

# UNIT 21

## Present perfect (**I have done**) or past simple (**I did**)? (2)

- a) Do not use the present perfect (**I have done**) when you are talking about a finished time in the past (for example: yesterday, two years ago, in 1979, when I was a child). Use a *past* tense:

- Tom **lost** his key yesterday. (*not* 'has lost')
- **Did** you see the film on television **last night**? (*not* 'have you seen')
- Mr Greaves **retired** from his job **two years ago**. (*not* 'has retired')
- I ate a lot of sweets **when I was a child**. (*not* 'have eaten')

Use a past tense to ask when something happened:

- **What time did** they arrive? (*not* 'have they arrived')
- **When were** you born? (*not* 'have you been born')

Compare:

- Tom **has lost** his key. (*present perfect*)

Here we are not thinking of the past action; we are thinking of the present result of the action: he is without his key now.

- Tom **lost** his key yesterday. (*past simple*)

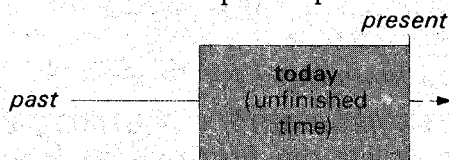
Here we are thinking of the action in the past. We don't know whether Tom is still without his key.

- b) Now compare these sentences:

### *Present perfect (I have done)*

I've **smoked** 20 cigarettes today.

Today is a period of time which continues up to the present. It is not a finished time. So we use the present perfect.



Tom **hasn't** been ill **this year**.

Have you seen Ann **this morning**?

(It is still morning.)

Have you seen Ann **recently**?

We've been waiting for an hour. (We are still waiting.)

Ian **has** lived in London for six years.

(He still lives there.)

I **have never** played golf (in my life).

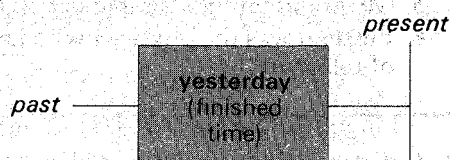
The present perfect always has a connection with the present.

See Units 13-20.

### *Past simple (I did)*

I **smoked** 20 cigarettes yesterday.

Yesterday is a finished time in the past. So we use the past simple.



Tom **wasn't** ill **last year**.

**Did** you see Ann **this morning**?

(It is now afternoon.)

**Did** you see Ann **last week**?

We **waited** (or **were waiting**) for an hour. (We are no longer waiting.)

Ian **lived** in Scotland for ten years.

(He no longer lives there.)

I **didn't** play golf when I was on **holiday last summer**.

The past simple tells us only about the past.

See Units 11, 12 and 20.

# Unit 21 Exercises

**21.1** In this exercise you have to put the verb into the correct form, present perfect (I have done) or past simple (I did).

Examples: I have lost (lose) my key. I can't find it anywhere.

Did you see (you/see) the film on television last night?

- 1 Jill ..... (buy) a new car two weeks ago.
- 2 His hair is very short. He ..... (have) a haircut.
- 3 Last night I ..... (arrive) home at half past twelve. I ..... (have) a bath and then I ..... (go) to bed.
- 4 ..... (you/visit) many museums when you were in Paris?
- 5 My bicycle isn't here any more. Somebody ..... (take) it.
- 6 When ..... (you/give) up smoking?
- 7 I ..... (not/eat) anything yesterday because I ..... (not/feel) hungry.
- 8 Why ..... (Jim/not/want) to play tennis last Friday?
- 9 The car looks very clean. .... (you/wash) it?
- 10 Brian: Hello, Susan. Is Alan here?  
Susan: No, I'm afraid he ..... (go) out.  
Brian: Oh, what a pity! When exactly ..... (he/go) out?  
Susan: About ten minutes ago.

**21.2** This time you have to make sentences using the words given.

Examples: (I / smoke / 20 cigarettes yesterday) I smoked 20 cigarettes yesterday.

(how many cigarettes / you / smoke / today?)

How many cigarettes have you smoked today?

- 1 (I / be / ill twice so far this year) I .....
- 2 (how many times / be / you / ill last year?) How many times .....
- 3 (I / not / drink / any coffee so far today) .....
- 4 (he / be / late three times this week) .....
- 5 (how many games / the team / win / last season?) .....
- 6 (how many games / the team / win / so far this season?) .....

**21.3** Put the verb into the correct form, present perfect (I have done) or past simple (I did).

Example: I didn't play (not/play) golf when I was on holiday last summer.

- 1 Mr Clark ..... (work) in a bank for 15 years. Then he gave it up.
- 2 Molly lives in Dublin. She ..... (live) there all her life.
- 3 Bob and Alice are married. They ..... (be) married for 20 years.
- 4 When we were on holiday, the weather ..... (be) awful.
- 5 The weather ..... (be) very nice recently, don't you think?
- 6 My grandfather died 30 years ago. I ..... (never/meet) him.
- 7 I don't know Carol's husband. I ..... (never/meet) him.