

# FRENCH EQUIVALENT OF THE ENGLISH PRESENT PERFECT



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## Is there a present perfect tense in French?

The verb tense called the *present perfect* in English doesn't exist in French.

How is this be possible?

We use the present perfect tense all the time in English.  
How do the French get along without it?

The *present perfect* in English is used for events that happened in the past, but affect the present.

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## Examples of the present perfect in English:

She has lived here for three years.  
We have (already) been to Italy.  
They have (already) read this book.  
Have you ever played tennis?  
I have just broken my screen.

If this tense doesn't exist in French, what do you use instead of the present perfect?

Depending on the context, the present simple tense or *passé composé* is generally used.

When we say “She has lived here for three years”, we indicate that she started living here three years ago.

We may also use the *present perfect continuous* and say “She has been living here for three years”. Regardless, she still lives here. It’s not the same thing as saying “She lived here for three years”, which would be a completed action.

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To indicate that something started in the past, and continues into the present, use the *present tense* with *depuis*.

## Present Tense + Depuis + Amount of Time

She has lived here for three years.  
Elle **habite** ici **depuis trois ans**.

We use the present perfect with past actions that aren't defined by a specific time. In French, use the *passé composé* with *déjà*.

## Passé Composé + Déjà

We have (already) been to Italy.  
Nous **avons** (*déjà*) **été** en Italie.

They have (already) read this book  
Ils **ont** (*déjà*) **lu** ce livre.

You can also use the *passé composé* with *déjà* construction to ask if someone has ever done something.

Have you ever played tennis?  
Tu **as** *déjà* **joué** au tennis?

We use the present perfect to indicate things that have just happened. In French, use *venir de + infinitive*.

## Venir De + Infinitive

I have just broken my screen.  
Je **viens de casser** mon écran.

## MORE EXAMPLES:

**I have been cooking all morning, and I just finished the dessert.**

*J'ai fait la cuisine toute la matinée et je viens de finir le dessert.*

**I have been eating too many sweets lately.**

*J'ai trop mangé de sucreries dernièrement.*

**You have been on the phone for two hours.**

*Tu es au téléphone depuis deux heures.  
Ça fait deux heures que tu es au téléphone.*

**I have been playing tennis for a long time.**

*Je joue au tennis depuis longtemps.  
Ça fait longtemps que je joue au tennis.*