



Learn English Through Stories

T Series

Upper - Intermediate

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Perfect Tenses 3 by K S Sandhu

An Exciting New Electric Car

Last week, Jane passed her driving test on her third attempt. She has felt very happy since that moment. "I've driven a normal car many times," she told her friend Lucy, "but I have never tried an electric car before."

Yesterday, Jane and Lucy visited an car exhibition in the city. A small American company called Markton Automobiles has just announced that its new electric car, the Lexington X1, will go into production this year. The company made the announcement at last month's Auto Show in Geneva. Jane and Lucy listened carefully to the presentation.

The presenter explained the problems that electric cars have faced so far. Manufacturers have not been able to produce a car that can really compete with petrol cars. There have been two major difficulties: speed and distance. Up until now, electric cars have been either too slow or unable to travel far enough without recharging their batteries.

However, Markton Automobiles claims that they have overcome these difficulties with a new type of solar panel which continually recharges the batteries while the car is moving. The company has not given the press all the exact details yet, but they have already tested the car successfully under all kinds of weather conditions.

A Japanese company first designed the engine in 2007. Over the last few years, Markton has adapted the design and increased its power. The company invited ten journalists to test-drive the new car last week. Their reports have been mainly positive.

Jane was very excited. "I have just seen the Lexington X1," she said to Lucy. "It looks amazing! I have wanted an electric car since I passed my test."

Lucy smiled. "The boss at my office has given me a new job this week too, so maybe I can buy one soon. We have used all our savings on other things, but this car looks like the future."

After the presentation, the two friends spoke to one of the engineers. He told them, "We have tested the car in rain, snow, and hot sun. It has performed very well. We have overcome the main problems that other electric cars still have."

Jane asked many questions because she has always been curious about new technology. She has read a lot about electric cars this year, but she has never seen one so advanced.

On the way home, Jane said, "Electric cars have changed a lot recently. I think I will buy one when they are available. I have driven ordinary cars for years, but this feels like a real transformation in transportation."

Lucy agreed. "Yes, the industry has made great progress. A few years ago nobody believed this was possible, but now it has become reality."

That evening, Jane wrote in her diary: "Today has been an exciting day. I have learned so much about the new Lexington X1. I have decided to save money for an electric car. Life has become more interesting since I passed my driving test!"

Jane has lived in the same town all her life, but now she dreams of long journeys in a silent, clean car. She has not felt this enthusiastic about anything for a long time.

The next morning she told her mother, "Markton has just announced their new car. I have already imagined myself driving it!"

Questions:

Question 1: When did Jane pass her driving test?

Question 2: What has Markton Automobiles just announced?

Question 3: What two major difficulties have electric cars had so far?

Question 4: How has Markton overcome the problems with speed and distance?

Question 5: When did a Japanese company first design the engine?

Question 6: What have the journalists' reports been like?

Question 7: How long has Jane wanted an electric car?

Question 8: Has Jane driven an electric car before?

Question 9: What has Jane decided to do after visiting the exhibition?

Question 10: What does Jane say has become more interesting since she passed her driving test?

Answers:

Answer 1: She passed her driving test last week.

Answer 2: Markton Automobiles has just announced that its new electric car, the Lexington X1, will go into production this year.

Answer 3: The two major difficulties have been speed and distance.

Answer 4: They have overcome the problems with a new type of solar panel which continually recharges the batteries.

Answer 5: A Japanese company first designed the engine in 2007.

Answer 6: Their reports have been mainly positive.

Answer 7: She has wanted an electric car since she passed her test.

Answer 8: No, she has never tried an electric car before.

Answer 9: She has decided to save money for an electric car.

Answer 10: Life has become more interesting since she passed her driving test.

38 Present perfect or past simple?

1 Differences in use

PRESENT PERFECT	PAST SIMPLE
Single or repeated actions in the past, when we don't know the date of the action or it isn't important: <i>I've driven an automatic car before.</i> <i>We've been to the theatre many times.</i> Time expressions: <i>before, ever, already, just</i> and <i>yet</i>	Single or repeated actions that happened at a definite time in the past: <i>I drove a racing car in the summer.</i> <i>We went to the theatre twice last month.</i> Time expressions: <i>yesterday, last month, in 2007, etc.</i>
Situations that started in the past and are still continuing: <i>Tom has worked at the garage for two years.</i> (He's working there now.) with <i>for</i> + period of time, or <i>since</i> + date	Situations that started and finished in the past: <i>Alex worked at the garage for two years.</i> (He isn't working there now.) with <i>for</i> to say how long the situation lasted
One or more completed actions in a time period that is still continuing: <i>He's sold fifteen cars this month.</i> Time expressions: <i>this morning/evening, today, so far, etc.</i>	Completed actions in a time period that is finished: <i>He sold twenty cars in August.</i> <i>I sold my Toyota two weeks ago.</i> with <i>ago</i> to mean '(a period) before now'

- ⚠ It is sometimes difficult to hear /v/ in *I've, we've, you've, they've* and /z/ in *he's* and *she's*. It is easy to confuse the present perfect and past simple:
PAST SIMPLE *I finished work. He started early. We carried the bags.*
PRESENT PERFECT *I've finished work. He's started early. We've carried the bags.*
The other words around the verb can usually help you to understand which form you hear:
I finished work an hour ago. I've just finished work.

🔊 Pronunciation ► 1.18

2 Giving news

We often use the present perfect to introduce new information:
I've decided to get a new car. I'm going to look at some tomorrow.
'Julian has passed his driving test.' 'Oh, that's good news!'

News reports often start a new item with the present perfect:
The Terracotta Army exhibition has opened in London.
There has been an earthquake in southern China.

After we have introduced new information with the present perfect, we usually give more details with the past simple:

Julian has passed his driving test. He took it on Wednesday.
The Terracotta Army exhibition has opened in Paris. It was opened by the Minister of Culture.

Practice

1 Choose the correct words in *italics*.

- 0 She's been to the doctor twice (*this month*) *last month*.
 1 I've driven this car *many times* / *in 2007*.
 2 Jane *passed* / *has passed* her driving test last week.
 3 Steve loves his job. He *did* / *'s done* it since he was twenty-two.
 4 Caroline's bought a lot of clothes *this year* / *two years ago*.
 5 Rick *has finished* / *finished* the course six months ago.
 6 'George has arrived.' 'Really? When *has he got* / *did he get* here?'

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Complete the text with suitable forms of the words in brackets. Use the present perfect or past simple. In one place, both are possible.

◀ 3.11 Listen and check.

Electric cars – Latest update

A small American car manufacturer (0) *has just announced* (just announce) that its experimental electric car, the Lexington X1, will go into production this year. Markton Automobiles, of Detroit, Michigan, (1) (make) the announcement at last month's Auto Show in Geneva.

Although there are now many electric cars on the market, so far manufacturers

(2) (not be able) to produce one that can really compete with existing petrol cars. There are two major problems – speed and distance. Up until now, electric cars

(3) (be) either too slow or unable to travel far enough without recharging their batteries. Markton Automobiles claim that they (4) (overcome)

these difficulties with a new type of solar panel which continually recharges the batteries. The company (5) (not give) the press exact details yet, but they claim they

(6) (already test) the car successfully under all kinds of weather conditions.

A Japanese company (7) (first design) the engine in 2007. But over the last few years Markton (8) (adapt) the design and increased its power.

The company (9) (invite) ten journalists to test-drive the new car last week.

Their reports (10) (be) mainly positive, although we will have to wait for the full test results before we know if this really is the electric car that everyone is waiting for.

3 GRAMMAR IN USE Complete the conversation with words and phrases from the box. There are three extra words or phrases. ▶ 3.12 Listen and check.

hasn't told told has told have you done 've used was 's been
 happened had just has decided 've just fallen has given

ALEC Hi, Judi, I'm home!

JUDI Shh. Don't disturb the children. They (0) *'ve just fallen* asleep.

ALEC OK. I'll be quiet. So, how are things? What (1) today?

JUDI Not much. It (2) a quiet day really. What about you?

ALEC Quite an exciting day. The boss (3) me a new job!

JUDI Wow. That's fantastic. What (4)?

ALEC Sylvia (5) to move Eddie to the Toronto office. So I've got his job!

She (6) me about it at lunchtime. It (7) a real surprise!

JUDI Well, I hope it's more money because we (8) all our savings!

UNIT 38

1 1 many times 2 passed 3 's done 4 this year 5 finished 6 did he get

2 1 made 2 have not been able 3 have been 4 have overcome 5 has not given 6 have already tested 7 first designed 8 has adapted 9 invited 10 were/have been

3 1 have you done 2 's been 3 has given 4 happened 5 has decided 6 told 7 was 8 've used