Performatives

We use the present simple with verbs which perform the action they describe (= performatives):

- I suggest you park outside the city and get the bus to the centre.
- We request that you read the terms and conditions carefully before signing.

Some verbs used as performatives with the present simple in affirmative (= positive) sentences (apologise, deny, guarantee, promise, suggest) have a similar meaning with either the present simple or the present continuous in negative sentences:

- I don’t deny / I’m not denying taking the books, but Miguel said it would be okay.

Modals are often used with performatives to make what we say more tentative or polite:

- We would advise you to arrive two hours before the flight leaves.
- I must beg you to keep this a secret.
Exercises

1.1 Complete each pair of sentences using the same verb (in a question form or negative if necessary) from the box. Use the present continuous; if this is not possible, use the present simple. Use \( ^* \) to add any words outside the gap and use contracted forms where appropriate.

A & B

attract consist of doubt feel fit

have like look

measure sound

1 a I hear you’re having your house repainted. How \( ^* \) is it looking? (or How \( ^* \) does it look?)

b I bought this new dress today. How \( ^* \) does it look?

2 a A: What are you doing with that ruler?  b: I \( ^* \) the area of the kitchen.

b The garden \( ^* \) 12 by 20 metres.

3 a I \( ^* \) whether I’ll get another chance to retake the exam.

b I suppose she might be at home tonight, but I \( ^* \) it.

4 a The new science museum currently \( ^* \) 10,000 visitors a month.

b Flowers \( ^* \) bees with their brightly-coloured petals.

5 a Carlos won’t work at the top of the 20-storey building because he \( ^* \) heights.

b /A. small: How’s the new job?  /B. small:  Well, at the moment, I \( ^* \) it at all.

6 a My car’s in the garage today. They \( ^* \) new brakes.

b I bought this jumper for Anna, but it \( ^* \) her so I’ll have to take it back.

7 a What’s your shirt made from? It \( ^* \) like silk.

b I won’t be coming to work today. I \( ^* \) very well.

8 a The roof of the house \( ^* \) only plastic sheets nailed down in a few places.

b Their school uniform \( ^* \) black trousers and a dark green jumper.

9 a Simon’s new song \( ^* \) quite good, but he doesn’t think he’s ready yet to perform it in public.

b /A. small: What’s that noise?  /B. small:  It \( ^* \) like a bird stuck in the chimney.

10 a Poulson \( ^* \) treatment for a knee injury, but should be fit to play on Saturday.

b My sister \( ^* \) long blonde hair. You’re bound to recognise her.

1.2 Cross out any improbable answers.

Dear Aunt Mara,

Thanks for your message. I (1) apologise / \( ^* \) apologising for not getting back to you sooner, but I’ve been incredibly busy. When I went into nursing, you warned me that it would be really hard work, but I (2) admit / \( ^* \) admitting that I didn’t really believe you. Don’t get me wrong – I (3) don’t suggest / \( ^* \) not suggesting that I’m not enjoying it. It’s incredibly rewarding, but I (4) now realise / \( ^* \) now realising how hard the job is. When I get home I just eat (not very well, I (5) confess / \( ^* \) not suggesting that I’m not enjoying it. It’s incredibly rewarding, but I (4) now realise / \( ^* \) now realising how hard the job is. When I get home I just eat (not very well, I (5) confess / \( ^* \) confessing) and go straight to bed. It doesn’t help that the bus journey to the hospital is so slow. I (6) consider / \( ^* \) considering buying a car, which will make things easier, I hope.

And what about you? How (7) do you find / \( ^* \) are you finding living in a village after so many years in the city? I (8) know / \( ^* \) knowing how difficult it is for you to travel such a long way, but it would be lovely if you could come and stay with me for a weekend. I’ve got plenty of room in my flat. I (9) don’t guarantee / \( ^* \) not guaranteeing to cook as well as you do, but I (10) promise / \( ^* \) promising to find time to show you around this lovely old town.

Hope to see you soon. Keep in touch.

Love,

Martina

Additional exercise 1 (page 240)
We often use the present simple and present continuous in stories and jokes in informal spoken English to create the impression that events are happening now. This can make them more direct and exciting and hold people’s attention:

- She goes up to this man and looks straight into his eyes. He’s not wearing his glasses, and he doesn’t recognise her ...
- This man’s playing golf when a kangaroo bounds up to him, grabs his club and hits his ball about half a mile ...

The main events are usually described in sequence using the present simple and longer background events are described using the present continuous.

In narratives and anecdotes the present simple can be used to highlight an event. Often it is used after past tenses and with a phrase such as suddenly or all of a sudden:

- I was sitting in the park, reading a newspaper, when all of a sudden this dog jumps at me.

We also use the present simple and present continuous in live commentaries (for example, on sports events) when the report takes place at the same time as the action:

- King serves to the left-hand court and Adams makes a wonderful return. She’s playing magnificent tennis in this match ...

We can use the present simple in phrases such as It says here, I hear, I gather, I see, I understand and They say, (Someone) says, (Someone) tells me to introduce news that we have heard, read, seen (e.g. on television), or been told. We can also use past tenses (e.g. It said here, I heard):

- I gather you’re worried about Pedro.
- Sophia tells me you’re thinking of emigrating.
- Professor Hendriks is at the conference and I hear she’s an excellent speaker.

The present simple is often used in news headlines to talk about events that have recently happened:

- SECOND QUAKE HITS JAPAN
- FIRE BREAKS OUT IN HOTEL ROOM
- SCIENTISTS FIND ICE ON THE MOON
- FOREIGN MINISTER RESIGNS

We can use the present simple to refer to the contents of books, films, newspapers, etc:

- Thompson gives a list of the largest European companies in Chapter 6.
- At the beginning of the book, three men find $4 million in a crashed plane.
- In the film, Loni Baranski takes the role of a private detective.

We can use the present continuous with adverbs such as always, constantly, continually or forever to emphasise that something is done so often that it is characteristic of a person, group or thing:

- a: I think I’ll stay here after all.   b: You’re constantly changing your mind.
- Jacob is a really kind person. He’s always offering to help me with my work.

We often use this pattern to indicate disapproval. The past continuous is used in a similar way with these adverbs (e.g. Was Olivia always asking you for money, too?).

We can use the present continuous to describe something we regularly do at a certain time:

- At eight o’clock I’m usually driving to work, so phone me on my mobile.
- Seven o’clock is a bit early. We’re generally eating then.
Exercises

2.1 Complete these sentences using the verbs in brackets. Use the present simple or present continuous. (A & B)

1. Rodriguez passes to Messi who just over the bar. Barcelona much more in this half. (pass – shoot – attack)
2. A man home late one night after the office Christmas party. His wife for him, and she to him. (arrive – wait – say)
3. I went to a concert yesterday in the Town Hall. In the middle of it, while the orchestra this man suddenly on his seat and to conduct them. (play – stand – start)

2.2 Complete what each person says about the news they have read or heard using the present tense phrases in C.

1. Government gives health service billions
   I see the government's giving the health service a lot more money.
2. Vegecorp to sack 1,000 workers.
   Vegecorp are going to
3. President Cartman announced a new public holiday on his birthday, August 6th. He made the announcement...
   we're going to have

2.3 Expand one of the sets of notes below to complete each dialogue. (E)

- continually / change / mind / forever / moan / work / forever / ask me / money
- constantly / criticise / driving / always / complain / handwriting

1. A: I can't read this. B: You're... always complaining about my handwriting...
2. A: Can I borrow €10? B: You're...
3. A: That was a dangerous thing to do. B: You're...
4. A: I think I'll stay here after all. B: You're...
5. A: I had a bad day at the office again. B: You're...

2.4 Complete each pair of sentences using the same verb (in negative form if necessary). Use to add any words outside the gap. (D & E)

1. a: Shall I phone at six? b: No, we usually dinner at that time.
   I a vegetarian.
2. a: Gielman Henry V in the latest production at the Royal Theatre.
   They constantly loud music until the early hours of the morning.
3. a: I normally the children to school at 8:30. Perhaps we could meet at 9:00.
   In his 2007 book, Wall a controversial view of Britain's role in the war.
Unit 3

Past simple and present perfect

**Time expressions that refer to the present, such as this morning / week / month and today, can be used with either past simple or present perfect verbs.**

If we think of this morning (etc.) as a past, completed time period, then we use the past simple; if we think of this morning (etc.) as a time period which includes the present moment, then we use the present perfect. Compare:

- I didn’t shave this morning. (= the morning is over and I didn’t shave) and
- I haven’t shaved this morning. (= it is still the morning and I might shave later)

**In a sentence which includes a time clause with since, we generally prefer a past simple verb in the time clause and a present perfect verb in the main clause. The time clause refers to a particular point in the past:**

- Since Mr Dodson became president unemployment has increased. (rather than … has become …)
- She hasn’t been able to play tennis since she broke her arm. (rather than … has broken …)

Note, however, that we use the present perfect in the time clause if the two situations described in the main clause and time clause extend until the present:

- Have you met any of your neighbours since you’ve lived here? (not … you lived …)

**With time clauses introduced by after, when, until, as soon as, once, by the time and the time expressions the minute / second / moment the past simple refers to past, completed events and the present perfect refers to future events.** Compare these examples:

- After she left hospital (past), she had a long holiday. and
- After Lucas has left school (future), he will be spending six months in India.
- The minute I got the news about Anna (past) I telephoned my parents. and
- I’ll contact you the minute I’ve got my exam results. (future)

In the time clause in sentences like this it is possible to use the past perfect instead of the past simple (e.g. After she had left …) and the present simple instead of the present perfect (e.g. After Lucas leaves …) with the same meaning (see also Unit 5).

**In news reports, you will often read about or hear recent events introduced with the present perfect, and then the past simple or other past tenses are used to give details:**

- A Russian spacecraft has returned safely to Earth with its two passengers. US astronaut Scott Keane and Russian cosmonaut Olga Kaleri landed in the early hours of Wednesday.
- An American woman has become the first person to make 2 million contributions to Wikipedia. Esther Miller began editing the site eight years ago.

**After the pattern It / This / That is / will be the first time … we generally use the present perfect in the next clause:**

- That’s the first time I’ve seen Jan look embarrassed. (reporting a past event)
- It won’t be the first time she has voted against the government. (talking about a future event)

Note that after It / This / That was the first time … we generally use the past perfect (see Unit 5):

- It was the first time I’d talked to Dimitra outside the office.
Exercises

Complete each sentence with a verb from the box. Use the present perfect or past simple, with a negative form where necessary.

**A**

1. **A** small: Shall I make us some dinner? It’s already eight o’clock.
   **B** small: No, thanks. I ______________ to the dentist this afternoon and my mouth hurts too much to eat anything.

2. I ______________ three lectures today and I still have two more later this afternoon.

3. It was so hot today that I ______________ shorts and a T-shirt at work.

4. We ______________ £200 on food this month and there’s another week to go before I get paid.

5. **A** small: Do you want a lift home?
   **B** small: No, I __________________ this morning because my alarm clock didn’t go off, so I need to work late.

6. I ______________ much of the report yet, but I have to finish it by the weekend.

Complete the sentences with the pairs of verbs from the box. Choose the most appropriate tense — present perfect or past simple.

**B**

1. Maria ______________ to go swimming since she ______________ in the river.

2. Since she ______________ at the company she ______________ a day off through illness.

3. Since he ______________ the girl from a house fire, he ______________ on TV almost every day.

4. A lot ______________ since I last ______________ to you.

5. Since I ______________ to drive I ______________ much more independent

6. Stefan’s reading ______________ enormously since he ______________ at school.

One sentence in each pair is wrong. Correct it by replacing the past simple with the present perfect of the italicised verb.

**C**

1. a. Remember that after you ______________ the contract you won’t be able to change your mind.
   b. Carlo’s injury only became apparent after he ______________ to play for Real Madrid.

2. a. As soon as I ______________ college I want to travel around Australia.
   b. I didn’t have time to check the essay. I handed it in as soon as I ______________ it.

3. a. By the time Sarah ______________ to work the meeting had ______________.
   b. I’ll probably have finished breakfast by the time the children ______________ up.

4. a. I recognised her the moment I ______________ her laugh.
   b. I’ll tell you what time we’re coming the moment I ______________ from Emil.

Here are some extracts from a television news report. Choose the more appropriate tense — present perfect or past simple — for the verbs in brackets.

**D & E**

1. When President Nelson ______________ (arrives) in Paris this evening, it will be the first time she ______________ (visit) Europe since her election victory in May.

2. The Victoria Hospital in Milltown ______________ (close) to new patients after more cases of food poisoning. Three elderly patients ______________ (die) last week in the outbreak.

3. The rate of inflation ______________ (drop) to 4.8%. It’s the first time in nearly two years that the rate ______________ (fall) below 5%.

4. Nearly 600 laptops ______________ (steal) from Ministry of Defence staff over the past five years. However, a spokesperson ______________ (insist) that there had been no security problems as none of the computers ______________ (hold) secret information.
Past continuous and past simple

When we talk about two events or activities that went on over the same period of past time, we can often use the past continuous or the past simple for both:

- Mia was reading to the children while Ben was washing up. (or ... read ... washed up.)

Using the past continuous emphasises that the event or activity (‘was reading’) was in progress during the past period of time (‘while Ben was washing up’). Compare:

- When I was learning / learned to drive I was living with my parents.

Was learning emphasises that the activity was in progress (‘I had lessons during this time’) and learned emphasises completion (‘I passed my test during this time’).

When we talk about two or more past completed events that followed one another, we use the past simple, not the past continuous, for both (see also Unit 5C):

- She got up when the alarm clock went off.

We usually use the past simple rather than the past continuous to talk about repeated past actions:

- We went to Spain three times last year.
- Did you drive past her house every day?

However, we can use the past continuous, particularly in spoken English, when we want to emphasise that repeated actions went on for a limited and temporary period of past time:

- When Kata was in hospital, we were visiting her twice a day. (or ... visited ...)
- To lose weight before the race, I wasn’t eating any biscuits for weeks. (or ... I didn’t eat ...)

or to talk about something that happened surprisingly often:

- Last week I was having to bring work home every night to get it all done. (or ... had ...)
- When the builders were here I was making them cups of tea all the time. (or ... made ...)

When we talk about two or more past completed events that followed one another, we use the past simple, not the past continuous, for both (see also Unit 5C):

- She was shaking with anger as she left the hotel.

We can use either the past continuous or past simple (or past perfect; see Unit 5E) with some verbs to talk about things we intended to do but didn’t:

- We were meaning to call in and see you, but Marc wasn’t feeling well. (or We meant ...)

Also: consider + -ing, expect to, hope to, intend to, plan to / on + -ing, think about / of + -ing, want to

These verbs (with the exception of mean and expect) and wonder about can also be used with the present and past continuous to report what we might do in the future. The past continuous is less definite than the present continuous:

- I was thinking of going to China next year, but it depends how much money I’ve got. (less definite than I’m thinking of going ...)
- We were wondering about inviting Eva over tomorrow. (less definite than We’re wondering about ...)

Reminder ↦ A6–A8, A13

A: past now

past

was reading / read

past

was washing up / washed up

C: past now

past

was washing up / washed up

D: past now

past

was washing up / washed up
Exercises

4.1 Complete the sentences using these pairs of verbs. Use the past simple in one gap and the past continuous in the other. A–D

come – show  get – go  hope – give  live – spend
look – see  play – break  start – check in

1 Just as I _______ into the bath all the lights _______ off.
2 I _______ some work that I have to finish by Monday.
3 When I _______ in Paris, I _______ three hours a day travelling to and from work.
4 A friendly American couple _______ chatting to him as he _______ at the hotel reception.
5 I bumped into Lena last week. She _______ a lot better than when I last _______ her.
6 My boss _______ just as I _______ everyone my holiday photos.
7 I _______ badminton four times a week before I _______ my ankle.

This time, use the same tense, either past simple or past continuous, in both spaces.

add – taste  go off – light  not listen – explain  push – run  not watch – dream

8 The smoke alarm _______ when he _______ a candle underneath it.
9 I can’t remember how to answer this question. I must confess that I _______ while the teacher _______ it to us.
10 She _______ more salt to the soup, and then it _______ much better.
11 Although the television was on, I _______ it. Instead I _______ about my holidays.
12 She _______ the door and _______ into the room.

4.2 Look again at numbers 1, 4, 7 and 11 in 4.1. Which of these sentences could have both verbs in the past simple? What difference in meaning, if any, would there be?

4.3 Complete this email with either the past simple or the past continuous form of the verbs in brackets. Where alternatives are possible, think about any difference in meaning. A–C

I _______ (buy) a new alarm clock the other day in Taylor’s the jewellers, when I actually _______ (see) somebody shoplifting. I’d just finished paying for my clock and as I _______ (turn) round, an elderly woman _______ (slowly put) a silver plate into a bag that she _______ (carry). Then she _______ (walk) over to another part of the shop and _______ (pick up) an expensive-looking watch a number of times. When she _______ (think) that nobody _______ (look), she _______ (drop) it into the bag. Before I _______ (have) a chance to tell the staff in the shop, she _______ (notice) that I _______ (watch) her and _______ (hurry) out. Unfortunately for her, two police officers _______ (walk) past just at that moment and she _______ (run) straight into them.
Past perfect and past simple

When we give an account of a sequence of past events we usually put these events in chronological order using the past simple. If we want to refer to an event out of order – that is, an event which happened before the last event in the sequence we have written or spoken about – we can use the past perfect. Study the use of the past perfect and past simple in the text on the right:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of events:</th>
<th>1 gave present</th>
<th>2 wrote email</th>
<th>3 made mistake</th>
<th>4 realised mistake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Order events are mentioned:</td>
<td>1 wrote email</td>
<td>2 had given present (out of order)</td>
<td>3 realised mistake</td>
<td>4 had made mistake (out of order)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can use either the past perfect or past simple (and often past continuous and past perfect continuous; see Units 4 and 7) when we talk about things that we intended to do, but didn’t or won’t now do in the future:

- I had hoped to visit the gallery before I left Florence, but it’s closed on Mondays. (or I hoped ..., I was hoping ..., I had been hoping ...)
- Aron planned to retire at 60, but we have persuaded him to stay for a few more years. (or Aron had planned ..., Aron was planning ..., Aron had been planning ...)
Exercises

5.1 The events mentioned in the magazine article are listed below. Write the order in which the events are mentioned and then the order in which they occurred (or were thought to occur). Compare the two lists and consider why the past perfect (in italics) was used.

A & B

Events mentioned in text

I moved ...
I learnt ...
The property developer decided ...
I heard ...
I first saw the old house
A property developer bought it
I nearly gave up ...
I put together enough money ...
It was empty

Order events are mentioned in text

2

Order of events

2

5.2 Underline the correct options. In some cases only one is correct, and in others both are correct.

C & D

1. As Jonas was introduced to Mrs Lopez, he realised that he had met / met her before.
2. During the previous week, I had been / went to the gym every evening.
3. He denied that he had taken / took the money from the office.
4. I thought it was the best film I had seen / saw in my life.
5. The boy told me that he had lost / lost his train ticket and didn't know how he would get home.
6. At the conference, scientists reported that they had found / found a cure for malaria.
7. The teacher guessed that some of the children had cheated / cheated in the exam.
8. She said that she had made up / made up her mind who to vote for, and that I couldn't persuade her to change.
9. Thomas explained that he had gone / went home early because he felt ill.
10. When I asked Maria about Jakub, she admitted that she hadn't heard / didn't hear from him for ages.
11. The waiter took my plate away before I had finished / finished eating.
12. Julia said she didn't want any dinner. Apparently, she had eaten / ate already.

5.3 Expand these sets of notes using the past perfect to begin each sentence.

E

I had expected / operation / painful
I had hoped / leave / by nine
He had not meant / insult / her
Lara had not intended / become / dentist
I had not thought of / cook rabbit

1. I had hoped to leave by nine, but I overslept and missed the train.
2. She always wanted to be a vet.
3. I had not thought of cooking rabbit, but I didn't feel like eating.
4. I had never been to this place before, until Andrei told me how tasty it was.
5. Daria was very offended.