like** pizza.
- John and David **don't like** milk.
- My mother **doesn't like** to travel.

Common Errors

1) In the present simple negative, do not add -s:

- ~~Martha doesn't likes to dance.~~
- Martha doesn't like to dance.

2) Other common errors:

- ~~Pete no like bananas.~~
- ~~Pete not like bananas.~~
- Pete doesn't like bananas.

Present Simple: Questions

Use the **present simple** for things that happen regularly or things that are generally true.

Do	I / you / we / they	live in a city?
Does	he / she / it	live in a city?

Examples:

- **Do** you **live** in Brazil?
- **Does** Adam **live** in England?
- **Do** they **live** in a big house?
- **Does** she **live** near the beach?

Common Errors

1) In questions, don't use -s:

- ~~Does she lives close to the beach?~~
- Does she live close to the beach?

2) Don't forget DO or DOES:

- ~~Clara live in a big city?~~
- Does Clara live in a big city?

Present Simple: Answering Yes/No Questions

- Do you have a dog?
Yes, I do. / No, I don't
- Do I look fat in these jeans?
No, you don't!
- Does John speak Italian?
Yes, he does. / No, he doesn't.
- Does she like rock music?
Yes, she does. / No, she doesn't.
- Do we watch too much TV?
Yes, we do. / No, we don't.
- Do they understand English?
Yes, they do. / No, they don't.

Grammar Exercises:

- [Present Simple Positive](#)
- [Present Simple Negative](#)
- [Present Simple Questions](#)

Can / Can't Have to / Don't have to

Can	It's OK
Can't	It's not OK
Have to	It's necessary
Don't have to	It's not necessary



You can ride your bike here.



You can't smoke here.



You have to stop here.



**You don't have to pay
for the food.**

Prepositions: In, At, On



	TIME	PLACE
IN	Months <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In January• In October Seasons <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the summer• In the spring Years <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In 2004• In 1986 Periods of the day <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the morning• In the evening <p>(exception: <i>at night</i>)</p>	Cities and countries <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Tokyo• In Japan Rooms and buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the kitchen• In the supermarket Closed spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the car• In a park

	TIME	PLACE
ON	Dates and days <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On Monday• On February 14th	Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the bus• On a bike (exception: <i>in a car</i>) A surface <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the table• On the wall

	TIME	PLACE
AT	Times <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At 6:00• At half past three• At noon	Contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At school• At work• At a party

Grammar Exercise: [Prepositions: In, On, At](#)

Past Simple: To Be

Positive:

I / he / she / it	was	born in 1982.
you / we / they	were	born in 1982.

Negative:

I / he / she / it	was not (wasn't)	born in Europe.
you / we / they	were not (weren't)	born in Europe.

Question:

Was	I / he / she / it	a famous artist?
Were	you / we / they	a famous artist?

Common words used to talk about the past:

- Yesterday
- Last Sunday / last week / last month / last November / last year
- 1 hour ago / 5 days ago / 3 months ago / 10 years ago
- When I was a child

Grammar Exercise: [Past Simple: To Be](#)

Past Simple: Regular Verbs

Positive:

I / you / he / she / it / we / they	worked	yesterday
-------------------------------------	---------------	-----------

Negative:

I / you / he / she / it / we / they	didn't work	yesterday
-------------------------------------	--------------------	-----------

Question:

Did	I / you / he / she / it / we / they	work	yesterday?
------------	-------------------------------------	-------------	------------

How to form the past simple for regular verbs:

Verb	Past	Spelling
listen play	listened played	Add -ed
like decide	liked decided	Add -d
stop	stopped	One vowel + one consonant = double the consonant and add -ed
study try	studied tried	One consonant + y → -ied

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Past Simple: Regular Verbs

In past simple negative and questions, do not add -ed:

- ~~Mary didn't liked the movie.~~
- Mary didn't like the movie.

- ~~Did you studied for the test?~~
- Did you study for the test?

Examples:

- I **talked** with my mother last night.
- We **enjoyed** the party on Saturday.
- She **finished** the test early.

- He **didn't listen** to the teacher's instructions.
- They **didn't want** to join us for coffee.
- Jill **didn't stay** in a hotel last summer.

- **Did** you **watch** the news yesterday?
- **Did** they **remember** to turn off the lights?
- What time **did** your father **arrive**?

Grammar Exercise: [Past Simple Regular Verbs](#)

Past Simple: Irregular Verbs

Infinitive	Positive	Negative
be	was / were	wasn't / weren't
buy	bought	didn't buy
can	could	couldn't
eat	ate	didn't eat
get	got	didn't get
go	went	didn't go
have	had	didn't have
leave	left	didn't leave
make	made	didn't make
meet	met	didn't meet
say	said	didn't say
see	saw	didn't see
take	took	didn't take
think	thought	didn't think
understand	understood	didn't understand
wear	wore	didn't wear
write	wrote	didn't write

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Past Simple: Irregular Verbs

Examples:

- Where **were** you last month?
I **was** in France.
- What **did** your sister **buy** at the mall?
She **bought** new shoes.
- What time **did** he **eat** breakfast today?
He **ate** breakfast at 6:00 AM.
- When **did** you **get** married?
We **got** married in July.
- Why **did** she **go** to London?
She **went** to London to study English.
- **Did** you **have** any pets when she was a child?
Yes, I **had** a dog.
- When **did** he **leave** the meeting?
He **left** the meeting an hour before it finished
- What **did** you **make** for dinner?
I **made** some vegetable soup.
- When **did** you **meet** your best friend?
I **met** my best friend 20 years ago.
- What **did** the teacher **say**?
The teacher **said** that she loved our class.
- **Did** you **see** Brad at the football game?
No, but we **saw** Peter and Henry.
- What **did** he **wear** to the wedding?
He **wore** a suit.
- **Did** he **write** a new book last year?
No, he only **wrote** a few magazine articles.

Grammar Exercise: [Past Simple – Irregular Verbs](#)

There is / There are

	Singular	Plural
(+)	There's a pillow on the sofa.	There are two pillows on the bed.
(-)	There isn't a mirror in the bathroom.	There aren't any windows in the bedroom.
(?)	Is there a table? Yes, there is. / No, there isn't.	Are there any chairs? Yes, there are. / No, there aren't.



There's a pillow on the sofa.



There are two pillows on the bed.



Is there a table? Yes, there is.



Are there any chairs?
No, there aren't.

Present Continuous: Positive

Present continuous is for things happening **now, at the moment**.

I	am	watching
you / we / they	are	watching
he / she / it	is	watching

Examples:

- I **am watching TV** right now.
- He **is studying** at the moment.
- It **is raining** today.
- We **are thinking** about you.
- They **are playing** baseball.

You can use contractions:

- **I'm** watching TV right now.
- **He's** studying at the moment.
- **It's** raining today.
- **We're** thinking about you.
- **They're** playing baseball.

Some verbs are never used in the present continuous: like, want, need, believe.

- ~~I'm believing in God.~~
I believe in God.
- ~~She's wanting a soda.~~
She wants a soda.

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Present Continuous: Negative

I	am not (I'm not)	listening
you / we / they	are not (aren't)	listening
he / she / it	is not (isn't)	listening

Examples:

- I **am not working** at the moment.
- She **is not wearing** a hat today.
- You **are not listening** to the teacher.
- Pete and Jan **are not watching** TV.

There are two ways to use contractions:

- She's **not** wearing a hat today.
She **isn't** wearing a hat today.
- You're **not** listening to the teacher.
You **aren't** listening to the teacher.

Both forms are OK!

Present Continuous: Questions

Am	I	working?
Are	you / we / they	working?
Is	he / she / it	working?

Examples:

- **Are** you **writing** a letter?
- **Is** Pedro **sleeping** right now?
- **Are** the children **playing** a game or reading a book?
- **Is** the computer **working**?

You can put a question word at the beginning:

- **What** are you doing?
I'm writing an e-mail.
- **Where** is Sarah going?
She's going to the store.
- **Who** are they talking to?
They're talking to the teacher.
- **Why** is he running?
Because he's late for work.

Grammar Exercises:

- [Present Continuous Positive](#)
- [Present Continuous Negative](#)
- [Present Continuous Questions](#)

Present Simple or Continuous?

Present simple for things that happen **in general** or **regularly**.

Present continuous for things happening **now, at the moment**, or **current/temporary projects**.

Present Simple	Present Continuous
I work from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM every day.	I'm currently working on a new project.
Mark studies English every Tuesday night.	Mark is studying the present continuous this week.
We usually go to Europe in the summer.	Right now, we're going to the supermarket.
They always talk to their boss in the morning.	It's 9:00 AM. They're talking to him now.
Does it usually rain in the winter?	No, but it's raining at the moment. Take an umbrella.

Words that are often used with the present simple or continuous:

- **With present simple:** always, usually, often, sometimes, never, every (day/night/Monday/summer/year)
- **With present continuous:** now, right now, at the moment, currently, this week/month/year, today

Grammar Exercises: [Present Simple or Present Continuous?](#)

Countable and Uncountable

Countable nouns are things we can count – for example, cats:

- My brother has **a cat**.
- My sister has **two cats**.
- My friend has **three cats**.

Other examples of countable nouns:

- **Things** - book, table, computer, banana, shirt, television, house.
- **People** - man, woman, child, friend, sister, uncle, teacher, boss.

Uncountable nouns are words that we can't count, or can't divide into separate parts:

- **Liquids and some foods** - water, butter, rice, flour, milk
- **Ideas and concepts** - love, fun, work, money, peace, safety
- **Information** - advice, information, news, knowledge
- **Categories** - music, furniture, equipment, jewelry, meat

Countable	Uncountable
dollar	money
song	music
table	furniture
bottle	wine, water
report	information
job	work

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Countable and Uncountable

Don't add -s to make uncountable nouns plural:

- ~~I need some informations about the course.~~
- I need some information about the course.

You can use other words to help:

- She bought three **bottles of wine** and five boxes of rice.
- He gave me two **pieces of advice**: eat less and exercise more.

Grammar Exercise: [Countable and Uncountable Nouns](#)

Future with Going To

Use "going to" to talk about future plans and predictions.



I'm going to have a baby next month.



It's going to rain soon.

Positive:

Full Form	Contracted Form	
I am You are He / she / it is We are They are	I'm You're He's / She's / It's We're They're	going to take a test tomorrow.

Future with Going To

Negative:

Full Form	Contracted Form 1	Contracted Form 2	
I am not You are not He / she is not It is not We are not They are not	I'm not You're not He's / She's not It's not We're not They're not	--- You aren't He / she isn't It isn't We aren't They aren't	going to take a test tomorrow.

Question:

Am Are Is Are Are	I you he / she / it we they	going to take a test tomorrow?
--	---	---------------------------------------

Don't forget "am/is/are"!

- ~~I going to buy some new shoes next week.~~
I'm going to buy some new shoes next week.
- ~~She not going to watch TV.~~
She's not going to watch TV.
- ~~They going to get married in June.~~
They're going to get married in June.

Grammar Exercise: [Future with "Going to"](#)

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Comparative Adjectives

Use comparatives to compare two things:



Phil is **older than** Ben.

Ben is **younger than** Phil.

For One-Syllable Words

Add **-er**

Tall	Taller
Old	Older
Fast	Faster
Long	Longer
New	Newer

- My new car is **faster than** my old car.
- I'm **older than** my brother.
- Traveling by bike takes **longer than** traveling by motorcycle

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Comparative Adjectives

For Words that end in consonant + vowel

Double the last letter and add -er

Big	Bigger
Hot	Hotter
Thin	Thinner

- An elephant is bigger than a cat.
- Brazil is hotter than Sweden.
- My sister is thinner than me.

For Words that end in consonant + y

Remove -y and add -ier.

Easy	Easier
Happy	Happier
Busy	Busier

- Reading English is **easier than** listening.
- Maria is **happier than** Dave.
- People today are **busier than** in the past.

Comparative Adjectives

For Words with 2+ syllables

Add "more" before the adjective:

Expensive	More expensive
Popular	More popular
Interesting	More interesting

- A car is **more expensive than** a computer.
- Michael Jackson's music is **more popular than** country music.
- Watching a movie is **more interesting than** studying grammar.

For Irregular Words

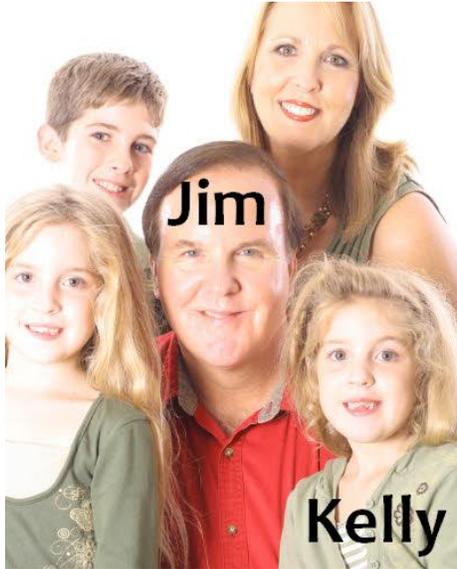
Good	Better
Bad	Worse
Far	Farther

- Eating fruit is **better** for your health **than** eating hamburgers.
- Cancer is **worse than** the flu.
- One mile is **farther than** one kilometer.

Grammar Exercise: [Comparative Adjectives](#)

Superlative Adjectives

Use superlatives to compare three or more things:



Jim is **the oldest** person in the family.

Kelly is **the youngest** person in the family.

Adjective	Superlative
Old	the oldest
Big	the biggest
Easy	the easiest
Friendly	the friendliest
Beautiful	the most beautiful
Expensive	the most expensive
Good	the best
Bad	the worst
Far	the farthest

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Superlative Adjectives

Examples:

- My grandmother is **the oldest** person in my family.
- Russia is **the biggest** country in the world.
- This is **the easiest** test I've ever taken.
- Barry is **the friendliest** guy in the class.
- Donna is **the most beautiful** woman I've ever seen.
- **The most expensive** shoes in the world cost 1.5 million dollars.
- I like all sports, but I like soccer **the best**.
- Picking up garbage was **the worst** job I've ever had.
- Australia is **the farthest** I've ever traveled.

Don't forget "the"!

- ~~I read newest lesson from Espresso English.~~
- I read **the newest** lesson from Espresso English.

Superlatives are often used with the **present perfect + ever**:

- This is the best sushi **I've ever eaten**.
- What's the most expensive car **you've ever driven**?
- The longest book **I've ever read** was 500 pages.
- Jan is the friendliest person **I've ever met**.

Grammar Exercise: [Superlative Adjectives](#)

Adverbs

Use **adjectives** to describe nouns (things or people).

Use **adverbs** to describe verbs (**how** a person does something):

- That was a **terrible** game. (adjective – describes “game”)
- The team played **terribly**. (adverb – describes “played”)

Common adverbs:

Adjective	Adverb
slow	slowly
quiet	quietly
bad	badly
beautiful	beautifully
dangerous	dangerously
careful	carefully
easy	easily
healthy	healthily
good	well
fast	fast
hard	hard

Adverbs

Examples:

- My grandfather drives **slowly**, but I drive **fast**.
- The teacher spoke so **quietly** that I couldn't hear her.
- I can read English **well**, but I speak **badly**.
- Evan lives **dangerously**. He loves radical sports.
- We wrote the letter **carefully** so as not to make a mistake.
- I opened the jar **easily**.
- Soccer players need to eat **healthily** to stay in good shape.
- Janet works very **hard**. She arrives at work early and leaves late.

Adjectives go **before** the noun. Adverbs usually go **after** the verb:

- Ruth is a **quiet** person. ("quiet" describes "person")
- Ruth speaks **quietly**. ("quietly" describes "speaks")

Grammar Exercise: [Adjective or Adverb?](#)

Present Perfect: Verb *be*

Use the **present perfect** in two situations:

1) To talk about experiences in the past, when we don't know exactly when the experience happened.

Examples:

- Have you been to Italy?
Yes, I've been there three times.
- Have you been to Rio de Janeiro?
No, I haven't. I don't like hot weather.
- Has Diana been to a rock concert?
Yes, many times!
- Has your brother been to a big sports event?
No, he hasn't. He hates sports.

2) To talk about an action that started in the past and continues to the present.

Examples:

- How long have you been married?
I've been married for five years.
- How long has John been a teacher?
He's been a teacher since last January.

Present Perfect: Verb *be*

Positive

Full Form	Short Form	
I have You have We have They have	I've You've We've They've	been to Paris.
He / she / it has	He's / she's / it's	been to Paris.

Negative

Full Form	Short Form	
I have not You have not We have not They have not	I haven't You haven't We haven't They haven't	been to Paris.
He / she / it has not	He / she / it hasn't	been to Paris.

Question

Full Form	Short Form	
Have	I / you / we / they	been to Paris?
Has	he / she / it	been to Paris?

Present Perfect: Other Verbs

Regular verbs

Verb	Past Participle	Example
travel	traveled	I've traveled to 15 countries in my life.
watch	watched	She hasn't watched the movie yet.
pass	passed	We've passed our English test.
try	tried	Have you tried restarting the computer?
stop	stopped	They've recently stopped smoking.

Irregular verbs

Verb	Past	Past Participle
break	broke	broken
buy	bought	bought
do	did	done
eat	ate	eaten
get	got	gotten
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
know	knew	known
leave	left	left
make	made	made
meet	met	met
see	saw	seen
take	took	taken
tell	told	told
think	thought	thought
write	wrote	written

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Present Perfect: Other Verbs

Examples:

- I can't find my car keys. **Have** you **seen** them?
No, I **haven't**. Sorry.
- We've **written** more than 100 e-mails in the past week.
- My cousin **has met** a lot of famous people in her life.
- **Have** you ever **broken** a bone?
Yes, I have. I broke my arm when I was a child.
- **Has** she ever **eaten** Vietnamese food?
No, she **hasn't**.
- **Have** you ever **thought** about moving to another country?
We've **thought** about it, but we **haven't told** our kids.
- The teacher **hasn't given** us any homework yet.
- Camilo **has made** a lot of mistakes in his life.
- **Have** you ever **gotten** lost while driving?
No, I **haven't** – but my mother **has**!
- Kristin **has** never **taken** singing classes.

Grammar Exercise: [Present Perfect](#)

Present Perfect or Past Simple

Use the **present perfect** to talk about a general experience in the past. Use the **past simple** to talk about a specific moment in the past.

"**Have** you **seen** the new *Mission Impossible* film?"

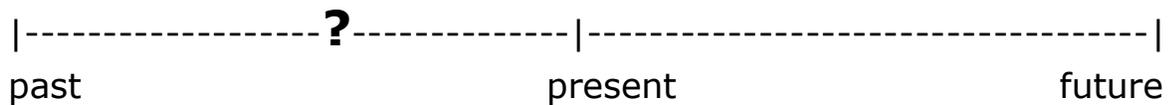
"Yes, I **have**."

"When **did** you **see** it?"

"I **saw** it last week."

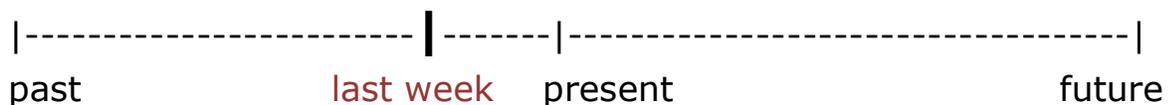
Use the **present perfect** for "unspecified" time:

I've seen the new Mission Impossible film.



Use the **past simple** for "specified" time:

I saw the new Mission Impossible film last week.



Present Perfect or Past Simple

Use the **present perfect** to talk about an action that started in the past and continues to the present. Use the **past simple** to talk about an action that started and finished in the past.

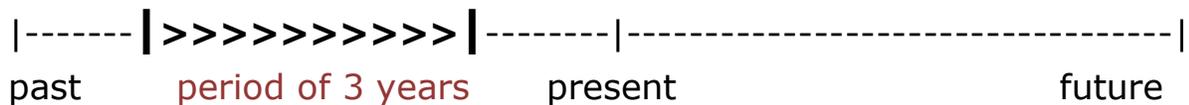
Use the **present perfect** for “unfinished” time:

“**I’ve lived** in Brazil for three years.” (and I live in Brazil now)



Use the **past simple** for “finished” time:

“**I lived** in Brazil for three years.” (and I don’t live in Brazil now)



Grammar Exercise: [Present Perfect or Past Simple?](#)

The End!

Thanks for reading 😊

Did you like this grammar e-book?

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About the teacher

My name is Shayna. I'm from the United States, and I currently live in Brazil, where I work as an English teacher and translator. I have a CELTA certification to teach English to adults, and I really enjoy helping my students communicate better.



I am 27 years old and married, and in my free time I like to read, write, play soccer, go hiking, and do *capoeira*. I also love to travel and learn about different countries and cultures – please [write to me](#) and tell me where you are from. I hope you enjoy Espresso English!