

Ever and never with the present perfect

CEFR A2-B1 • 20 questions • A4 / US Letter

Ever means at any time up to now, and it lives in questions. Never means at no time up to now, and it lives in statements.

The rule

Ever: any time up to now

- Ever in a question means at any time in your life: "Have you ever eaten sushi?"
- The answer can be yes or no, and the time is not named: "Yes, I have", "No, I have not."
- Ever goes after the auxiliary and before the past participle: have ever been, has ever seen.
- Do not use ever in a positive answer. "Yes, I have ever been there" is wrong; say "Yes, I have been there."

Never: at no time up to now

- Never is the negative partner of ever: "I have never been to Canada."
- Never already carries the negative, so do not add not: "I have not never" is impossible.
- Never goes in the same middle position: have never tried, has never met.
- Never before adds the idea that this is the first time: "I have never seen snow before."

The present perfect and life experience

- Use the present perfect when the exact time is not important or not named: "She has never ridden a horse."
- Use the past simple when you name a finished time: "Did you ever meet him at school?" refers to a particular period.
- Ever and never without a named time belong with the present perfect.
- With a finished time expression, use the past simple: "I never went there last year."

Other patterns with ever and never

- A superlative plus ever means the best or worst in your whole life: "the most exciting match I have ever seen."
- Hardly ever means almost never, and it works with the present simple: "I hardly ever drink coffee."
- If ever introduces a rare possibility: "If you ever visit Rome, call me."
- Never mind and never again are fixed phrases, not part of this pattern.

Short answers and follow-up questions

- A short answer repeats the auxiliary: "Have you ever been there?" — "Yes, I have" or "No, I haven't."
- A follow-up with the past simple asks for detail: "When did you go?"
- The order matters: present perfect for the experience, past simple for the story.

- To be emphatic, put never at the front or stress it: "I have never done that."

Questions

Write your answer on the line under each question. Check your work with the answer key on the last page.

1. Have you ___ visited Australia?

2. I have ___ been to Australia.

3. She has ___ eaten raw fish.

4. Have they ___ worked in another country?

5. That is the best meal I have ___ had.

6. I have ___ seen snow before.

7. Did you ___ meet him when you were at school?

8. He has ___ tried skiing.

9. Have you ever ___ a horse?

10. I have never ___ that film.

11. Have you ever ___ to Japan?

12. She has never ___ a horse.

13. Have you ___ forgotten your keys?

14. I have ___ been so tired in my life.

15. Have you ever been to Rome? Yes, I ___.

16. He has never ___ abroad before.

17. I hardly ___ drink coffee at night.

18. Have you ever seen this painting? No, I ___ not.

19. She did not ___ visit her grandmother last year.

20. Have you ever ___ a famous person?

Answer key

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1. **ever** — A present perfect question about life experience uses ever.
2. **never** — The negative statement about experience uses never after the auxiliary.
3. **never** — Never goes between has and the past participle in this present perfect sentence.
4. **ever** — Ever asks about any time in their life up to now.
5. **ever** — The superlative pattern takes ever to mean the best in my whole life.
6. **never** — Never with before expresses the first-time meaning.
7. **ever** — The past simple question about a finished period uses ever.
8. **never** — The present perfect statement expresses no experience at any time.
9. **ridden** — The present perfect needs the past participle ridden after have.
10. **seen** — Never sits between have and the past participle seen.
11. **been** — The present perfect of be uses the past participle been.
12. **ridden** — Has never takes the past participle ridden to describe experience.
13. **ever** — The life experience question uses ever before the past participle.
14. **never** — Never is the negative partner of ever in this present perfect statement.
15. **have** — The short answer repeats the auxiliary have.
16. **travelled** — The present perfect needs the past participle travelled after has never.
17. **ever** — Hardly ever means almost never and fits the present simple sentence.
18. **have** — The short negative answer repeats the auxiliary have from the present perfect question.
19. **ever** — In a past simple negative sentence, ever emphasises not at any time.
20. **met** — The present perfect question uses the past participle met after ever.