

Unit 14

Present perfect (I have done) (2)

a Study this example conversation:

Dave: Have you travelled a lot, Nora?
Nora: Yes, I've been to 47 different countries.
Dave: Really? Have you ever been to China?
Nora: Yes, I've visited China twice.
Dave: What about India?
Nora: No, I've never been to India.



When we talk about a period of time that continues up to the present, we use the present perfect. Nora and Dave are talking about the places Nora has visited in her life (which is a period continuing up to the present).

Here are some more examples:

- 'Have you read *Hamlet*?' 'No, I haven't read any of Shakespeare's plays.'
- How many times have you been to the United States?
- Susan really loves that film. She's seen it eight times.
- Sam has lived in Belfast all his life. (or Sam has always lived in Belfast.)

We often use **ever** and **never** with the present perfect:

- Have you ever eaten caviar?
- We have never had a car.

We often use the present perfect after a *superlative* (see **Unit 104d**):

- What a boring film! It's the most boring film I've ever seen.

b You have to use the present perfect with **This is the first time ...**, **It's the first time ...** etc.

Study this example situation:

- Ron is driving a car. He is very nervous and unsure because it's his first time behind the wheel of a car. You can say:
This is the first time he has driven a car. (not 'drives')
- or: **He has never driven a car before.**

Here are some more examples:

- Tom has lost his passport again. **It's the second time he has lost it.**
- **Is this the first time you've been in hospital?**

c Use the present perfect to say that you have never done something or that you haven't done something during a period of time which continues up to the present:

- I have never smoked.
- I haven't smoked for three years. (not 'I don't smoke for ...')
- I haven't smoked since September. (not 'I don't smoke since ...')
- Jill hasn't written to me for nearly a month.
- Jill has never driven a car.

For the difference between **for** and **since** see **Unit 19b**.