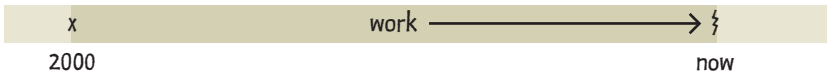
Sample activities in the Language Reference three

present perfect and past simple (2)

The present perfect can describe something that started in the past and continues up to now.



I've worked for this company since 2000. (I started in 2000 and I'm still here.)
I've worked there for a few years. (I started a few years ago and still work there.)

This use of the present perfect also describes something that didn't happen in a period of time from the past until now.

I haven't seen him since 1998. (The last time I saw him was in 1998.)
I haven't worked for five years. (I stopped working five years ago.)

If you want to describe something that started and finished in the past, use the past simple with *for* + a period of time. Compare:

She**'s had** that sports car for eighteen months. (present perfect: she still has the car.)
She **had** that motorbike for two years. (past simple: she hasn't got it now.)

For and *since* are common with this use of the present perfect.

***for* + period of time**	***since* + point of time**
I haven't been **for three years / ages / a long time / a couple of weeks**.	I've known her **since last June / we were at school / last summer**.

go to **exercises 3.1** *and* **3.2**

The most common question with this use of the present perfect is *How long …?* This question can also be used with the past simple. Compare:

How long have you been a doctor? (I know you are a doctor now.)
How long were you in the army? (I know you aren't in the army now.)

For more information on the **present perfect**, go to *p.153* and *p.166*.

go to **exercise 3.3**

collocation

Collocation describes the way pairs or groups of words often go together.

verb + noun	**noun + verb**	**adjective + noun**	**adverb + adjective**
play the guitar	the car broke down	blonde hair	terribly sorry
take a photo	the bomb exploded	a close friend	completely empty

Many collocations are easy to understand. It can be difficult to produce them, however, because they don't always translate literally from different languages.

I missed the bus. NOT I lost the bus.
She did her homework. NOT She made her homework.
a fast train NOT a rapid train
a terrible pain NOT a strong pain

cover & check exercises

3.1 **Correct the errors. Sometimes there's more than one possible answer.**

1 I've lived here since three years.
2 She's bought that car three years ago.
3 I've been in Paris last weekend.
4 I didn't see Mark since Monday.
5 I wasn't there since last year.
6 Jane worked here since a month.
7 Mike's been on holiday last week.
8 I didn't see Jason since last year.
9 I enjoyed tennis when I've been a child.
10 We've seen our friends yesterday.

3.2 **Put *for* or *since* in these sentences.**

1 I haven't seen Isabelle _____ ages.
2 We've lived in this house _____ I was a baby.
3 Peter has known Sally _____ 1994.

3.3 **Make questions for these answers. Use *How long …?* and the present perfect or past simple.**

1 For fifteen years.
2 Since 1999.
3 For three months now.
4 For about a year or so.
5 Most of my adult life.

Is this grammar different in your language? If so, make a note of the difference.