

Past Simple v Present Perfect

The past simple is used to talk about a specific event in the past that has finished but the present perfect is used to talk about either an unfinished past event or a past event with no specified time.

Past Simple	Present Perfect
One single past event <i>I went to Germany in summer</i>	Life experience (no time) <i>I have visited France before</i>
A past duration <i>I lived in Barcelona for 3 years</i>	Past events impact present <i>I've lost my wallet and I need it now</i>
A repeated past event <i>I drove to work every day</i>	Recent past events <i>We've just arrived home</i>
A changed state <i>She was short as a child but now she's tall</i>	Change in state <i>I have improved my English</i>
Stative Verbs <i>I wanted some chocolate yesterday</i>	Stative Verbs <i>I have known her for a long time</i>
	Unfinished duration of time <i>I haven't been to the cinema this year</i>



LOOK OUT

- ⚠ *I knew her for 5 years* (5 years finished in the past). *I have known her for 5 years* (I started knowing her 5 years ago, I still know her today)
- ⚠ *She lived here for many years* (she is dead). *She has lived here for many years* (she is alive and continues living here)
- ⚠ *I lost my wallet* (simple finished event). *I've lost my wallet and I need it now* (past event with an impact on the present)
- ⚠ *I went to France in 2003* (finished time phrase). *I've been to France before* (no time phrase or an unfinished time phrase)