



The Lexical Aspect

The semantic property of verbs is called the lexical aspect. This includes the idea that some verbs have a natural and clear end point and some other verbs do not.

The lexical aspect affects the meaning of the present perfect in English.

01

STATIVE Verbs

Stative verbs express states and situations rather than actions. The states they express are continuous and non-changing while they last, which is normally for a long or indefinite time.

Stative verbs do not have an implicit end point. For example, the verb phrase, 'have blue eyes' is of indefinite duration.



Present Perfect

My father has **been** a United fan for over 50 years



When used with present perfect then, stative verbs often express situations that started in the past and continue into the present because the verb has no natural end point. The period of time is often expressed using an adverb such as 'for' or 'since'.

02

ACTIVITY Verbs

Activity verbs belong to the larger group of dynamic verbs. Activity verbs express actions with no implicit end point and can occur for an unspecified period of time.

Activity verbs can express actions that are either continuous



or changing



Present Perfect

He has **worked** for that company for 15 years



When used with present perfect, continuous activity verbs can express activities that started in the past, and continue into the present, because these verbs have no end point.

The plant has **grown** a meter in the last six months



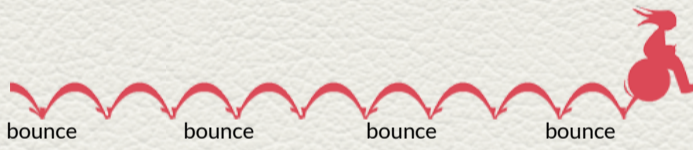
Alternatively, activity verbs which express change express actions that occur over a period of time, but are completed at time of speaking.

03

ACHIEVE Verbs

Achievement verbs express actions that are instantaneous. Because they are instantaneous, achievement verbs have logical end point - they end almost as soon as they begin.

They can be divided into two groups - punctual verbs which express actions that end as soon as they begin.

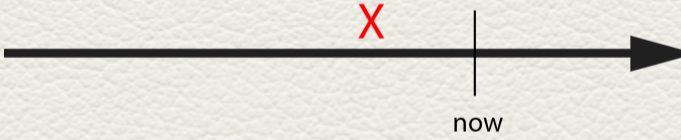


And achievement verbs that involve a change of state, like 'win' in 'win the race'

and which suggests some preliminary activity before the act expressed by the verb - before you win the race, you must run it.



The flight from Berlin has just **arrived**.



Present Perfect

Present perfect sentences that contain achievement verbs express recently completed actions.

04

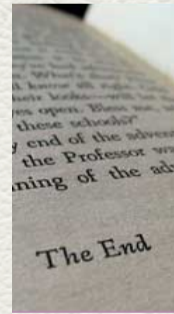
ACCOMPLISH Verbs

Accomplishment verbs have a logical end point.

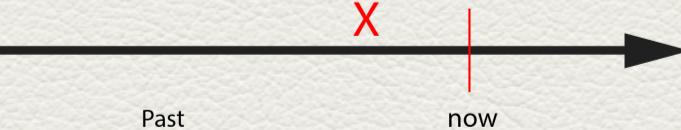
eat an apple



read a book



I have already **seen** the movie.



Present Perfect

Present perfect sentences which contain accomplishment verbs can express actions that occur at an unspecified time in the past, and which have current relevance.

Some verbs can be more than one kind of verb according to lexical aspect. It is often the words that go with the verb that show you the difference.



Activity Verb

'I've taken photos since I was young'



Accomplishment Verb

'I've just taken a photo of that sunset'