

Grammar Explanation

Using simple past (*acted*) or present perfect (*have acted*)

- Use the simple past when you refer to an action that occurred at a specific time in the past; for example, with phrases such as *yesterday*, *last night*, or *two days ago*.
 - Example: *Welfare recipients **did not have** to work for their benefits before 1996.*
- Use the present perfect when you refer to an action that occurred at a non-specific time in the past, especially if there is a connection to the present.
 - Example: *The living standard of welfare recipients **has increased**.*
- Use the present perfect with actions that started in the past and continue into the present.
 - Example: *Welfare recipients **have had** to work for their benefits since the welfare reform act was signed into law.*

Excerpted from: Verb Tenses: Exercise 2