

Chapter 3: PERFECT AND PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSES

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<i>Review of regular and irregular past participles</i>		Ex. 1 → 2	
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Past perfect progressive	3-4	Ex. 17	Pr. 8
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General Notes on Chapter 3

- **OBJECTIVE:** The focus is on perfect and perfect progressive tenses, which have complex references to time and duration of activities or situations.
- **TERMINOLOGY:** A “past participle” is the third principal part of a verb (e.g., *go-went-gone-going*). (See Chart 2-5.) The past participle is used with an auxiliary in the perfect tenses (or aspects) and in the passive voice. It can also function as an adjective. (See Chart 11-8.)

□ EXERCISE 1, p. 34. Review of regular past participles. (Charts 2-5 and 2-7)

The teacher can always play the role of Speaker A; in other words, even though the directions suggest pair work, the exercise can be teacher-led. It depends upon availability of time for pair work, the level of your class, your objectives (e.g., quick review of surface grammar or intensive developmental skills work), the composition of your class (monolingual or multilingual), the size of your class, etc.

If necessary, remind students that a question with *your* requires an answer with *my*, as in item 14.

As a follow-up activity, ask students to spell some of the past participles in the exercise, especially those that are sometimes troublesome, such as *hidden* (not *hiden*), *stolen* (not *stollen*), *forgotten* (not *forgoten*). You might write problem words on the chalkboard.

QUESTIONS ONLY: Have you ever . . . ?

- | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|----------------|------------|----------|---------|
| 1. bought | 2. broken | 3. hidden | 4. taught | 5. made | 6. won |
| 7. flown | 8. spoken | 9. stolen | 10. fallen | 11. held | 12. fed |
| 13. built | 14. forgotten | 15. understood | 16. eaten | | |

□ **EXERCISE 2, p. 35. Review: regular and irregular past participles. (Charts 2-5 and 2-7)**

You may need to explain that *ever* in a present perfect question means “at least once in your lifetime.” It is not used in the answer to a question.

An acceptable alternative to the answer “No, I haven’t” is “No, I never have.”

Instead of pair work, this exercise can be teacher-led. The students’ books are closed. You say the cue phrase. Then Speaker A asks B a question, and B answers truthfully. If you wish, you may expand some of these short dialogues. After Speaker B replies “Yes, I have,” you might ask when or where the event occurred.

QUESTIONS ONLY: Have you ever . . . ?

- | | | | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. climbed | 2. written | 3. been | 4. told | 5. smoked | 6. ridden |
| 7. taught | 8. seen | 9. met | 10. given | 11. eaten | 12. studied |
| 13. played | 14. gone | 15. walked | 16. watched | 17. taken | 18. driven |
| 19. fallen | 20. had | 21. driven | 22. read | 23. drawn | 24. ridden |
| 25. caught | 26. slept | 27. written | 28. lost | 29. had | 30. brought |
| 31. worn | 32. drunk | 33. left | 34. dug | 35. shaken | 36. sung |

CHART 3-1: PRESENT PERFECT

- Compare the example sentences with similar sentences in the simple past; e.g., *They have moved into a new apartment* vs. *They moved into a new apartment last week.*
- The use of the present perfect illustrated by examples (l) through (p) carries the same meaning as the present perfect progressive: it expresses the duration of an activity that began in the past and continues to the present. The present perfect is used to express the duration of a “state,” but the present perfect progressive is used to express the duration of an “activity.” Note that all the verbs in (l) through (p) are stative. (See Chart 2-3.)
- Special attention may need to be paid to (h) and (n), where *have* is an auxiliary and *had* is the main verb.

□ **EXERCISE 3, p. 36. Present perfect vs. simple past. (Charts 2-9 and 3-1)**

ANSWERS: 2. went 3. arrived 4. has been 5. have already missed . . . missed 6. have had 7. has drawn . . . drew 8. has called . . . called 9. has worn . . . wore 10. has risen . . . rose 11. saw 12. has never seen [*never saw* would mean that either Fatima is now dead or you are telling a story about a fictional character whose story took place in the past.] 13. have known [*knew* would mean that Greg Adams is, in all likelihood, dead.] 14. has just arrived / just arrived 15. haven’t been . . . hasn’t responded . . . started . . . have faxed . . . have phoned . . . have sent

□ **EXERCISE 4, p. 37. Present perfect. (Chart 3-1)**

If teacher-led, this exercise can be expanded by eliciting similar sentences using the simple past: e.g., *How many books have you bought since the beginning of the semester?* can be followed by *When did you buy this book?*

As with any teacher-led oral exercise, omit items irrelevant to your particular class and make up additional items directly related to your students' lives and situations.

This kind of question-and-answer oral exercise is a good opportunity to get your students talking about themselves. Ask more than one student the same question. Follow up interesting responses by engaging in short dialogues with your students. Questions that you ask conversationally on the topics suggested in the exercise can provide the students with excellent oral practice of verb tenses. In addition, you can learn more about your students and they about each other. They may discover, for instance, that others in the class are having trouble meeting people and making friends (item 7), or that others miss home cooking and dislike what is offered in the student cafeteria (item 11).

POSSIBLE RESPONSES: 1. I've bought six books OR I haven't bought any 2. I've gotten two OR I haven't gotten any 3. I've written three OR I haven't written any 4. You've asked three questions 5. I've flown many times 6. I have made dinner many times 7. I've met lots of people 8. I haven't missed any classes 9. I've had two cups 10. I've had four classes 11. I've eaten at a restaurant several times 12. I've ridden a bike lots of times.

□ **EXERCISE 5, p. 38. Present perfect. (Chart 3-1)**

Frequent problems occur with the word "since." *Since* may be followed by (1) a specific day or date (*1998, Friday, last January, etc.*) or (2) a clause with a past tense verb (*since I was twelve years old, since he came to this city, etc.*). Point out that it is incorrect to use durational phrases like *since two years* or *since a long time*. In those cases, *for* is used.

It is advisable to discourage the use of time phrases with *ago* following *since* (e.g., *since three days ago*). Such phrases are sometimes used very informally by native speakers, for instance in a short answer, but are likely to be misused by the learners at this point.

Example of possible informal usage:

A: *You can't drive. You don't have a license.*

B: *Yes I do.*

A: *You do? Since when?*

B: *Since two weeks ago!*

NOTE: In usual usage, a person would say: "I've had my driver's license **for two weeks**" NOT "I've had my driver's license since two weeks ago."

SAMPLE RESPONSES: 2. two weeks . . . two weeks . . . the twenty-second of September 3. October 2 . . . September 2 OR one month ago . . . September 2 . . . one month 4. 1999 . . . 1981 . . . eighteen years . . . 1981 5. In October . . . three months . . . October

□ **EXERCISE 6, p. 39. Present perfect. (Chart 3-1)**

FORMAT: After one student replies, the leader asks another student about the first one's response.

If student-led, this exercise gives small groups the opportunity to begin with a structured format and then, it is hoped, proceed to incidental communicative interaction.

If the exercise is teacher-led, some of your exchanges with students might lead to expansion of the dialogue into a brief conversation. If it seems natural and interesting, keep it going for a minute or two.

□ **EXERCISE 7, p. 39. Present perfect. (Chart 3-1)**

You can either have the students repeat after you, or have the students read the sentences with the contracted forms first and then repeat after you. Make up additional sentences as you and the students wish. (E.g., *How long've you been living here? Why's Juan stopped coming to class? Etc.*)

It is not necessary for students to use these contractions when they speak, but they are natural for native speakers of English. The main point here is to make the class aware that these contractions with nouns and question words exist so that the students might be more likely to notice them when listening to native speakers.

Students sometimes hesitate to use contractions. The result is that their speech sounds stilted and formal in conversations. Comfortable use of contractions comes through experience. You can encourage your students to use contractions but should not require it.

ITEM NOTES: 3. "weather's" been 4. "neighbors've" asked 5. "teacher's" never eaten 6. (no contraction; "has" is the main verb) 7. "parents've" lived 8. (no contraction; "have" is the main verb) 9. "Where've" you been? 10. "What've" you done

□ **EXERCISE 8, p. 40. Present perfect vs. simple past. (Charts 2-9 and 3-1)**

Point out spoken contractions.

ANSWERS: 1. came . . . have you made 2. haven't had . . . have had 3. had . . . went [*Last night* signals the simple past; both actions occupied the same time period.] 4. have gotten/got [*got* is principally British usage.] . . . saw . . . have also gotten/got [*got* is principally British usage.] 5. advanced 6. have made 7. have changed . . . were . . . have become [*today* = in modern times, in contemporary life, these days] . . . has also changed . . . were 8. have already taken . . . took 9. A: Have you ever met B: haven't 10. have never eaten 11. [The most common use of the present perfect is without time signals, as illustrated in the first two blanks.] Have you eaten . . . have already eaten . . . have just finished OR Did you eat . . . already ate . . . just finished 12. A: have you visited [no time signal] B: have been [no time signal] A: have never been . . . were you [asking for a specific time signal] B: also visited [no time signal—not two years ago, but a different trip] . . . took [six years ago] A: did you visit [referring to the trip six years ago]* A: have always wanted . . . haven't had . . . went . . . haven't gone

□ **EXERCISE 9, p. 41. Activity: using the present perfect. (Chart 3-1)**

You might want to give students some limit on the length of (or amount of detail in) their written answers. A lengthy or detailed answer will require use of the simple past as well as the present perfect and could serve as practice in using both tenses. In evaluating the answers, reward each correct use of the present perfect. You might choose simply to note misspellings and other errors without focusing on them.

In preparation for (or possibly instead of) writing their answers, students could discuss them in small groups. Each member of the group could give an answer as the rest of the group listens for the use of the present perfect. At the end of the speaker's answer, the others could identify (orally or in writing) what the speaker said, copying or correcting the speaker's use of the present perfect.

*The separate *Answer Key* booklet mistakenly gives the present perfect as a possible answer for this blank. The author apologizes for the confusion—and sometimes wonders what little grammar gremlins sneak in and cause printed errors! The correct completion for this blank is *did you visit*; *have you visited* is NOT correct.

Another alternative is to divide the class into five groups. Each group discusses one item. Each student writes a summary of everything that was said in his/her group, or the leader of each group presents an oral summary to the rest of the class. (You might want to expand the scope of item 3 to include “Why?” “Do you ever expect to do these things?” and “What are some interesting and unusual things that you have done and want to do again?”)

CHART 3-2: PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE

- Compare the examples with the present progressive. (See Chart 2-2.) Explain that both tenses deal with actions in progress, but that the present progressive simply states that an action is in progress at the moment of speaking, while the present perfect progressive gives the duration up to now of an action in progress now.
- Expect students to have difficulty understanding the use of this tense in examples (g), (h), and (i).
- As noted in (j) and (k), sometimes there is little or no difference between the present perfect and the present perfect progressive in sentences with *since* or *for*, often depending on the type of action the verb describes. There is, however, often a subtle preference for one or the other by native speakers in certain situations. The present perfect may be preferred for longstanding activities (*Jack has worked at the ABC Company since he graduated from college 40 years ago*) and the present perfect progressive for temporary or recent activities (*Jack has been working on the X Project since its inception two months ago*). In these cases, however, either tense is usually possible and correct (*Jack has been working at the ABC Company since he graduated from college 40 years ago* AND *Jack has worked on the X Project since its inception two months ago*).

The present perfect progressive is generally preferred over the present perfect to express the duration of an activity from a point in the past to the present—except, of course, in the case of stative verbs, which are not used in any progressive and use the present perfect to express duration: *I have known Jack since he graduated from college*.

□ EXERCISE 10, p. 42. Error analysis: present perfect progressive. (Chart 3-2)

This exercise is intended solely as further clarification of the information in the preceding chart. It is intended for discussion. Give the students two or three minutes to find the errors themselves prior to class discussion.

The items present situations in which only the present perfect progressive is appropriate. Review the meanings of the incorrect tenses and compare them to the present perfect progressive.

ANSWERS: 1. They have been playing for almost two hours. 2. He has been talking on the phone for more than half an hour. 3. I have been trying to study for the last hour, but something always seems to interrupt me. 4. He has been waiting there for the last twenty minutes.

□ **EXERCISE 11, p. 43. Present perfect vs. present perfect progressive.**
(Charts 3-1 and 3-2)

Notice in items 1, 3, maybe 6 and 7B, and possibly 12 that the present perfect simple instead of progressive would not necessarily be grammatically incorrect, but native speakers would use the progressive form.

ANSWERS: 1. has been snowing 2. have had 3. have been studying 4. have written
5. has rung 6. has been ringing 7. Have you been . . . have been trying
8. haven't seen . . . have you been doing 9. have never had 10. Have you been crying?
11. A: has he been B: has been teaching/has taught 12. has been playing

□ **EXERCISE 12, p. 44. Present perfect and present perfect progressive with SINCE and FOR.** (Charts 3-1 and 3-2)

Students may use either the present perfect or the present perfect progressive. You may choose to ask them for both.

The exercise can be done as a teacher-led oral review, as group or pair work, or as written work.

□ **EXERCISE 13, p. 45. Activity: using the present perfect and present perfect progressive in writing.** (Charts 3-1 and 3-2)

This is a summary review activity for both the present perfect and present perfect progressive, as well as the simple past.

Perhaps brainstorm a sample composition with the students by discussing both topics. It could be fun for the class to share some of their experiences and will get them thinking about what they might write. Prior discussion of topics often leads to better compositions. For item 1, if the students seem shy about speaking frankly of their experiences in this class, ask leading questions: "What was your first impression of this building? this room? What do you remember about your classmates the first day? your teacher? Who did you talk to? What did we do the first day of class? How did you feel about taking this class in (grammar, composition, etc.)? Were you excited about studying grammar? Did you think the class was going to be too easy? too hard? What were your concerns? Were you concerned about the level of your English ability?" Etc. Then move into questions with the present perfect: "How long have you been attending this class? What topics of English grammar have we studied? What are some of the fun things we've done in this class since that first day?" (NOTE: The responses to some of these questions might appropriately slip into the simple past; for example, a student might say: "I really enjoyed the pantomimes we did.") "What is one of the things you've enjoyed most in this class? How many compositions have you written? How many tests have we had? How many grammar exercises have we done?" Etc.

Prepare some leading questions for item 2 also.

CHARTS 3-3 AND 3-4: PAST PERFECT AND PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE

- Compare the examples with similar sentences containing (1) the present perfect and present perfect progressive; and (2) the simple past. For example, in Chart 3-3: *Sam **has** already **left*** and *Sam **left*** vs. *Sam **had** already **left***. In Chart 3-4: *The police **have been looking** for the criminal for two years* vs. *The police **had been looking** for the criminal for two years before they caught him*.
- Point out that two past events or times are necessary in order to use the past perfect. The earlier event uses the past perfect tense. The progressive form may be used to express duration or recency.
- You might anticipate that students sometimes have the erroneous idea that the past perfect is used to express an event that happened a long, long time ago. In using the past perfect, when an event occurred in the past is important only in relation to another time in the past.
- The expression “by the time” usually needs some explanation. It conveys the idea that one event was, or will be, completed before another event. It usually signals that either the past perfect (simple or progressive) or the future perfect (simple or progressive) needs to be used in the main clause. In fact, this phrase is used to signal only those tenses in the exercises in the text—even though it is possible to use other tenses when a “state” rather than an “event” is being expressed: e.g., *The doctor came at six. By that time, it **was** too late* (state). *The patient **was** dead* (state) OR ***had died*** (event).
- In (b) and (c), the simple past may be used in informal English. In other words, it is often, but by no means always, possible to use the simple past in place of the past perfect. The past perfect is relatively formal; the past perfect progressive is relatively infrequent. Students can expect to find these tenses more useful in written English than in everyday spoken English, with the possible exceptions of their use in conditional sentences (Chapter 20) and in noun clauses that report speech (Chapter 12).

□ EXERCISE 14, p. 46. Contracting HAD. (Appendix Chart C)

Items 1 and 2 review contractions with pronouns. Item 2 points out that the contraction for *had* and *would* is the same: apostrophe (') + *d*. One can determine which auxiliary is being contracted by looking at the verb form that follows 'd. If it's the past participle, 'd = *had*. If it's the simple form of a verb, 'd = *would*.

Items 3, 4, and 6 require students to supply the spoken contractions with nouns.

Item 5 distinguishes between *had* as an auxiliary and *had* as a main verb, and how that affects its contractibility. Main verb *had* is not contracted—except rarely and perhaps a bit poetically to show possession; for example, *I'd a lamb for a pet when I was a boy*. By comparison, a native speaker would probably not say, “We'd a test yesterday” OR “They'd dinner last night at Luigi's.”

Items 7 and 8 contain contractions with question words (with the contracted forms both spoken and written).

ANSWERS: 3. children/əd/ 4. roommates/əd/ 5. [No contraction is possible because *had* is the main verb.] 6. flood/əd/ 7. Where'd [spoken as a single syllable /werd/, but note that /d/ before /y/ in *you* becomes /j/ = Where-/'ju/] 8. Who'd [hud]

□ **EXERCISE 15, p. 46. Simple past vs. past perfect. (Charts 2-9 and 3-3)**

Note the contracted forms for the students.

ANSWERS: 1. was/had been . . . became 2. felt . . . took/had taken 3. had already given . . . got 4. was . . . had stopped 5. roamed [Emphasize that the past perfect is NOT used simply because something happened a long time ago; the use of the past perfect requires two events in the past, one of which occurred before the other.] . . . had become . . . appeared 6. had never seen . . . visited 7. saw . . . hadn't seen . . . didn't recognize . . . had lost 8. emigrated . . . had never traveled . . . settled . . . grew . . . went . . . had always wanted

□ **EXERCISE 16, p. 47. Past perfect. (Chart 3-3)**

In these sentences, review once again that the earlier or first action is in the past perfect and the later or second action is in the simple past.

It's possible to expand the scope of this exercise by asking the students to write a short paragraph (for each item, one item, or several items) in which the sentence based on the cue in the text is embedded in a context that the student creates. For example, in item 2:

*I was supposed to pick my cousin up at the airport last Friday at five in the afternoon. I left my apartment at three and thought I would have plenty of time to get to the airport before his flight arrived. Unfortunately, I got caught in rush hour traffic. **By the time I got to the airport, he'd already left.** He thought I'd forgotten to meet him, so he took a taxi to my apartment.*

ANSWERS: [These depend on students' creativity.]

□ **EXERCISE 17, p. 48. Present perfect progressive and past perfect progressive. (Charts 3-2 and 3-4)**

The past perfect progressive is not a common tense. This is the only exercise that focuses on it, although it will be revisited in the chapter on conditional sentences and (briefly) in the noun clause chapter. The intention here is simply to clarify its meaning and use by comparing it to a tense the students are already familiar with, the present perfect progressive.

ANSWERS: 3. have been studying 4. had been studying 5. had been daydreaming 6. have been sleeping

□ **EXERCISE 18, p. 48. Review of verb tenses. (Chapters 1 → 3)**

ANSWERS: 2. Gloria [Riding her bicycle was in progress at the time the rain stopped, meaning she began to ride her bike before the rain stopped. Paul rode his bicycle after the rain stopped; the *when*-clause happens first when both clauses contain the simple past.] 3. Ken [Ann went to the store after she had run out of food. Ken went to the store while running out of food was in progress.] 4. Mr. Sanchez [*taught for nine years*—the simple past indicates that the activity was completed in the past; *has taught for nine years*—he is still teaching; the activity is not completed.] 5. Alice [George walked to the door only after the doorbell rang. Alice knew someone was coming to ring her doorbell because she began to walk toward the door before the bell rang.] 6. Joe [Maria finished eating before I arrived. Joe ate after I got there, so he was the one who was still hungry.] 7. Carlos. [similar to item 4] 8. Jane [Sue's lying in the sun was still in progress when she applied lotion. Jane's lying in the sun had been recently completed when she applied lotion.] 9. Mr. Fox. [Mr. Fox's waving was already in progress when I looked across the street.]

□ **EXERCISE 19, p. 49. Error analysis: present and past verbs. (Chapters 1 → 3)**

See the *Introduction*, p. xviii, for suggestions for handling error analysis exercises.

ANSWERS:

1. Since I came to this country, I have learned a lot about the way of life here.
2. Before I came here, I had never bought anything from a vending machine.
3. I arrived here only a short time ago. I have been here only since last Friday.
4. When I arrived here, I didn't know much about the United States. I had seen many movies about America, but that wasn't enough.
5. My understanding of this country has changed a lot since I arrived.
6. When I was in my country, I coached a children's soccer team. When I came here, I wanted to do the same thing. Now I am coaching a soccer team at a local elementary school. I have been coaching this team for the last two months.
7. My grandfather lived in a small village in Italy when he was a child. At nineteen, he moved to Rome, where he met and married my grandmother in 1947. My father was born in Rome in 1950. I was born in Rome in 1979.
8. I have been living / have lived in my cousin's apartment since I arrived here. I haven't been able to find my own apartment yet. I have looked at several places for rent, but I haven't found one that I can afford.
9. How long have you been living here? I have been here for almost two years.
10. Why haven't you been in class the last couple of days?

□ **EXERCISE 20, p. 49. Activity: using verb tenses. (Chapters 1 → 3)**

The stories may get a little silly, but it is hoped the students will have fun.

Be sure students understand that their contributions need to contain the cue words, chosen by them at random.

□ **EXERCISE 21, p. 50. Activity: using verb tenses. (Chapters 1 → 3)**

Each person in the group is to begin a story. In a group of six people, six different stories will be circulating at the same time.

A time limit (two to three minutes per contribution) is advisable, unless you wish to make this an activity that takes up an entire class period. If you use a strict time limit, an unfinished sentence can be completed by the next writer.

After the stories are written and you are discussing them in class, you may or may not wish to bring up the possibility of using present tenses in a narrative. For example: *Let me tell you about Pierre's day yesterday. He gets in trouble as soon as his alarm clock rings. When he hears the alarm and gets out of bed, he steps on a snake! Would you believe that? He's nearly frightened to death, but the snake slithers away without biting him. Etc.* The text doesn't deal with this use of the simple present, but you might want to explore it with an advanced class. This use of the simple present is common when telling jokes.

□ **EXERCISE 22, p. 50. Using verb tenses in writing. (Chapters 1 → 3)**

Suggest a desirable length for the assignment, e.g., six to ten sentences, or 300–400 words, depending on your purposes and the emphasis on writing and composition in your particular class.

The questions are intended only to guide the students' ideas. Tell the students not to simply answer each question in order. The questions in the text are only prompts to start the students thinking about the topic.

If you wish, ask the students to try to use each of the tenses studied so far at least once. List them on the chalkboard or identify them in Chart 1-5.

As preparation for the writing assignment, ask leading questions about the topics to get the students thinking about what they might write about. Discuss the meaning of “the state of the world” by asking the students to describe the state of the world today.

In marking the papers, focus mainly on verb tenses. Praise emphatically correct verb tense usage. One suggestion: mark but do not correct errors in verb tense; correct all other errors yourself. If development of all writing skills is one of the principal goals in your class, however, you will probably want the students to correct most of their errors themselves.

SUGGESTION: Make up your own error analysis exercise by copying incorrect sentences from the students’ writing and giving them to the class for discussion. Focus on verb tense errors. Include other miscellaneous errors if you know that the class knows the correct underlying grammar. Edit the student writing somewhat; don’t include errors that would get you into a whole new discussion of unfamiliar grammar. For example:

Student writing: *I enjoied to grow myself up in Mexico City. I had had a happy child time there. My parents taked good care of there childrens.*

Used as an error analysis exercise item: *I enjoied growing up in Mexico City. I had had a happy childhood there. My parents taked good care of there childrens.*

One last note: You may notice that some errors in verb tense usage seem to be the result of the students’ study of verb tenses. For example, you may notice students trying to use the past perfect more than they had previously, but not always using it correctly. Don’t despair. It’s natural and does not seem to be of any lasting harm. View the students as experimenting with new tools. Praise them for reaching out toward what is new usage for them, even as you correct their errors. Their study of verb tenses is providing a foundation for growth as they gain experience and familiarity with English. Grammar usage takes time to gel. Don’t expect sudden mastery—and make sure your students don’t expect that either. Encourage risk-taking and experimentation; students should never be afraid of making mistakes. In language acquisition, a mistake is nothing more than a learning opportunity.