Will
Well, hello! And welcome to today’s Grammar Gameshow! I’m your host, Will! No, seriously, look, I’m running out of these. You come up with one at home. And of course, let’s not forget Leslie, our all-knowing voice in the sky.

Leslie
Hello, everyone!

Will
Tonight we’re going to ask you three questions about…

Leslie
The present perfect simple and past simple tenses.

Will
OK! Now, let’s meet our contestants!

Didactica
Hello. I'm Didactica

Will
And contestant number two?

Didactica
It’s nice to meet you. I’m Pedantia.

Will
Now, correct me if I’m wrong, but you two are sisters, aren’t you?

Pedantia
That’s correct.

Didactica
And linguists.
We do everything together.

That was creepy! I guess it’s a team game, then! Let’s get going and don’t forget you can play along at home too. Round one is a ‘which tense’ round. I’m going to show you some past simple sentences and you’re going to decide if they should remain past simple or be changed into the present perfect. Here we go. I cut my finger.

How badly?

Does it matter?

Of course! The present perfect is all about the relevance…

…or importance of something in the present…

…even if the action is past. If you cut your finger,

…but it isn’t important to you – maybe it doesn’t hurt…

…or doesn’t stop you using your hand,

then it’s past simple. But…

…if you cut your finger…

…and you need to go to hospital,

…well, that’s a relevant or significant present consequence…

…of a past action, so then…
Pedantia
…it’s a present perfect.

Will
Well?

Didactica
Which one?

Pedantia
You need to be…

Didactica
…specific.

Will
Oh, I don’t know! You cut your finger at an artery, and a six-foot-high fountain of blood is spurting all over the ceiling!

Pedantia
Oh! A bit of a…

Didactica
…nip then. Probably…

Pedantia
…hospital. So,

Didactica
…present perfect. I’ve…

Pedantia
…cut my finger.

Leslie
Correct!

Will
The Olympic Games started.

Didactica
Is this being mentioned…
Pedantia
…for the first time?

Will
Er, yes.

Didactica
Then it’s news.

Pedantia
So, the Olympic Games…

Didactica
…and have started. Present perfect…

Pedantia
…and to report…

Didactica
…and news. Official, or…

Pedantia
…and personal. You could also…

Didactica
…and tell people that you’ve passed…

Pedantia
…and your driving test if…

Didactica
…and you want to give…

Pedantia
…and them a lift for the first time…

Didactica
…and just want some attention!

Leslie
Correct!

Will
Last one, I lived in London for many years.
Pedantia
Are you…

Didactica
deceased?

Will
What? No!

Pedantia
Do you still…

Didactica
live in London?

Will
I guess so.

Pedantia
Then, I’ve lived in…

Didactica
London for many years.

Pedantia
Present perfect…

Didactica
…for a continuation or…

Pedantia
…repetition of something…

Didactica
…up to the present.

Leslie
Correct!

Will
You’re giving me the willies. Leslie, comfort me!

Leslie
The difference between the present perfect simple and past simple is not always easy to understand. Much of it relies on context and what the speaker thinks is important or
relevant. The bottom line is, the present perfect is used when past actions or states are important or connected to the present in some way. This could be past actions with present consequences, announcing new information, or the continuation of something from the past to the present. Finally, after we have used the present perfect simple, we switch to the past simple to go into specific detail. Don’t forget!

**Will**
Well done, ladies. Have I I divided in half. That's one each! Round two. The present perfect is often associated with a number of adverbs. These adverbs spell out J.E.A.N.Y. I want to know what they are.

**Pedantia**
Just.

**Didactica**
Ever.

**Pedantia**
Already or Always.

**Didactica**
Never.

**Pedantia**
Yet.

**Didactica**
Correct!

**Pedantia**
Although, the word genie…

**Didactica**
...is spelt 'G E N...

**Pedantia**
...I E’ so it would have been…

**Didactica**
...better to say…

**Pedantia**
...spell a homophone…
Didactica
…of genie.

Pedantia
It’s just a way of remembering.

Didactica
Accuracy…

Pedantia
…is important.

Didactica
And you forgot…

Pedantia
…for…

Didactica
…since…

Pedantia
…lately…

Didactica
…recently…

Will
Alright, yeah, we get it! You know, there’s something very eerie about you two. Leslie!

Leslie
Scarily accurate! The present perfect is associated with a number of adverbs, many of which mean ‘at some or any time up to now’. A useful way of remembering some of them is to use the mnemonic JEANY! Just, ever, already, never, yet! You could also say JEANYFSLR, with for, since, lately, and recently. But it doesn’t have the same ring to it.

Will
Good work. On to our last round, thank goodness. Look at these sentences and tell me if the use of time in each is correct. Have you been to France?

Didactica
The sentence is…
**Pedantia**
…correct. In these contexts…

**Didactica**
…when time is not mentioned, the speaker…

**Pedantia**
…is usually thinking of a period of…

**Didactica**
…time up to now.

**Leslie**
Correct!

**Will**
I’ve last seen John yesterday.

**Pedantia**
Yesterday is…

**Didactica**
…finished time…

**Pedantia**
We don’t use…

**Didactica**
…the present perfect …

**Pedantia**
…with finished time…

**Didactica**
…except in exceptional circumstances.

**Pedantia**
I saw John…

**Didactica**
…yesterday.

**Leslie**
Correct!
Will
Right. Last one. Have you seen John this morning?

Pedantia
What time is it…

Didactica
…in this context?

Will
Does it matter?

Pedantia
Yes.

Will
OK. It’s 11.30 am.

Didactica
Then the morning…

Pedantia
…is not over. It is…

Didactica
…still this morning…

Pedantia
…so we can use…

Didactica
…the present perfect.

Will
Well, what if it’s 3pm?

Didactica
Then the morning…

Pedantia
…is finished and becomes…

Didactica
…finished time.
Pedantia
So sorry.

Didactica
Past simple.

Leslie
Correct!

Will
Make them stop Leslie.

Leslie
All the hairs on the back of my neck are standing up. The present perfect is often used without a time word. In these cases, the speaker is generally thinking of a time period meaning up to the present. We can also use the present perfect with time periods that are not finished. For example, saying 'I've had a nice day today,' at 8 o'clock at night. If the time word represents a finished time period though, we use the past simple.

Will
Good job, ladies. You certainly know your grammar. Have twenty points.

Pedantia
That’s not…

Didactica
…a real number.

Will
That is true! But I don’t care! That was creepy. And accuracy is your speciality, so release the indescribable whatchamacallit. Freaky-deaky! I probably did the world a favour there. Saved some money on a prize too! And that brings us to the end of today’s Grammar Gameshow. Thanks for joining us. Say goodbye, Leslie.

Leslie
Sampai jumpa, Leslie!

Will
See you next time.