

## Present time 2

### A Present simple or continuous?

- The present simple and present continuous are explained in unit 1. Compare:

#### Present simple

permanent  
habits and routines  
facts that are always true  
general situations

*I live in Budapest.* (all the time)  
*This plane lands in Frankfurt.* (routine)

#### Present continuous

temporary  
in progress now  
events happening at the moment  
a particular situation

*I'm living in Budapest.* (for a few months)  
*Look! We're landing.* (in progress now)

*NTL dominates the UK cable-television market* (general situation). *It is doing very well in the rest of Europe, too, with about 4m customers* (at the moment). (International Herald Tribune website)

*Canada continues to be the most popular country for franchise expansion among US-based companies* (general situation), *but that is changing* (trend in progress). (worldtradeonline magazine)

### B Present continuous or present perfect continuous?

The present continuous is used for a temporary action happening now.

The present perfect continuous describes an action in progress from the past up to the present.

*Sue is working on the new design.* (in progress now, and will continue)  
*Sue has been working on the new design.* (in progress up to now, and may or may not continue)

### C Other uses of present tenses

#### PRESENT SIMPLE

The present simple can be used to refer to timetables and schedules. When we speak about timetables we are often thinking about the future.

*British Airways flight BA729 leaves Geneva at 16.40 and arrives in London at 17.20.*

- The present simple can be used to make a story appear more immediate and interesting. This is common in journalism.

*On a grey November day in New England the mood inside EMC's headquarters is sunny and bright. Executives of the data-storage market leader see no limits to the world's expanding appetite for their storage machines. CEO Michael Ruetigers calls EMC recession-proof.* (Business Week website)

#### PRESENT CONTINUOUS

- The present continuous can be used to describe a fixed future arrangement. There is usually a future time expression.

*HSBC are moving to new premises next year.*

We can use *always* with the present continuous. This is often used for exaggerating or complaining. We emphasise *always* in speech in this case.

*This photocopier is always breaking down!*

## D State verbs

- Some verbs describe states, not actions. Nothing 'happens'. Verbs like this are not normally used in the continuous form of any tense.

*I notice that you've moved your desk.* (NOT *I'm noticing*)

*Sorry, I don't understand.* (NOT *I'm not understanding*)

*How much does it cost?* (NOT *How much is it costing?*)

*It weighs 4kg with the packaging.* (NOT *It is weighing*)

These examples are in the present simple even though we are talking about temporary situations.

- State verbs include:

the senses: *appear, hear, look like, notice, see, seem, smell, sound, taste* (= have a flavour)

feelings: *dislike, fear, hate, like, love, prefer, want, wish*

thinking: *agree, believe, doubt, expect* (= believe) *feel* (= believe), *forget, imagine, know, realise, recognise, suppose, suspect, think* (= believe), *understand*

possession: *belong to, contain, have* (= possess), *include, own, possess*

being: *be, consist of, exist*

other verbs: *cost, depend on, fit, involve, matter, measure* (= have length), *mean, need, satisfy, surprise, weigh*

*Analysts expect that shares in the demerged P&O Princess Cruises will trade initially at about 400p a share, which means that P&O is currently undervalued. However some analysts think that the arrival of new cruise ships on the market will produce a fall in profits.* (Telegraph website)

- Some of the verbs in the previous list can have a 'state' meaning and an 'action' meaning.

Examples include *be, have, taste, think*.

*Our suppliers are usually very helpful.* (state)

*Our suppliers are being very helpful at the moment.* (action)

*I have two sisters.* (state)

*I'm having problems with this computer.* (action)

*This soup tastes salty.* (state)

*I'm tasting the soup to see if it needs more salt.* (action)

*I think you're right.* (state)

*I'm thinking about changing my job.* (action)

- State verbs are not normally used in the imperative.

## 2 Practice

### Exercise 1 A

Underline the correct words.

- A: What do you do/are you doing?  
B: I'm an executive secretary.
- A: What do you do/are you doing?  
B: I'm looking for the details on the computer.
- A: Where do you work/are you working?  
B: Paris this month, then Bonn the next.
- A: Where do you work/are you working?  
B: At our head office in Paris.
- My name's Walter, and I come/I'm coming from Frankfurt.
- I come/I'm coming to Frankfurt next Thursday – I can call in to your office.
- I deal with/I'm dealing with Andrew's clients while he's on holiday.
- I deal with/I'm dealing with the paperwork and general administration.
- A: Who do you go/are you going to the Trade Fair with?  
B: This year with Stefano.
- A: Who do you go/are you going to the Trade Fair with?  
B: Usually with Stefano.

### Exercise 2 A D

Complete the sentences by putting the verbs in brackets into the present simple or present continuous.

- I am looking at (look at) the details on the screen right now.
- I ..... (look at) the sales results in detail every month.
- The production line ..... (not, work) at weekends.
- The production line ..... (not, work) at the moment.
- Yes, I agree. I ..... (think) it's a good idea.
- I ..... (think) about it. I'll let you know tomorrow.
- Helen ..... (stay) at the Astoria while she's in Madrid this month.
- Helen ..... (stay) at the Astoria when she's in Madrid.
- We ..... (take) a sample for testing once a day.
- We ..... (take) a big risk if we go ahead with the project.
- They ..... (be) usually very flexible if we need to change the order.
- They ..... (be) flexible about giving us credit for a few more months.

### Exercise 3 D

Some of the following sentences are right and some are wrong. Put a tick (✓) next to the right ones, and correct the wrong ones.

- Which wine are you going to have? ..... ✓
- Which wine are you preferring? ..... do you prefer
- That's ridiculous – I'm not believing it! .....
- That's ridiculous – I'm not doing business with them again! .....
- I'm sorry, I'm not following what you're saying. ....
- I'm sorry, I'm not understanding what you're saying. ....
- This building is containing all the printing machines. ....
- This building is getting very old – soon we'll have to move. ....

## Exercise 4 A D unit 1

Complete this dialogue by putting each of the verbs in brackets into the correct form of the present simple or present continuous.

- MATT: (1) Are you looking... (you/look) for someone?
- JENNIFER: Yes, I (2) ..... (need) to speak to Kim Bryant but she isn't in her office.  
(3) ..... (you/know) where she is?
- MATT: Oh, I'm sorry, she isn't here today. She (4) ..... (work) at home trying to finish an urgent report. I (5) ..... (think) she'll be back at her desk tomorrow. Perhaps I can help you?
- JENNIFER: Oh, thanks. I (6) ..... (work) for Pritchard Evans. We  
(7) ..... (organise) corporate hospitality ...
- MATT: Oh, yes.
- JENNIFER: Well, Kim Bryant contacted us last week. Apparently you  
(8) ..... (expect) a visit by a Korean trade delegation next month.
- MATT: Yes, that's right.
- JENNIFER: Kim asked me to call in and give her some information on our service. Um, I  
(9) ..... (have) a list of suggestions with me. It  
(10) ..... (give) you information on where you could take your visitors, and details of extra services that we can offer, like our pick-up service from the hotel in a chauffeur-driven limousine.
- MATT: Well, that sounds great. I'm sure Kim would be really interested to see this.
- JENNIFER: How long (11) ..... ? (your visitors/stay)?
- MATT: Oh, I'm sorry, I (12) ..... (not/know) exactly. You really need to speak to Kim, she (13) ..... (deal) with this conference. I'll tell her to give you a ring tomorrow. What's the best time to call?
- JENNIFER: I (14) ..... (not/work) in the office in the mornings ... anytime after two. Or she can call me on my mobile, on 0777...

### Exercise 5 A D

Complete this article about the magazine *Time Out* by using words from the list below. Decide whether to put the verbs into the present simple or present continuous.

own look for move investigate rely want provide try to

## Time Out: time to expand

*Time Out*, the London entertainment magazine, has plans for expansion. It already (1) ..... owns ..... the monthly magazine *Paris Passion*, and now it (2) ..... beyond France to other markets such as Argentina and Japan. Tony Elliott, *Time Out's* founder, says he (3) ..... local people to initiate and run the magazines, as *Time Out's* London office doesn't have the cash or

management time. Elliott also has plans for the website, *Timeout.com*, which was launched in 1995 and (4) ..... information about more than 30 cities. It (5) ..... on advertising revenue and a small amount of money from ticket sales to survive. But as *Time Out* changes and expands, Tony Elliott (6) ..... persuade advertisers in the printed version to take more

space on the Internet site. Also, he (7) ..... the possibility of charging visitors to the site for access to some information. Despite these expansion plans, Elliott says that a flotation on the stock market is out of the question. He (8) ..... to keep control of the business he has built up.

## Past simple: form

The past simple of regular verbs is formed by adding *-ed* to the infinitive. Verbs ending in *-e* simply add *-d*. Common irregular verbs are listed on page 240.

*check-checked*: I **checked** the figures.

*like-liked*: They **liked** his idea.

Irregular: *eat – ate* *drink – drank* *go – went* etc.

Negatives are formed with *did not* and the infinitive. This is contracted to *didn't* in speech and informal writing.

I **didn't** like his idea.

I **didn't** go to the meeting.

Questions are formed with the auxiliary verb *did* and the infinitive. Short answers to *yes/no* questions repeat the auxiliary.

A: **Did you check** the figures?

B: Yes, I **did**. / No, I **didn't**.

The verb *to be* is irregular and follows a different pattern. In negatives there is no *did*. In questions there is no *did* and the subject and verb are inverted:

I/he/she/it **was** late.

I/he/she/it **wasn't** late.

**Was** I/he/she/it late?

You/we/they **were** late.

You/we/they **weren't** late.

**Were** you/we/they late?

## Past simple: uses

We use the past simple to describe actions and states in a completed period of time. We know when the action happened, and this may be mentioned or clear from the situation.

I **checked** the figures very carefully **last week**.

I'm sorry, I **wasn't** in the office **yesterday**.

American ISP Juno **designed** an easy-to-use email service and user interface and then **outsourced** everything else. It **leased** phone lines from a dozen companies and **hired out** customer service. (BusinessWeek website)

The past simple is also used to describe habitual actions in the past.

Every evening we **went out** and **ate** in a different restaurant.

## Past simple: time expressions

Time expressions used with the past simple include:

**at** twelve o'clock/the end of the year

**in** the morning/June/1998/the sixties

**on** Friday/the second of April

**no preposition** last week/yesterday/ago

## D Past continuous: form

The past continuous is formed with the past of *be* and the *-ing* form of the main verb. Negatives are formed with the verb *be* + *not*. In speech and informal writing we use contractions.

I/he/she/it **was working** yesterday.

I/he/she/it **wasn't working** yesterday.

You/we/they **were working** yesterday.

You/we/they **weren't working** yesterday.

Questions are formed by inverting the subject and the auxiliary verb *be*. Short answers to *yes/no* questions repeat the auxiliary.

A: **Was he working** yesterday?

B: Yes, **he was**. / No, **he wasn't**.

A: **Were they working** yesterday?

B: Yes, **they were**. / No, **they weren't**.

## E Past continuous: uses

The past continuous is used to describe a situation in progress in the past.

I **was waiting** in the departure lounge for more than two hours.

There can be several situations in progress, happening at the same time:

The early 1970s was a time when IBM **was beginning** to lose its way and many skilled people **were leaving** to set up their own businesses. Computing **was entering** a new age. (The Times website)

The past continuous is used to give information about the background situation. The separate, completed actions that happen during or after this period are in the past simple:

'I **came in** to Oracle as **it was recovering** from the recession of the early 1990s. The business unit I **joined** had an ageing product line that **was declining** by 30 per cent a year in sales. Within a year we completely **turned** that unit around.' (Eurobusiness website)

If we do not mention the background situation then the separate actions are in the past simple in the normal way:

When I **arrived** I **registered** at reception and **went** straight to the conference hall.

## F Past continuous: time expressions

We can use *when*, *while* or *as* with the past continuous to mean 'during the time that something was happening':

**While** Plattner and Dietmar Hopp **were developing** the first real-time order processing system at SAP, Claus Wellenreuther **was writing** the financial software. (Eurobusiness website)

But if we mean 'at the time that' then we only use *when* with the past simple:

He **wasn't** very happy **when I told** him the news. (NOT ~~while I told him~~ ...)

## G Past simple or continuous?

Sometimes the past simple or past continuous can be used. The past simple suggests a separate, complete action or event. The past continuous emphasises the duration of the action.

**We discussed** the report and agreed that Peter should prepare some detailed figures before the next meeting.

**We were discussing** the report for over an hour. Eventually we agreed that Peter should prepare some detailed figures before the next meeting.

### 3 Practice

#### Exercise 1 A

Underline the correct word/s.

- A: Did you get/got the email I sent you yesterday?  
B: Yes, thanks, I did/got.
- How you felt/did you feel when they told/did tell you about moving offices?
- A: Did you tell/told him about the change of plans?  
B: Yes, I told/I did.
- I didn't see/didn't saw the reason for the delay, so I got/did get angry.

#### Exercise 2 A

Complete the dialogue using the verbs from the list below in the past simple. There is a mixture of affirmative, negative and question forms. There is one negative question.

go take think sell like have (x2) make (x2) be (x4) buy

- DALE: Hi, Jill. You (1) went to the Milan Fashion Show last week, didn't you?  
(2) ..... you ..... a good trip?
- JILL: Yes, it was great.
- DALE: (3) ..... you ..... any useful contacts?
- JILL: Well, there (4) ..... loads of people at the show, and I (5) ..... a lot of good contacts but we (6) ..... nearly as many orders as last year.
- DALE: Oh, why was that? (7) ..... they ..... our new styles?
- JILL: No, no, that (8) ..... the problem. The shoes (9) ..... really well, but we (10) ..... so successful with some of our other products, like handbags, for example, and there (11) ..... much more competition this year.
- DALE: Who from?
- JILL: Well, the Paul Smith stand was really busy.
- DALE: Oh, but his clothes are expensive ... Um, (12) ..... people at the show ..... our prices were too high?
- JILL: Possibly. But we (13) ..... the authority to lower them at the time.
- DALE: Oh, what a shame. So it was a waste of a trip then?
- JILL: Well, not exactly ... I (14) ..... this great pair of Prada shoes and this Gucci handbag ...

#### Exercise 3 B E

Underline the best continuation of the conversations.

- A: What was she doing this morning?  
B: She interviewed/was interviewing candidates for the sales job.
- A: How did Brenda spend her holiday?  
B: Most days she went/was going to the beach.
- A: What happened after you launched the product?  
B: While we promoted/were promoting it, our main competitor dropped/was dropping their prices.
- A: I didn't see you in the office last week.  
B: No, I worked/was working at home for a few days.
- A: What did Pat do when she saw the artwork?  
B: She called/was calling the designers and said/was saying it wasn't suitable.
- A: Why did Renata take so long to get here?  
B: She said they mended/were mending the road and so the traffic moved/was moving very slowly.

### Exercise 4 A

Complete this article about Vivendi by putting each of the verbs in brackets into the past simple. Most of the verbs are irregular (see Appendix 2).

## Vivendi: 150 years of history

Vivendi, the French utilities and communications group, has a long history going back to 1853. In that year the Government (1) created (create) Compagnie Generale des Eaux. The founders (2) ..... (have) two objectives: to irrigate the countryside for farming and to supply water to towns and cities in France.

In 1880 a treaty (3) ..... (give) Generale des Eaux the right to supply water to Venice, and then Constantinople and Oporto (4) ..... (come) soon after. By the time of the centenary celebrations in 1953 Generale des Eaux (5) ..... (supply) water to eight million people in France.

In the 1960s and 1970s the company (6) ..... (begin) activities in the area of civil construction and (7) ..... (build) a large tower block in the La Defense business district of Paris.

During the 1980s Generale des Eaux (8) ..... (join) with the Havas media group to create Canal Plus, a pay TV channel. They also (9) ..... (take) a controlling stake in the civil engineering giant, SGE. In the 1990s they (10) ..... (win) major contracts in the Asia Pacific region and in Latin America.

Jean-Marie Messier (11) ..... (become) CEO in 1996 and (12) ..... (run) the company along American lines.

He (13) ..... (sell) \$5 billion in assets and (14) ..... (cut) the workforce by 10%. All this (15) ..... (mean) that an annual loss of \$600 million (16) ..... (turn) into a profit of \$320 million. In 1998 he (17) ..... (change) the name of the group to Vivendi and soon after (18) ..... (make) a series of partnerships and acquisitions in the telecommunications industry.

Operations in North America (19) ..... (grow) very quickly after this and in 2000 Vivendi (20) ..... (buy) Seagram to become a truly international media and communications company. ■

### Exercise 5 B E

Complete the sentences by putting the verbs in brackets into either the past simple or past continuous. Sometimes the same tense is used twice; sometimes different tenses are used.

- What did you eat (eat) when you went (go) to Paris?
- While I was negotiating (negotiate) the contract, my boss phoned (phone) me to say that he wanted completely different conditions.
- The last time something like this ..... (happen), she ..... (call) a press conference immediately.
- Anne ..... (explain) her proposal when Pedro ..... (interrupt) her.
- We never got the chance to interview him. While we ..... (investigate) the incident, he ..... (resign).
- When he ..... (finish) reading the article, he ..... (give) it to me.
- Everyone ..... (wait) for the meeting to begin when he ..... (call) to say that he was stuck in a traffic jam.
- When I ..... (clean) the piece I ..... (drop) it by mistake.
- I ..... (find) the missing file while I ..... (look) for some other documents.
- When Tim ..... (arrive), we ..... (tell) him what had happened.

## Past time 2

### A Past perfect: form

The past perfect is formed with the auxiliary *had* and the past participle. In speech and informal writing *had* is contracted to 'd.

**I had (I'd) already decided** what to do before he called me.

- Negatives are formed with *not* and contractions are used (*hadn't*). Questions are formed by inverting the subject and *had*.

*At that time I still **hadn't decided** what to do.*

**Had you already decided** what to do before he called you?

### B Past perfect: uses

- The past perfect is used to show clearly that one past event happened before another past event. We use the past perfect for the earlier event:

*On the New York Stock Exchange the Nasdaq Index **had opened** higher, but **fell back** to 1,578 in morning trading.* (Yahoo News Service website)

Compare these examples which describe exactly the same situation:

1 Sue **left** at 2 pm. We **arrived** at her office at 2.30. (both verbs in past simple)

2 When we **arrived** at Sue's office, she **had left**. (earlier action in past perfect)

In example 1 the two actions are separate in the mind of the speaker. In example 2 there is a stronger connection between the two actions and the past perfect emphasises which happened first.

- It may not be necessary to use the past perfect if we use *before* or *after* to make the time clear.

We can use the past simple for both actions.

Sue **left/had left** her office **before** we arrived. (both forms possible)

We arrived at Sue's office **after she left/had left**. (both forms possible)

Many speakers still prefer to use the past perfect in this case, to show a strong connection between the two events.

- The past perfect is often used with verbs of thinking like *know*, *realise*, *remember*, *be sure*, *think*.

David **knew he'd seen** her somewhere before, but he couldn't remember where.

When I got to the office I **realised I'd left** all my papers behind.

Ellen **was sure they hadn't received** the invoice, but she checked one more time.

I **thought we'd already chosen** the name for the new product!

### C Past perfect: time expressions

- The time expressions *after*, *once*, *by*, *already*, *just*, *never*, *meanwhile* are often used with the past perfect. The word *still* is often used with negative forms.

*Around 1993 Korean corporations started turning to Park to acquire companies in the US or Europe. **By this time, he had built up** sufficient contacts to help them.* (Asia Inc website)

### D Past perfect continuous: form

- The past perfect continuous is formed with the auxiliary phrase *had been* and the *-ing* form of the main verb. Contractions are used.

**I'd been working** on the project for two months before they decided to cancel it.

- Negatives are formed with *had not been* and the *-ing* form of the main verb.

Questions are formed by inverting the subject and *had*.

**I hadn't been sleeping** well, so I was quite tired.

**Had you been working** for a long time on the project before they cancelled it?

### E Past perfect continuous: uses

- The past perfect continuous is used to describe a situation that was in progress up to a certain point in the past. It often emphasises the duration of time.

*Before he left IBM Plattner **had been putting together** a software package for the UK-based chemical company ICI. He **had been working** on this project during 1971 and 1972.* (Eurobusiness website)

- The past perfect and the past perfect continuous both look back from a point in the past. The past perfect looks back at an earlier event. The past perfect continuous looks back at a situation in progress.

*The economic situation was quite healthy. The central bank **had lowered** interest rates because inflation **had been falling** steadily for several years.*

### F Used to/would + infinitive

- *Used to* describes a habit or state in the past. There is no present form (for present habits we use the present simple).

*'Price dictates what motorists put into their petrol tanks. Lots of people who **used to have** their doubts about diesel from biological sources are now regular users', says Dieter Enders, who owns an independent filling station in southern Germany.* (Frankfurter Rundschau website)

*Used to* normally suggests that the action or situation is no longer true and so makes a contrast with the present:

**I used to work** in marketing. (= but now I work in another area)

**He used to be** really enthusiastic about his job. (= but now he isn't)

- Note that *used to* is used for habits and repeated actions, not single events.

**I went** to the Milan Fashion Show for the first time last month. (NOT ~~used to go~~)

- With negatives and questions *used to* becomes *use to*.

**Did you use** to work in marketing? **I didn't use** to work in marketing.

- *Would* is used in the same way as *used to*, but it only describes repeated actions in the past, not states.

*In the old days we **used to/would make** three copies of all documents for the files.*

*Our company **used to belong** to an American multinational.* (NOT ~~would belong~~)

*Would* is more common in descriptive writing than in speech.

## 4 Practice

### Exercise 1 A B F unit 3

Underline the correct words. This exercise includes examples of the past perfect, *used to*, the past simple and past continuous.

- 1 While I looked/was looking for my keys, I suddenly remembered I left/had left them at home.
- 2 In those days the unions used to/had used to go on strike whenever there was/was being a problem.
- 3 After they were buying/had bought the company, they started/were starting to make a lot of people redundant.
- 4 Jack used to have/was having a Mac, but then he used to change/changed to a PC.
- 5 I asked about my package in reception, but they said/were saying that it still hadn't arrived/wasn't arriving.
- 6 I was sure that I used to lock/had locked the door to my office last night, but it was/had been open this morning.
- 7 I'm sure that the winters used to be/had been colder when I was a child. I remember that we used to walk/were walking to school in the snow every winter.
- 8 I had gone/went back to the restaurant to look for my umbrella, but found/was finding that someone took/had taken it.
- 9 When George saw/was seeing Diane at the seminar, he knew/was knowing that he met/had met her somewhere before.
- 10 While I had/was having breakfast I looked/was looking at the financial pages to see the share prices. I saw/was seeing that my original investment grew/had grown by over 40%.

### Exercise 2 A B unit 3

Complete the sentences with the best form of the verb in brackets. In each sentence one verb will be in the past simple (unit 3) and the other in the past perfect.

- 1 After she had made (make) a few notes, she started (start) writing the introduction to the Annual Report.
- 2 Gary ..... (be sure) that he ..... (set) the alarm before leaving the office.
- 3 I ..... (call) my wife on my mobile because the meeting ..... (still not finish).
- 4 Once I ..... (speak) to him, I ..... (realise) there had been a misunderstanding.
- 5 After Jill ..... (give) her first presentation, she ..... (feel) much less nervous.
- 6 Before Edite ..... (become) Michael Edward's personal assistant she ..... (already work) in the company for two years.
- 7 I ..... (not see) the figures before the meeting, so it ..... (put) me at a disadvantage during the discussion.
- 8 Sorry it took so long. I ..... (have to) go down to the store room because we ..... (run out of) paper for the photocopier.
- 9 The rain ..... (stop) by the time I ..... (get out of) the taxi.
- 10 I ..... (be) surprised to find that she ..... (already leave).

### Exercise 3 B unit 3

Complete this magazine article by putting the verb in brackets into either the past simple or past perfect. In one case only the past perfect can be used, in five cases only the past simple can be used and in six cases both are possible.

## THE DANES SAY 'NO'

On 28 September 2000 the people of Denmark (1) voted (vote) 'No' to joining the single European currency, the euro. All the main political parties, the trades unions, the employers and the media (2) ..... (campaign) for a 'Yes' vote before the referendum. So why (3) ..... (the Danes/reject) the euro? Let's look first at the economic background. For many years the Danish central bank (4) ..... (be) committed to keeping the value of the krone stable against the German mark, and this policy (5) ..... (be) very successful in maintaining stability and prosperity. Then the euro was launched in January 1999. In the period after the launch the countries in the euro zone (6) ..... (perform) relatively well in economic terms. However, by the time of the referendum the euro (7) ..... (fall) significantly against the dollar, and the central banks of the USA and Japan (8) ..... (be) forced to intervene in the foreign exchange markets to buy euros. But the 'No' campaign (9) ..... (focus) on national identity, not economic issues. In the end the Danes (10) ..... (make) their decision because they (11) ..... (fear) that economic integration would eventually lead to political integration. They (12) ..... (want) to keep their independence and freedom.

### Exercise 4 A B unit 3

Alan is talking about his first job. Complete what he says with the best form of the verb in brackets. Choose between the past simple (unit 3), past continuous (unit 3) or past perfect.

- INTERVIEWER: So, Alan, why did you quit your last job?
- ALAN: Well, at the time I (1) was working (work) as a financial officer for an International Accountancy firm in London. I (2) ..... (be) in the same company for three years.
- INTERVIEWER: How (3) ..... (you/get) the job?
- ALAN: Just after I (4) ..... (finish) university I (5) ..... (go) to a job fair. I still (6) ..... (decide) what I wanted to do and I was interested to see what kind of jobs there (7) ..... (be) at the fair. While I (8) ..... (look) at information on one of the stands for a large international accountancy firm, someone (9) ..... (give) me an application form to fill in. I thought this might be a good career opportunity for me as I (10) ..... (already/take) some accountancy exams for my degree. So I (11) ..... (complete) the form and (12) ..... (send) it off. They (13) ..... (interview) me the following week and I got job.
- At first, I (14) ..... (feel) satisfied with the job, but as time went by, things (15) ..... (change) and I began to hate working there.
- INTERVIEWER: So what (16) ..... (go) wrong?
- ALAN: Well, the situation was this: I (17) ..... (work) for a person who was very difficult, or ... very demanding ... never satisfied. What's more, my job (18) ..... (become) too repetitive and I really wanted to do something more creative. So, that's why I resigned ... I (19) ..... (not have) another job to go to, but I knew I (20) ..... (have) to make a change.

### Exercise 5 F

Complete the sentences with *used to* or *used to/would*.

- 1 With my old boss we used to/would have meetings several times a week.
- 2 I ..... own a BMW, but now I have an MG.
- 3 Before they built the new motorway it ..... take me an hour to get to work.
- 4 I ..... think I wanted to work for a large organisation. Now I want to be self-employed.

## Past and present 1

### A Present perfect: form

- The present perfect is formed with the present tense of the auxiliary verb *have* and the past participle. In speech and informal writing we use contractions ('ve and 's).

*I/you/we/they have ('ve) gone.*  
*He/she/it has ('s) gone.*

- Negatives are formed with *not*.  
*I/you/we/they have not (haven't) gone.*  
*He/she/it has not (hasn't) gone.*

- Questions are formed by inverting the subject and the auxiliary verb *have*. Short answers to *yes/no* questions repeat the auxiliary.

A: **Have they gone?**

A: **Has he gone?**

B: Yes, **they have**/No, **they haven't**.

B: Yes, **he has**/No, **he hasn't**.

### B Present perfect: uses

- In general, we use the present perfect to talk about a present situation which is connected to the past.

There may be a present situation that started in the past.

*I've lived here for about ten years.*

*I've known Mary since we worked together in Spain.*

- There may be a series of actions that happened in our life up to now.

*I've often been to Singapore.*

*I've seen a lot of changes around here.*

There may be a result in the present of a past event.

*Sorry, I think I've lost the file.*

*My computer has crashed.*

In this case we are explaining the current importance of the past event. When it happened is not important and is not mentioned.

### C Present perfect: time expressions

- We use *ever* and *never* to ask and talk about our general life experience.

*Have you ever spoken in front of a large audience?* (in all your life up to now)

*I've never worked abroad, but next year I might be based in Paris.*

If the answer to the question is *Yes* then we continue to give more information about the specific events by using verbs in the past simple.

A: *Have you ever spoken in front of a large audience?*

B: Yes, *I have*. Last year I *went* to a sales conference in Berne and I *gave* a presentation.

- The present perfect is often used with *already* and *yet*. *Already* is normally used in affirmative sentences:

*Knapp, CEO of US cable company NTL, insists that NTL has already made 75% of its planned investment to deliver broadband for mobile phone users.* (Telegraph website)

*Yet* is used in questions and negatives, and suggests that something has not happened, although we expect it to happen.

*Have you finished the report yet?*

*Sorry, I haven't finished the report yet. I'll try to finish it this afternoon.*

*Shares in the two big telecoms stocks Colt and Energis continue to fall. Neither has yet managed to convince investors that they can provide services attractive enough to earn a decent return.* (Guardian website)

We use *just* to describe something that happened a short time ago.

*I've just spoken to him on the phone and he says he'll be here at 9.30 tomorrow.*

- The present perfect is often used with time expressions that refer to unfinished time. In other words the time period includes the present. Common expressions are: *this morning, today, this month, so far, up to now, recently, during/in the past month, over the last few years*, etc.

*The Russian Central Bank announced on Thursday that its gold and currency reserves have increased in the past week by \$300 million.* (Delovoj Peterburg website)

*In the area of economic development, the Asia Pacific region has succeeded in achieving rapid growth, which has exceeded 7% annually during the past few years.* (Asia Pacific Economic Review website)

- Some time expressions can be used with the present perfect or the past simple, depending on when you are speaking:

*Have you spoken to Sue this morning?* (it is now 11 am: the morning has not finished)

*Did you speak to Sue this morning?* (it is now 3 pm: the morning has finished)

- We use *for* and *since* with the present perfect to refer to periods of time.

A: *How long has Tom worked here?*

B: He's *worked here for three months*.

B: He's *worked here since the beginning of May*.

*For* describes the length of the time period. *Since* describes the point when the time period started.

*'We have been in business for 37 years, so the Internet to us is just another way of collecting orders'* says Lands Ends' international vice president Sam Taylor. (CNBC Business website)

*UPS became a worldwide Olympics sponsor in 1994, and since then it has handled the Atlanta games in 1996 and the 1998 Japan winter games.* (worldtradeonline magazine)

- Frequency adverbs that are used with the present simple can also be used with the present perfect.

*They've often given us good advice.*

*Hollinger has always been interested in buying newspapers, and we tend to look at most that come on to the market.* (SundayTimes website)

### D Been (to) and gone (to)

- If we *have been* to a place, we went there and have now returned. If we *have gone* to a place we went there but have not yet returned.

*She's been to visit our suppliers. Everything seems to be OK.* (she has come back)

*She's gone to visit our suppliers. I hope everything will be OK.* (she is still there)

## 5 Practice

### Exercise 1 A

Complete the sentences by putting the verbs in brackets into a form of the present perfect. Use contractions where possible.

- Are you sure it isn't working? Have you tried (you/try) it?
- I ..... (never/see) such a boring presentation.
- Luckily, our customers ..... (not/complain) about the price rise.
- We ..... (already/spend) quite a lot of money on this project.
- ..... (they/reply) to your last email?
- I ..... (not/get) the figures to hand – can I call you back later?
- Unemployment ..... (go/up) by 2% since January.
- I'm sorry, she's not here. She ..... (just/leave).
- Their shares ..... (fall) by 15% since the merger.
- ..... (you/ever/take) the Eurostar to Brussels?

### Exercise 2 B

Look at the paired sentences below. Match each one with situation a) or b).

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 1 Inflation has fallen by 1%. <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b) | a) Two years ago it was 4%. Last year it was 3%.             |
| 2 Inflation fell by 1%. <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a) | b) Last month it was 4%. This month it is 3%.                |
| 3 I think I've lost the file. <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>               | a) I can't find the file. I wonder where I put it?           |
| 4 Sorry, I lost the file. <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/>               | b) The file has gone and I'll never find it.                 |
| 5 Has Jane called this morning? <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>               | a) Jane promised to call this morning. It's 11 am.           |
| 6 Did Jane call this morning? <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>               | b) Jane promised to call this morning. It's 2 pm.            |
| 7 Sales improved. <input type="checkbox"/>                   | <input type="checkbox"/>               | a) Last year sales were poor. This year they are better.     |
| 8 Sales have improved. <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input type="checkbox"/>               | b) Sales were poor initially. A year later they were better. |
| 9 How long have you worked here? <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/>               | a) In 1999.  |
| 10 When did you start working here? <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>               | b) Since 1999.   |

### Exercise 3 C

Complete the sentences with a suitable time expression from the list below.

already yet ever never just for since always

- The goods will be with you soon. They've ..... already ..... left our warehouse.
- I've ..... had a great idea! Why don't we launch a new range of colours?
- We've known each other ..... more than twenty years.
- I've ..... used my credit card on the Internet. I don't think it's safe.
- I haven't had a chance to speak to Magda ....., but I'm sure she'll agree.
- I've ..... worked in insurance, ever since leaving university.
- I'm sorry he hasn't called you back. He's been in a meeting ..... lunchtime.
- Have you ..... been to São Paulo? It's completely different from Rio.

### Exercise 4 A B C

Read this text about the performance of the Ford car company. Complete the text with the verbs from the list below, using the present perfect.

make fall launch be have cut withdraw spend take perform

## Ford: the road to recovery

Although Ford (1) has ..... made ..... operating profits of over \$7 billion in its American market this year, the story in Europe (2) ..... very different. Its market share (3) ..... from 12% six years ago to only 9% now. The truth is that rivals like Volkswagen and Renault (4) ..... much better over recent years. They (5) ..... costs and (6) ..... exciting and highly successful new models. In contrast, Ford (7) ..... its large saloon,

the Scorpio, which was not selling well. But Ford (8) ..... a lot more success at the higher end of the market. Over the last few years it (9) ..... a lot of money buying brands such as Jaguar, Aston Martin and Land Rover, and these models have much higher profit margins. It (10) ..... some time to sort out the problems at Jaguar in particular, but it's now a successful part of the business.

### Exercise 5 C D

Read this email from Steve, the Purchasing Manager of a UK importer, who is in Poland on a business trip. Complete the email by choosing the correct alternative from A, B, C or D below.

**From:** Steve McGinlay **To:** Mike Evans **Sent:** 18 May ...

**Subject:** Poland **Cc:**

**Message:** Mike

Sorry I haven't contacted you (1) ..... last week, but I've been very busy. I've (2) ..... to Katowice in the south-west of Poland (3) ..... a few days, and I've (4) ..... returned to my hotel in Warsaw, from where I'm sending this email. I visited several firms when I was in Katowice and one of them looks quite promising. I've (5) ..... seen their factory, and I've got some product samples to show you. Unfortunately I haven't met the guy in charge (6) ..... He wasn't there – he's (7) ..... to Gdansk and should be back next week. So, the trip has been quite successful (8) ..... Have you (9) ..... been to Central Europe? Everything is changing very fast – I've (10) ..... seen so much building work going on. Anyway, I'll email you again later in the week to let you know what's happening. Regards, Steve

- |            |           |           |          |
|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 1 A for    | B since   | C just    | D so far |
| 2 A going  | B gone    | C being   | D been   |
| 3 A for    | B since   | C already | D so far |
| 4 A now    | B been    | C just    | D so far |
| 5 A yet    | B already | C been    | D gone   |
| 6 A just   | B already | C now     | D yet    |
| 7 A going  | B gone    | C being   | D been   |
| 8 A so far | B yet     | C just    | D now    |
| 9 A yet    | B since   | C ever    | D never  |
| 10 A yet   | B since   | C ever    | D never  |



## Past and present 2

### A Past simple or present perfect?

- The past simple is used to describe actions in a completed time period.  
The present perfect is used when the time period includes the present. This can be a situation which started in the past and continues to be true in the present, life experience until now, or the present result of a past action.  
*I lived in Milan many years ago.* (completed: now I live in another place)  
*I've lived in Milan since 1998.* (a situation that started in the past and continues in the present: I still live there)  
*I've lived in both Milan and Rome.* (life experience: the time when I lived in these cities is not mentioned and is not important)  
*I've spoken to my boss, and he's agreed.* (present result of past action)
- Time phrases used with the past simple refer to a particular point in the past: *yesterday, last month, a few years ago, in 2002.*  
Time phrases used with the present perfect link the past to the present: *this month, ever, never, already, just, recently, since.*  
Look at this example:  
*Lojas Americanas, a chain of discount stores in Brazil, has had difficulties since the mid-1990s. Although the stores generate enormous traffic, profitability has been hard to achieve because of a low average purchase price. In 1998 it began a rationalisation effort. It reduced the number of warehouses and sold 23 supermarket stores to Carrefour (France).* (ebusinessforum website)
- The time word *for* refers to a period of time. It can be used with either tense:  
*I lived in Milan for four years when I was at university.* (now I don't live there)  
*I have lived in Milan for four years.* (I still live there)
- The choice of tense often depends on the situation and where our attention is:  
*We've won the contract!* (recent news: the event is present in my mind)  
*We won the contract.* (telling a story: the event feels distant in my mind)

### B Present simple or present perfect?

- The present simple is used in two main ways: facts, and habits or states in the present. The present perfect makes a connection between past and present.  
*About two million people live in Milan.* (a fact)  
*I live in Milan.* (a permanent state – I always live there)  
*I have lived in Milan for two years.* (I arrived there two years ago and still live there now)

### C Present perfect continuous: form

- The present perfect continuous is formed with the present perfect of *be*, and the *-ing* form of the verb. Negatives are formed with *not*.  
*I've been (haven't been) waiting here for more than an hour.*  
*She's been (hasn't been) waiting here all morning.*
- Questions are formed by inverting the subject and *have*.  
*I'm sorry I'm late. Have you been waiting long?*

### D Present perfect continuous: uses

- The present perfect continuous describes an action or situation in progress from the past up to the present.  
*Trade between Slovenia and the Ukraine has been increasing steadily since 1992, when it totalled just US\$9 million.* (Slovenia Business Week website)
- The present perfect continuous often emphasises the length of time of the action:  
*I've been trying to contact her all day.*
- The action may be finished or continuing, we only know by the situation:  
*I've been waiting for an hour! Why are you so late?* (the waiting is finished)  
*I've been waiting for an hour and he hasn't arrived yet.* (I will continue waiting)
- The present perfect continuous can be used for repeated actions:  
*I've been phoning her all morning, but she's always in a meeting.*

### E Present perfect continuous: time expressions

- Typical time expressions that are used with the present perfect continuous include: *all day, for months, for ages, lately, recently, over the last few years, since, for.*  
*Foreign life insurers have been expanding their business in Japan by about 15% annually over the past four years.* (BusinessWeek website)

### F Present perfect or present perfect continuous?

- Often there is very little difference in meaning between the present perfect and present perfect continuous.  
*I've worked/been working here for three years.*
- The choice of tense often depends on where our attention is. We use the present perfect if our attention is on the present result.  
*I've written the report.* (the finished report is in my mind)  
We use the present perfect continuous if our attention is on the action in progress.  
*I've been writing the report.* (the act of writing is in my mind)  
*In the global economic growth of recent years new companies have been created at an astonishing rate. Companies which have been operating for many years without franchising are now exploring the possibilities.* (worldtradeonline website)
- If we give details of how many or how much we do not use a continuous form.  
*I've written three reports this week.*  
*I've done a lot of research on this company.*  
*The technology-heavy Nasdaq index has been falling for three weeks, and is now 34% lower than its March peak. Shares of companies announcing poor results have fallen by a third or a half after profit warnings.* (Washington Post website)

## 6 Practice

### Exercise 1 A

Underline the correct words.

- 1 Yesterday I phoned / I've phoned the bank about my overdraft.
- 2 I work here / have worked here since the end of last year.
- 3 Your taxi has just arrived / just arrived.
- 4 We're enjoying our trip. We have made / made a lot of useful contacts.
- 5 I've seen / I saw Hugh Hopper a few days ago – he sends his regards.
- 6 We went / have been to an interesting seminar last week.
- 7 Today has been / was really busy – and it's only lunchtime!
- 8 Today has been / was really busy. It's 7 pm – I'm going home.
- 9 I'm afraid Patrizia left / has left the office an hour ago.
- 10 I'm afraid Patrizia isn't here – she left / has left the office.

### Exercise 2 A, B

Complete the sentences by putting the verbs in brackets into either the present simple, past simple or present perfect.

- 1 The company is doing very well. Last year sales ..... went up ..... (go up) by 15%, and so far this year they ..... have gone up ..... (go up) another 12%.
- 2 We ..... (operate) all over Latin America. Recently we ..... (set up) branches in Peru and Ecuador.
- 3 This ..... (not look) like the right block. Are you sure we ..... (come) to the right address?
- 4 ..... (you/see) my laptop? I'm sure I ..... (leave) it here earlier.
- 5 I ..... (just/met) Andrew from Sales. .... (you/know) him?
- 6 I ..... (never/speak) to him, but I ..... (speak) to his assistant on the phone yesterday.
- 7 I ..... (work) for WorldCom now – I ..... (be) there for more than five years. .... (you/know) WorldCom?
- 8 I ..... (work) for WorldCom since last year, but now I ..... (want) to change jobs. .... (you/hear) of any vacancies?

### Exercise 3 C, D, F

Complete each mini-dialogue by putting the verbs in brackets into the correct form. One verb will be in the present perfect and the other in the present perfect continuous. Use contractions where possible.

- 1 A: What's the matter? You look worried!  
B: Yes, I am. I 've been looking at ..... (look at) the contract in detail, and I 've noticed ..... (notice) a lot of potential problems.  
A: Oh, such as?  
2 A: I ..... (phone) Carol all day, but there's no reply.  
B: I expect she ..... (go) to Head Office.  
A: Oh, yes, I forgot.  
3 A: 'Tosca' is coming to the Opera House. .... (you see) it?  
B: No, not yet. Shall we go? I ..... (look forward) to it for ages.  
A: So have I. What about next week?  
4 A: How long ..... (you produce) cars at this site?  
B: About four years. We ..... (invest) twenty million dollars in plant and machinery.  
A: Oh, and how long will it take to recoup your investment, do you think?

### Exercise 4 A

Complete this dialogue by putting the verbs in brackets into the correct form of the past simple or present perfect. Use contractions where possible.

- VICTORIA: Hi, Sue. I (1) haven't seen ..... (not/see) you for ages!
- SUE: Hi. No, I'm sorry. I (2) ..... (not/be) in touch with anyone recently ... I (3) ..... (be) really busy.
- VICTORIA: Oh, what have you been up to then?
- SUE: Well, you know I (4) ..... (leave) my job in January so that I (5) ..... (can) go freelance as a graphic designer?
- VICTORIA: Yes, I remember, you (6) ..... (talk) a lot about that last year. How's it going?
- SUE: Well, it (7) ..... (be) a really difficult year so far. I (8) ..... (never/do) anything like this before ... it's much harder work than I (9) ..... (imagine). (10) ..... (you/ever/be) self-employed?
- VICTORIA: No, never, although I (11) ..... (often/think) about it. So, why has it been so difficult?
- SUE: Well, at the beginning I (12) ..... (have) two or three good clients – and, you know, people that I (13) ..... (know) for many years, like Tom Pierce. And since then I (14) ..... (have) a lot of interest from different companies, but none of them (15) ..... (become) regular customers.
- VICTORIA: What about advertising in the specialist magazines?
- SUE: I (16) ..... (already/do) that. I (17) ..... (put) an advert in Design Monthly a couple of months ago, but I (18) ..... (not/get) any replies.
- VICTORIA: Oh, dear, well, (19) ..... (put) up a website with examples of your work?
- SUE: Yes, I (20) ..... (just/finish) it. Would you mind having a quick look at it and tell me what you think of it?

### Exercise 5 A



Look at the graph and read the passage about technology stocks. Complete the text by putting the verbs in brackets into the correct form of the past simple or present perfect.



European investors (1) have watched ..... (watch) US stock markets nervously over the last few months. The problems with US technology and telecomms stocks (2) ..... (begin) last March, and since then share prices at companies like Intel, Apple and Dell (3) ..... (crash). Over the summer all these giants (4) ..... (announce) lower than expected profits, and investors fear that demand for PCs in the highly developed US market (5) ..... (peak). Now it's the turn of European stocks. On Monday stocks in companies like Germany's SAP and Finland's Nokia (6) ..... (fall) sharply. SAP (7) ..... (be) down 3% in Frankfurt, and Nokia (8) ..... (drop) 7% in Helsinki.

But there was some good news for investors yesterday. Yahoo!

(9) ..... (release) figures which showed that in the last quarter revenues (10) ..... (rise) to \$295 million, up from \$115 million a year earlier. Yahoo! relies on online advertising for most of its income, and this year it (11) ..... (gain) significant market share in Europe and (12) ..... (manage) to achieve the position of top Web-navigation company.

Analysts believe that the market (13) ..... (not/hit) the bottom yet. Earlier this year investors (14) ..... (buy) any Internet stocks that were available, creating a stock market bubble. Now it's just the opposite. Investors (15) ..... (become) so nervous that they are selling everything, even if the company is sound and the stock looks cheap.

