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HiIn post#54 and post#55 of this thread, I've been told that the sentence "He climbed a/the mountain" (past simple tense) doesn't show a complete action. But when I read about "past simple tense" on this website, I found this: We use the past simple to describe an action that started in the past and ended in the past. It could be something that happened twenty years ago or something that happened two minutes ago. It started. It stopped. Its over. The Past Simple Tense Examples:We ate mangoes.They played cricket.I watched the TV.You broke the window pane.He posted a question on EO forum. etc etc... As the website says, "past simple tense" shows a complete action, as it is clear from the examples above. But the native speakers in the above linked thread said it doesn't show a complete action. I'm confused. Would you please clear up this confusion and help me understand what the true story is? Thanks very much Who are you talking about, Lun? If you mean PaulQ, then he said that it doesn't indicate a single complete action in the context that he provided. And he was right. No it isn't. The context is A: "And what was it that you used to do when you wanted to keep fit?"B: "We climbed the/a mountain". There are several situations where simple past can indicate a continuing state or action. The first that comes to mind is this: (1) The rain fell more and more heavily.(2) The grandfather clock stood in the corner of the room. Here the verbs intrinsically indicate continuing states, at least with that subject (rain falling, furniture standing in a place). As for climbing, it's a long-lasting activity, so it can be adapted to a similar situation. We need to give it the right context: (3) He climbed the mountain before night fell.(4) He climbed the mountain more carefully as night drew close. (3), like most uses, implies the completion of the action, but (4) frames it as a continuing action without implying completion. 'He was climbing' would not be used in that sentence, though it would in some similar ones: (5) He was climbing the mountain more carefully because night was drawing close.Here (5) is viewed in the middle of the action, whereas (4) is viewed looking back on a stretch of the action. Thank you, Entangled, for this admirable post, which I hope has done much to clarify the situation.To present the simple past as always indicating a completed action is a gross oversimplification. Last edited: Jan 16, 2018 Who are you talking about, Lun? I mean PaulQ - he said that the sentence "He climbed a/the mountain" (as it stands) doesn't show a complete action. But the website that I linked says that past simple tense does show a complete action.It is perfectly clear from the examples sentences too. Have a look: We ate mangoes. -> the action of eating the mangoes is complete.They played cricket. -> the action of playing cricket is complete.I watched the TV. -> the action of watching the TV is complete.You broke the window pane. -> the action of breaking the window pane is complete.He posted a question on EO forum. -> the action of posting the question is complete. PaulQ said exactly opposite to what the website says... I'm confused I mean PaulQ - he said that the sentence "He climbed a/the mountain" (as it stands) doesn't show a complete action PaulQ means that, in the context of the preceding sentence, the sentence shows multiple completed actions, not a completed action. Remember that the word "a" in English means "one".He doesn't say it shows an incompleted action. He does not disagree with the website.In the quoted text, this sentence is a reply to a question. The question asks "what was it you used to do". So the answering sentence is about what you used to do, which is multiple actions. We ate mangoes while we walked. -> not completeI watched the TV while I waited for her. -> neither is completeThey played cricket like professionals. -> not completeWhere there is some kind of phrase drawing attention to a continuing state, the simple past can (sometimes) be interpreted as continuing. I don't know whether this is common. It is still a good generalization to say that simple past usually means completed action, but you have to be aware of such things as the common use of 'stood', 'sat', 'lay' etc. for locations, and of the repeated or habitual meaning, and that other examples like mine can be constructed. I agree with TT - excellent analysis by ETB (as always, really). I think we may be touching on a previously discussed subject here, having to do with whether or not past-tense verbs in the English language are always perfective, in other words whether or not they always express a completed action, as opposed to having internal structure (ongoing, continuous and habitual actions). As TT rightly points out, opinions have been heard here whereby all past-tense verbs are perfective, which I, too, see as a gross oversimplification. I myself have been known to quote a simple sentence from Wiki saying this, rather baldly and categorically (and rightly, I believe):English has neither a simple perfective nor imperfective aspect;Perfective aspect - WikipediaAll of which means that, of course, context alone can tell us whether a past-tense action is complete or incomplete. We ate mangoes while we walked. -> not completeI watched the TV while I waited for her. -> neither is complete Can you explain how?Here, all the actions "eating", "walking", "watching" and "waiting" are completed actions, aren't they? I'm saying these actions are completed, because we are talking about the past (notice "ate", "walked", "watched" and "waited"), referring to the time before now. And when we talk about the time before now, it is understood the actions are completed. (See the part that I've quoted from the website in the OP) entagledbank, your examples one through refer to actions that were observed in the past and therefore, grammatically speaking, completed. Examples three and four are contextually accurate. Example number five uses the past continuous/progressive tense, not the past simple. Different animal. English tenses can be difficult for non-natives, particularly, perhaps, for people whose native languages do not use tenses to indicate when something happened. For instance: What looks like a simple past can act in ways where some other languages would use the imperfect tense, to indicate habitual or continuing action -We went to the cinema every Thursday. (habitual)We ate mangoes as we walked. (continuous - as we walked we were eating mangoes) What looks like a conditional can act in ways where some other languages would use the imperfect tense, to indicate habitual action -We would go to the cinema every Thursday. (habitual) What looks like a future can act to indicate a probable present -Where's Tommy?He will be in the garden. (ie. he is probably in the garden)I don't doubt that there are plenty of other examples. All actions and states in the past are 'completed': they're in the past. But they're not all grammatically viewed or expressed as complete. 'I was eating breakfast when the doorbell rang' probably refers to a breakfast I am no longer still eating, but it is expressed as an incomplete action, relative to its context. Likewise with my examples in the simple past. In post#54 and post#55 of this thread, I've been told that the sentence "He climbed a/the mountain" (past simple tense) doesn't show a complete action. That is simply untrue. You have been shown that the past simple can be used for (i) habitual, (ii) continuing and (ii) single actions. I mean PaulQ - he said that the sentence "He climbed a/the mountain" (as it stands) doesn't show a complete action. No. I gave you an example in which the context determined the way the verb is used. You should take a little more care when reading what is written. Last edited: Jan 16, 2018 1. We ate mangoes as we were walking.2. We ate mangoes as we walked.What is the difference between these two sentences. 1. We ate mangoes as we were walking.2. We ate mangoes as we walked. There is no real difference and you could also say "We were eating mangoes as we walked/were walking."In English there are two types of verb: the durative verb and the instant verb. A durative verb describes an action, which, by its nature, takes some time to complete: to walk is a durative verb. There is no real difference in meaning between "he walked" and "he was walking"To hit is an instant verb "He hit the dog" indicates a single action - "He is hitting the dog" indicates a continuing action or actions - time passes as the action of hitting continues. The reason for this is that the continuous form of the verb is understood as, for example:We were walking = "we were in the process of walking" / "we were spending time walking" and yet we know that, when we walk, time passes and that walking/to walk involves a process. Suppose, my uncle says to me.1.You arrived as we are leaving.The process of my arriving was finished, but they are in the middle of their action.2.You arrived as we were leaving.Again, only they were in the middle of their action, i had finished my job. Suppose, my uncle says to me.1.You arrived as we are leaving.The process of my arriving was finished, but they are in the middle of their action.2.You arrived as we were leaving.Again, only they were in the middle of their action, i had finished my job. To arrive and to leave are instant verbs, not durative verbs, so there is a difference that should be expressed by using either the simple form or the continuous form: 1.You arrived as we are leaving.I had arrived, but we are in the middle of our action. 2. You arrived as we were leaving.This is the same as 1 above... Again, only they were in the middle of their action, i had finished my job. Which job? 2a. You arrived as we left.You walked past each other: both actions were instant and happened together. 3. You were arriving as we left You were close to the door and were walking towards the door at the same time as we left. What a rabbit hole. The answer lies with the verb "to be". Last edited: Jan 16, 2018 I can't imagine a context in which I could say You arrived as we are leaving. Ah... that was a blind "copy and paste" - it would be rare but not impossible. A: "[describes a plan] So that is the plan - what do you think? Will it work?"B: "I don't know, what would happen if you arrived as we are leaving?" HiIn post#54 and post#55 of this thread, I've been told that the sentence "He climbed a/the mountain" (past simple tense) doesn't show a complete action. You mention post #55. Please re-read it. I have put it here for you. BOTH examples in that post clearly show the meaning of the verb in context - either one completed action, or many, in the past. We climbed Mount Everest. The meaning is indefinite. The same exact words can mean different things in different CONTEXTSWe climbed Mount Everest yesterday. (Single complete action)We climbed Mount Everest every year. (Habitual, but obviously complete actions)You cannot tell what the words mean without the context. This is very difficult to understand for non-natives such as myself.Anyway, I found this somewhere, I hope it helps. Verb tenses (also) may be categorized according to aspect.Aspect refers to the nature of the action described by the verb.There are three aspects: indefinite (or simple), complete (or perfect) and continuing (or progressive). The three indefinite (or simple) tenses describe an action but do not state whether the action is finished:Simple past (I went)simple present (I go)simple future (I will go)The indefinite aspects are used when the beginning or ending of the action, event or condition is unknown or unimportant to the meaning of the sentence.The indefinite aspect also indicates a habitual or repeated action, event or condition. There are several situations where simple past can indicate a continuing state or action. The first that comes to mind is this: (1) The rain fell more and more heavily.(2) The grandfather clock stood in the corner of the room. Here the verbs intrinsically indicate continuing states, at least with that subject (rain falling, furniture standing in a place). As for climbing, it's a long-lasting activity, so it can be adapted to a similar situation. We need to give it the right context: (3) He climbed the mountain before night fell.(4) He climbed the mountain more carefully as night drew close. (3), like most uses, implies the completion of the action, but (4) frames it as a continuing action without implying completion. 'He was climbing' would not be used in that sentence, though it would in some similar ones: (5) He was climbing the mountain more carefully because night was drawing close.Here (5) is viewed in the middle of the action, whereas (4) is viewed looking back on a stretch of the action. This example is, perhaps unfortunately, complicated by the fact that climb has two distinct meanings, again depending on context: to ascend, go up, or get to the top of, esp. by the use of the hands and feet or feet alone or by continuous or strenuous effort:to climb a rope;to climb the stairs;to climb a mountain Climbing is an action that either represents the movement of hands and feet to increase ones elevation OR the complete the ascent of something.For example Yesterday, I climbed all day but failed to reach the summit and I climbed Mount Everest last week - the first does not have a meaning of completion in the sense of getting to the top, and allows #4 as a result: the context there is fairly clear (as in transformation to #5). If we tried to say #4 was the get to the top meaning, it might make grammatical sense but not one that leaps to mind as we normally read it: He got to the top multiple times a day but climbed more carefully doing so at dusk than he did during the complete ascents in the middle of the day. Last edited: Jan 16, 2018 They refer specifically to the numbered sentences in post #3 which I quoted (you may need to click to expand the quote to see them) To climb has several aspectsI climb the hill -> I went up the hill to the top. This is the completative aspect, which carries the meaning of "to the end".I climb the hill -> I am at some point in the ascent of the hill with or without the intention of reaching the top.I climb the hill -> I do 1 or 2 on a regularly/frequently/by habit.English does not have verb forms that indicates the completative and therefore uses context. (Russian and some other Slavic language do, and, if I remember correctly, so does Bangla - so maybe Hindi?)Climb and to be climbing are the same as to climb is a durative verb - one that contains its own sense of duration. En mi pas es totalmente arbitrario e intercambiable. Por ejemplo podemos decir: llegu temprano esta maana como tambin he llegado temprano esta maana.Como creo que en Espaa vosotros hacis la distincin, me gustara que me ilustren. En mi pas es totalmente arbitrario e intercambiable. Por ejemplo podemos decir: llegu temprano esta maana como tambin he llegado temprano esta maana.Como creo que en Espaa vosotros hacis la distincin, me gustara que me ilustren. Hola Luis:hace un par de das se estuvo hablando de ese mismo tema. Espero que te aclare alguna duda. Gracias Diego, vergenza de m... siempre llego tarde.Lo que me aclara este hilo que me diste es que la cosa no es tan homognea en Espaa como yo haba pensado que era. Saludos Gracias Diego, vergenza de m... siempre llego tarde.Lo que me aclara este hilo que me diste es que la cosa no es tan homognea en Espaa como yo haba pensado que era. Saludos Como ya comentaban, suele ser bastante homognea en casi toda Espaa (excepto Galicia y parte del norte). Solemos distinguir entre esos dos tiempos y les vemos matices distintos, por eso me llama la atencin la manera de hablar de los gallegos en general. Yo recuerdo que en su momento me choc or el pretrito perfecto simple cuando you hubiera usado el compuesto en dos personas: - Una ta ma que viva en Asturias desde hace tiempo (norte de Espaa, como dice Diego) - Una compaera que lleg nueva a la escuela, de Olivenza (un pueblo en el suroeste, con fuerte influencia portuguesa) Desde entonces he odo utilizar el pretrito perfecto simple a muchas personas y ya no me sorprende (aunque sigue siendo una caracterstica notable), pero me no he vuelto a darme cuenta de si la gente de Olivenza en efecto lo usa o fue slo un hecho aislado lo que me sorprendi. De hecho, no es fcil para nosotros saber cuando usar un tiempo o el otro. Suelo apoyarme en el ingls, para escoger entre ellos. De hecho, no es fcil para nosotros saber cuando usar un tiempo o el otro. Suelo apoyarme en el ingls, para escoger entre ellos. Entiendo que no es fcil porque tiene un componente subjetivo importante, adems del temporal. Es como el subjuntivo, que no es fcil de explicar. - El ao pasado estudi qumica (una frase neutra que indica algo que hiciste en el pasado) - He estado estudiando qumica durante cinco aos y no me ha servido para nada. (claro que se refiere al pasado, pero de una manera ms especial que en la primera frase. Sientes esos 5 aos muy cercanos a ti, te han afectado, estn casi presentes en tu mente) Buenas noches compaeros: Aprovechando que est este hilo abierto voy a realizar una pregunta al respecto. Quisiera saber el valor que tiene el pretrito perfecto simple. Me refiero al pretrito perfecto simple de indicativo, el cual creo haber ledo que funciona como pasado y como futuro pero la verdad es que no encuentro ningn ejemplo de su valor como futuro, realmente se usa para futuro o slo para pasado? Agradecera algn ejemplo de su valor como futuro. Gracias. Existe un valor trasladado (por lo menos en el habla chilena y colombiana) de uso muy coloquial que tiene un valor de futuro/imperativo: "Ya! Te bajaste de ese rbol!". En la oracin que expones (no s si en chile y colombia se entiende un futuro) yo no veo valor de futuro; lo que veo es un pasado como una casa de grande: "Ya! Te bajaste de ese rbol!" = Ya lo has hecho, te bajaste (te has bajado, ya lo has hecho, pasado como una casa) de ese rbol, es decir, que ya no ests en el rbol porque te has bajado... En la oracin que expones (no s si en chile y colombia se entiende un futuro) yo no veo valor de futuro; lo que veo es un pasado como una casa de grande: "Ya! Te bajaste de ese rbol!" = Ya lo has hecho, te bajaste (te has bajado, ya lo has hecho, pasado como una casa) de ese rbol, es decir, que ya no ests en el rbol porque te has bajado... As es como nosotros lo interpretaramos, pero, al parecer, no es ese el sentido que all le dan, sino el que dice Istriano, que podra ser:Bjate ya!Te bajars?! Ya! As es como nosotros lo interpretaramos, pero, al parecer, no es ese el sentido que all le dan, sino el que dice Istriano, que podra ser:Bjate ya!Te bajars?! Ya! Ah, ahora entiendo, es: "te bajaste de ese rbol" --> como queriendo decir "que te bajes del rbol ya, ahora mismo, bjate". Es como con reticencia. Pero ese uso y ese sentido no se usa en Espaa. Entonces puedo entender, si no estoy errado, que si solamente es ese uso el que puede tener con valor de futuro, entonces para hablantes espaoles el pretrito perfecto simple no tiene valor de futuro porque nosotros no lo usamos con ese sentido, slo con sentido de pasado. With respect to IF-clause rules, I used to know that the modal verb "would" had to be paired with simple past: if + simple past + would + infinite.Today I run into the following form: if + simple present + would + infinite and it left me really bemused. So I started to check on google how many results I'd have got if I had searched that form, then I got more dumfounded since the number of results was topping 14 millions.For instance the first result I got was: "If you require, we would also be happy to work alongside your existing supplier and integrator of your packaging line" Instead, I'd have said: If you require, we will also be happy to work alongside your existing supplier and integrator of your packaging line Did I miss something?Thanks it's not a conditional sentence, it's a false conditional. It is a fact that he requires, not a condition to be fulfilled. For instance the first result I got was: "If you require, we would also be happy to work alongside your existing supplier and integrator of your packaging line" This sounds fine. Your initial issue was the past or present tense after 'if' [here, 'require' comes right after]. The present, here is definitely preferred, unless you re write, "If required, we would..."As to 'would' vs. 'will' ['___ be happy']; here I see little difference, except that 'would' sounds more hypothetical, and 'will' sounds more like a promise. And what about this other example: "We would suggest this one if you required a portable solution" Is it better simple past or simple present? Before you told me that it's false conditional since there's no condition to fulfill. Is it not the term "require" setting up a condition?If you require something... That means you can require it or not. Otherwise, you consider that sentence with a hidden conjunction: "if you require a portable solution (then) we would suggest this one". Is In the if-clause mandatory to fulfil a condition? Last edited: Feb 15, 2015 I've simply given you an opinion on some sentences, as a native speaker. As to the alleged rules, classifications of conditionals, etc. I stand aside and let the grammarians have at it. With respect to IF-clause rules, I used to know that the modal verb "would" had to be paired with simple past: if + simple past + would + infinite.Today I run into the following form: if + simple present + would + infinite and it left me really bemused. So I started to check on google how many results I'd have got if I had searched that form, then I got more dumfounded since the number of results was topping 14 millions.For instance the first result I got was: "If you require, we would also be happy to work alongside your existing supplier and integrator of your packaging line" Instead, I'd have said: If you require, we will also be happy to work alongside your existing supplier and integrator of your packaging line Did I miss something?Thanks Hello Gainni. No, I don't think you've missed anything. Certainly the sentence doesn't follow the standard rules for conditional sentences, and I don't agree with the view that this is not a true conditional sentence.This idea would more naturally be expressed by a second conditional than by the first conditional which you suggest, and which sounds rather abrupt and disobliging. In business deals it's normal to soften those will's to would's.The second conditional would take the form: if you required, we would also be happy etc.The bastard form you quote is quite a common error: the first conditional has been set up by the if-clause but then the will sounds too abrupt and gets softened. Hello Gainni. No, I don't think you've missed anything. Certainly the sentence doesn't follow the standard rules for conditional sentences, and I don't agree with the view that this is not a true conditional sentence.This idea would more naturally be expressed by a second conditional than by the first conditional which you suggest, and which sounds rather abrupt and disobliging. In business deals it's normal to soften those will's to would's.The second conditional would take the form: if you required, we would also be happy etc.The bastard form you quote is quite a common error: the first conditional has been set up by the if-clause but then the will sounds too abrupt and gets softened. Hi Thomas thanks, I have understood.At this point, Could you please make me an example of false conditional? Is it a condtional that doesn't follow the standard if-clause? Last edited: Feb 15, 2015 This definitely sounds odd to this American/Canadian ear. Are you recommending it to Gaini? Thomas said in part [post #8, above]: This idea would more naturally be expressed by a second conditional than by the first conditional which you suggest, and which sounds rather abrupt and disobliging. In business deals it's normal to soften those will's to would's. The second conditional would take the form: if you required, we would also be happy etc. ===If I were to choose that route, I'd say, "It it were required, we would also be happy to ...." Hi Gainni,Please quote me on this. I don't remember the topic or context. It is true that some conditional-looking sentences [or parts of them] involve hypothetical or contrary-to-fact situations, and some do not. Before you told me that it's false conditional since there's no condition to fulfill. Is it not the term "require" setting up a condition?If you require something... That means you can require it or not. Otherwise, you consider that sentence with a hidden conjunction: "if you require a portable solution (then) we would suggest this one". Is In the if-clause mandatory to fulfil a condition? Hi Gainni,Please quote me on this. I don't remember the topic or context. It is true that some conditional-looking sentences [or parts of them] involve hypothetical or contrary-to-fact situations, and some do not. Hi bennymix, it wasn't you but sonorous in post #2. Sorry Would this example suit to a false conditional statement:If we need it then we'd call you. You ask for examples of false conditional sentences, by which we don't mean sentences which don't happen to be true, but ones where the apparent conditional clause doesn't present a condition.A typical example would be If he's coming, I'll stay at home, to mean not In the event that he is coming, I'll stay at home (true conditional) but Given that he's coming, I'll stay at home (false conditional). You ask for examples of false conditional sentences, by which we don't mean sentences which don't happen to be true, but ones where the apparent conditional clause doesn't present a condition.A typical example would be If he's coming, I'll stay at home, to mean not In the event that he is coming, I'll stay at home (true conditional) but Given that he's coming, I'll stay at home (false conditional). so, is false conditional not stuck to if-clause rules?In the latter there's no condition because you assume that he is coming for sure, right?Anyway let me say that "if he's coming" is quite foggy... it has a double meaning, how can I catch the right one? Last edited: Feb 19, 2015 so, is false conditional not stuck to if-clause rules?In the latter there's no condition because you assume that he is coming for sure, right?Anyway let me say that "if he's coming" is quite foggy... it has a double meaning, how can I catch the right one? I'm not sure that a false conditional is a standard expression: I don't think it has a single definition. For me, and it's an expression I use occasionally, it means a sentence which uses an apparent protasis which doesn't present a condition. There are several different ways in which some native speakers do this. You've clearly understood my objection to the case I gave.I'm not clear about your final question, Gianni. As with all ambiguous language, you have to guess from the context, or avoid people who speak so loosely. I'm not sure that a false conditional is a standard expression: I don't think it has a single definition. For me, and it's an expression I use occasionally, it means a sentence which uses an apparent protasis which doesn't present a condition. There are several different ways in which some native speakers do this. You've clearly understood my objection to the case I gave.I'm not clear about your final question, Gianni. As with all ambiguous language, you have to guess from the context, or avoid people who speak so loosely. Ok got it, if it's ambiguous... it's ambiguous man!How does it sound as false conditional? With respect to IF-clause rules, I used to know that the modal verb "would" had to be paired with simple past: if + simple past + would + infinite. Today I run into the following form: if + simple present + would + infinite and it left me really bemused. So I started to check on google how many results I'd have got if I had searched that form, then I got more dumfounded since the number of results was topping 14 millions. For instance the first result I got was: "If you require, we would also be happy to work alongside your existing supplier and integrator of your packaging line" Instead, I'd have said: If you require, we will also be happy to work alongside your existing supplier and integrator of your packaging line Did I miss something? Thanks Would can have various different meanings, but the most likely meaning in the sentence you found takes "would be" as the "conditional" form of the verb "be", as in for example: We would be happy, were we to have the chance, to work with you. We would be happy, in order to further our common goals, to work with you. We often use this conditional form without explicitly stating a condition: We would be happy to work with you. In other words, we leave the conditions unsaid and "would be" open ended. The latter sentence just means that we find the prospect of working with you to be more than acceptable. It is about our feelings concerning a possible future. In contrast, will instead of would would make the sentence about a more definite future. Now let us add a present tense condition: If you require, we would be happy to work with you. I take this to mean: If you require us to work with you, we would be happy to. Since a condition as in my examples above, if expressed, would not be in present tense, we still have an open-ended "would be" as before, but now we have a different kind of condition that is not the reason for the use of would. The latter sentence says that under circumstances in which you require us to work with you, we find the prospect of working with you to be more than acceptable. By the rules of logic, it can be deduced from this that if we don't find the prospect of working with you to be more than acceptable, then you don't require it anyway. In the real world, however, we simply mean that we expect you need us to work with you, and we do find the prospect more than acceptable, but we want to leave the evaluation of your needs up to you and do not wish to presume you want to hear all about our feelings if perchance you don't need us to work with you. I would call this indirect language designed to ease "our" way into a business deal. We have expressed our feelings to you without being presumptuous. Hola a todos, ?hay alguien que pueda explicarme si el condicional compuesto puede siempre ser substituido por el condicional simple?El condicional compuesto, si no me equivoco, se utiliza una accin futura a otra futura en relacin al pasado. Ejemplo: Crean (=pasado) que por la noche (=pasado) ya habran llegado (=antefuturo).Tambin el condicional simple se puede utilizar as. Ejemplo: Crean que por la noche ya llegaran. ?As que el compuesto puede siempre ser substituido por el simple??Podra substituirlo tambin si yo utilizara un pretrito pluscuamperfecto en la principal? Ejemplo: Haban creido que por la noche ya habran llegado = Habian credo que por la noche ya llegaran Intent explicarme lo mejor que pude, gracias Hola: No, es interesante el uso del condicional compuesto porque refiere a una accin futura respecto de otra pero pasada, aunque esa accin futura es anterior a otra accin: Crean (accin pasada) que por la noche (tiempo futuro), ya habran llegado (accin futura pero anterior al hecho de ser de noche).Creo que en tu ejemplo corresponde el condicional compuesto. No, no son equivalentes. Si dices Me asegur que cuando volviramos terminara el trabajo, la accin de terminar es paralela o futura respecto a "volver"; o sea, primero vuelven y luego termina el trabajo. Si dices Me asegur que cuando volviramos habra terminado el trabajo, la accin de terminar es anterior a la de volver; o sea, primero termina el trabajo y luego vuelven. Hello!Michael Swan in his Practical English Usage says:"In an informal style, a simple past tense is sometimes possible with always, ever and never when they refer to time up to now.I always knew I could trust you. (or Ive always known)Did you ever see anything like that before? (or Have you ever seen ?)" I've stumbled over the word 'sometimes'. What are situations where the Past Simple is not appropirate in an informal style? Or does 'sometimes' mean that if a sentence may sound ambiguous in a certain context, we'd better stick to the Present Perfect referring to 'time up to now'.Say, if a sentence like "I always liked him" leaves room for interpretation (liked in the past? or still like?), then we should choose "have liked" if we still really do. Setting aside use of the present tense here (I sometimes post in this forum), in general, the present perfect is best, provided the action began in the past and and persists "up till now" (I have sometimes posted in this forum) Thank you!I agree about sentences containing such adverbials as "sometimes, many times, etc." I just have doubts about the choice of tenses in those containing "ever, never, always" in informal speech."Sometimes" is the word which Michael Swan uses in his explanation (see it in my previous post): "... a simple past tense is SOMETIMES possible..." Meaning that there could be situations when it is NOT possible. For example:"I have always liked you" - could it be transformed into "I always liked you" without any change of the meaning?What about "I have never been to London"? Can "I never was in London" convey the same meaning? For some reason, this sentence about London doesn't sound right to me in the Past Simple if I want to describe the time up to know. "I have always liked you" - could it be transformed into "I always liked you" without any change of the meaning?YesWhat about "I have never been to London"? Can "I never was in London" convey the same meaning? For some reason, this sentence about London doesn't sound right to me in the Past Simple if I want to describe the time up to know.I agree. It doesn't sound right for that 'up till now' criterion Hi everybody,My grammar book writes that ****Quote from the bookalways, ever and neverIn an informal style, a simple past tense is sometimes possible with always, everand never when they refer to time up to now.I always knew I could trust you. (or I've always known . . .)Did you ever see anything like that before? (or Have you ever seen . . . ?)********** I know that the best way is using present perfect.I also would like to know that if American speakers would use simple past in this situation:I would like to tell to my mum who is still alive. what I mean is may love to my moon from the past until now. I still love her.1."I always loved you"2."I 've always loved you"(1) and (2) have no difference in anunace for this situation. And I can use either.Right? Hi everybody,My grammar book writes that ****Quote from the bookalways, ever and neverIn an informal style, a simple past tense is sometimes possible with always, everand never when they refer to time up to now.I always knew I could trust you. (or I've always known . . .)Did you ever see anything like that before? (or Have you ever seen . . . ?)********** I know that the best way is using present perfect.I also would like to know that if American speakers would use simple past in this situation:I would like to tell to my mum who is still alive. what I mean is may love to my moon from the past until now. I still love her.1."I always loved you"2."I 've always loved you"(1) and (2) have no difference in anunace for this situation. And I can use either.Right? First of all, I speak BE, so I can't answer the bit of the question about what speakers of AE would say."I always knew I could trust you." This is fine, if referring to something which has happened to give the speaker that impression."Did you ever see anything like that before?" The simple past doesn't work for me there. I'd use either the perfect for something current, or the pluperfect (Had you ever seen...) for something which took place in the past.1."I always loved you" This suggests to me that you're referring to a situation which existed at one time in the past but which for whatever reason no longer applies. If it's still the case now, then I'd use the perfect tense as in version (2). Thanks so much for your answer, Donny B.Your answer matches with what I learned from grammar books. Because I see the answer of someone on post #4 like this: "I have always liked you" - could it be transformed into "I always liked you" without any change of the meaning?Yes But I still have a doubt, if American speaker, especially North American speaker use either sentences without the differences in the meaning in spoken language.Because I would like to know more about the difference between BrE and Ame, so I will wait to hear more from NAmE voice. HelloOne of my students wrote How long ago have you bought your car? I thought that the sentence should be in the past simple (How long ago did you buy your car?) as the question is about a specific point in the past. However, when I google "how long ago have" I get 4'150'00 hits (slightly less than half as many as when googling "how long ago did"). Here my questions:1) Shold how long ago be followed by a past simple (did you buy) or a present perfect (have you bought)?2) Could it be that there is a difference between the US and the UK? You are right. Past simple is correct. As far as I have checked those Google hits, they are all bad English.It should be either: 'How long ago did you buy your car?' or 'How long have you owned your car?'No US/UK difference, as far as I know. A small PS:I get 4'150'00 hits Numbers are written e.g. 415,000 / 1,234,567. There is a comma (not an apostrophe) after every third number counting from right to left. Here my questions:1) Shold how long ago be followed by a past simple (did you buy) or a present perfect (have you bought)?2) Could it be that there is a difference between the US and the UK? (1) The choice between past simple and prefent perfect depends on the time of the actiona. An action that happened completely in the past = past simple -- I lived in london for five years, from 2001 to 2006.b. An action that STARTED in the past AND CONTINUES to the present = present perfect -- e.g. I have lived in London for five years, from January 2007 until now. There are also other circumstances in which the present perfect is used, but the above seems to be the one that gives learners the most trouble. "How long ago" usually seems to refer to actions completed in the past, so the simple past would usually apply. (2) I'm not an expert on American English, so I'll leave it to speakers of AE comment on that. Hello tigerduck.Consider this:"How long ago" or "How many years ago" are similar to "when" - the answer: two years ago, in 2010 in the past). We use "How long ago" to ask about a completely finished period of time. So we use the simple past."How long" is similar to "since when" - the answer: for two years, since 2010 up to now. Michael Swan says: "We use a present perfect to say how long a situation or action has continued up to now." The OALD online gives this definition: "ago early 14c., shortened form of O.E. agan, agone "departed, passed away," pp. of an obsolete verb ago "to go forth," formed from a- "away" (perhaps here used as an intensive prefix) + gan "go" (see go). Agone remains a dialectal variant." Source: many years ago" = "How many years passed away." Last edited: Jan 23, 2012 What about this situation?I have just got to know that one of my former colleague left the company I was working at before. Speaking with someone is still working at that company I am about to ask more information about that. Alice: The team configuration has changed a lot since you and James left.Bob: a) Oh, I didn't know about James. How long ago did he leave?b) How long ago has he left?I was tempted to choose b). I don't quite know why that one sounded better to me. Is it because we were talking about the consequences of that action that are still continuing in the present?Which one should I have chosen? Hi eagleglide, you can't use b) How long ago has he left? in this context. You're asking when he left. That action happened at a point in the past. The "leaving" doesn't continue into the present."Ago" denotes "time past", "gone", so it refers to actions or states that no longer apply at the time of speaking. Present perfect generally applies to actions or states that continue up to the time of speaking. We normally use ago with the past simple. We dont use it with the present perfect:I received his letter four days ago.Not: I have received his letter four days ago. (Cambridge) >>_>_

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