

Unit 5

TENSE: Present Perfect

TIME: Refers to the recent past; past actions that are still true

KEY PHRASES: Have; has (I *have* eaten; She *has* eaten)

STRUCTURE: Compound tense: **haber**, conjugated in the present + past participle

The Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect tense is a *compound tense*, which means that it requires an auxiliary, or *helping*, verb. This is true also in English, where the auxiliary is *have* or *has*, as in “I *have* spoken”; “She *has* studied.” In Spanish, the auxiliary is formed from the auxiliary verb **haber** which means “to have.” Do *not* confuse **haber** with **tener** (which means “to have; to possess”).

We often use the present perfect tense when speaking about something that was true in the past and *is still true*. The sentence, “I have lived here for ten years,” means that ten years ago I lived here, I still live here, and I have lived here all the time in between.

We also use this tense to indicate that an action was completed recently: I can’t go out to dinner because *I have eaten*.

An important aspect of the present perfect tense is that there is a *scope* of time, either stated or implied, which includes the present, and that the action(s) referred to within this scope are not time specific (as they are in the preterite).

In the sentence, “I’ve gone to the club three times this year,” the scope of time includes all of this year *until now*; we do not know *when* specifically (i.e., on which dates) the person visited the club. If you ask a person, “How have you been?” the implied scope is *lately*.

Formation of the Present Perfect Tense

Because the present perfect tense is a compound tense, you will be working with two verbs, not one. To form verbs in this tense you first conjugate **haber** in the present tense:

he	hemos
has	habéis
ha	han

The conjugated form of **haber** is then followed by the past participle of the desired verb. Most of the past participles in Spanish are regular, and we shall consider these first.

Regular Past Participles

The patterns for regularly formed past participles are below:

-ar verbs: drop the *-ar*; and replace it with **-ado**
-er verbs: drop the *-er*; and replace it with **-ido**
-ir verbs: drop the *-ir*; and replace it with **-ido**

hablar → **hablado**
 comer → **comido**
 vivir → **vivido**

hablar	comer	vivir
<i>(I have spoken, etc.)</i> he hablado hemos hablado has hablado habéis hablado ha hablado han hablado	<i>(I have eaten, etc.)</i> he comido hemos comido has comido habéis comido ha comido han comido	<i>(I have lived, etc.)</i> he vivido hemos vivido has vivido habéis vivido ha vivido han vivido

examples:

Yo **he hablado** con Roberto.
 I *have spoken* with Robert.

Tú **has estado** aquí por diez minutos.
 You *have been* here for ten minutes.

Tomás **ha sido** mi amigo por nueve años.
 Tom *has been* my friend for nine years.

Note:

1. The conjugated verb *haber* and the past participle are not separated by any other words.
2. Object pronouns precede the conjugated verb *haber*.

Nos hemos acostado.
 We *have gone to bed*.

¿Habéis recibido los regalos?
 Have you *received* the presents?

No lo han visitado.
 They *haven't visited* him.

Check the things that you have done today:

- _____ 1. He hablado por teléfono.
- _____ 2. He tomado café.
- _____ 3. He comido una ensalada.
- _____ 4. He comprado una camisa.
- _____ 5. He almorzado.
- _____ 6. Me he duchado.
- _____ 7. He contado mi dinero.
- _____ 8. He recibido un regalo.
- _____ 9. He cometido un error.
- _____ 10. He escuchado la radio.

_____ 11. Me he lavado el pelo.

_____ 12. He lavado el coche.

ejercicio
II-5-1

1. I have worked. _____
2. You have listened. _____
3. She has drunk the milk. _____
4. We have understood. _____
5. They have received a present. _____
6. We have sold the house. _____
7. Have you watched television today? _____
8. Where have they lived? _____
9. I have showered. _____
10. He has been with me. _____
11. You (*sing. form.*) have learned a lot. _____
12. Have you brushed your teeth? _____
13. He has called me six times. _____
14. I've run three miles. _____
15. She hasn't washed her hair. _____

Irregular Past Participles

All conjugations in the present perfect begin with **haber** conjugated in the present tense, followed by a past participle. Most past participles are regular (see the previous section). Below is a list of verbs which have irregularly formed past participles. These verbs form two distinct groups.

1. Most *-er* and *-ir* verbs in which a vowel immediately precedes the infinitive ending are formed regularly, but take an accent over the *i* in *-ido*. (This does *not* include verbs ending with *-uir*; such verbs are regular; for example, the past participle of *construir* is *construido*.)

atraer	to attract	atraído
caer	to fall	caído
creer	to believe	creído
leer	to read	leído
oír	to hear	oído

poseer	to possess	poseído
sonreír	to smile	sonreído
traer	to bring	traído

2. Other irregular past participles have no pattern and thus must be learned individually:

abrir	to open	abierto
cubrir	to cover	cubierto
decir	to say, tell	dicho
describir	to describe	descrito
descubrir	to discover	descubierto
devolver	to return (something)	devuelto
disolver	to dissolve	disuelto
envolver	to wrap, wrap up	envuelto
escribir	to write	escrito
freír	to fry	frito
hacer	to make, do	hecho
morir	to die	muerto
oponer	to oppose	opuesto
poner	to put, place	puesto
proveer	to provide, furnish	provisto
podrir	to rot, languish	podrido
resolver	to resolve	resuelto
romper	to break, break through or up	roto
ver	to see	visto
volver	to return	vuelto

examples:

He abierto la puerta.
I have opened the door.

¿**No has escrito** la carta?
Haven't you written the letter?

Él me **ha dicho** una mentira.
He has told me a lie.

No hemos hecho nada.
We haven't done anything.

¿**Habéis visto** la película?
Have you seen the movie?

Los huevos **se han podrido**.
The eggs have rotted.

¿Qué has hecho esta semana?

Escribe una "X" delante de todo lo que has hecho.

- _____ 1. He visto una película.
- _____ 2. He escrito una carta.
- _____ 3. He resuelto todos mis problemas.
- _____ 4. He leído un libro.
- _____ 5. He abierto las ventanas de mi casa.
- _____ 6. He dicho una mentira.

- _____ 7. He frito una hamburguesa.
- _____ 8. He roto un plato.
- _____ 9. He devuelto libros a la biblioteca.
- _____ 10. He envuelto un regalo.

ejercicio**II-5-2**

1. I have read twenty pages. _____
2. She has opened the book. _____
3. Where have you put the dishes? _____
4. The rabbit has died. _____
5. Have you told her the truth? _____
6. What have you seen? _____
7. The cook has fried all the eggs. _____
8. What have you done today? _____
9. The store has provided us with clothing. _____
10. She has broken another fingernail. _____
11. Has he resolved his problems? _____
12. We haven't said anything. _____
13. The politician has not told the truth. _____
14. Why haven't they returned? _____
15. What have you made for us? _____

ejercicio**II-5-3**

Advanced exercises: regular and irregular past participles

1. I have had the money for more than twenty years. _____
- _____

2. She has opened the window, and I have closed the door. _____

3. My neighbor's dog has barked (*ladrar*) all night long, and I haven't been able to sleep. _____

4. Where have you put your suitcase? _____
5. How many times have you brushed your teeth today? _____

6. Why haven't you shaved today? _____
7. For how many years have you known Charles? _____
8. You've been (arrived) late every day this week. _____
9. Have you (*pl. form.*) seen her? _____
10. The thieves have robbed our jewels and have broken all my records. _____

11. Have the newlyweds (*los recién casados*) returned from their honeymoon (*la luna de miel*)? _____

12. Your manners (*los modales*) have attracted me. _____
13. They have demonstrated their love for Beethoven's music. _____

14. If she is as rich as you say, then why has she robbed the bank? _____

15. The telephone has rung twenty times. Why haven't you answered it? _____

traducción

II-5-4

I want to go shopping because I haven't left this house in more than a week. I need to buy a pair of tennis shoes. I think I've lost my other pair. I've looked everywhere: under the bed, in the closet, in the basement, even in the trunk of my car, but I haven't been able to find them anywhere. My sister has borrowed them from time to time in the past, but she always returns things. Therefore, I've come to the conclusion that I've lost them forever and that if I want to play tennis again, I have to buy a new pair.

vocabulario

(to) borrow	pedir prestado
(to) come to the conclusion	llegar a la conclusión
even	hasta
everywhere	en todas partes
forever	para siempre
from time to time	de vez en cuando
(to) go shopping	ir de compras
nowhere; not anywhere	en ninguna parte
(to) return (a thing)	devolver
tennis shoes	los zapatos tenis
trunk	el maletero (baúl)
