

The Perfect Tense

Languages

The spoken past tense, and choosing between haben and sein.

haben or sein in the present, plus the past participle at the end of the clause.

ge- + stem + -t (weak) · ge- + stem + -en (strong)

machen (weak)

ge-mach-t

Ich habe gemacht

sehen (strong)

ge-seh-en, sometimes with a vowel change

Ich habe gesehen

gehen (movement)

Takes sein.

Ich bin gegangen

THE COMMON MISTAKE

✗ **Putting the participle next to the auxiliary**

✓ **It goes to the end of the clause**

German brackets the clause: the auxiliary is second, the participle is last, and everything else sits between them.

Verbs ending in -ieren take no ge-: ich habe studiert. Nor do verbs with inseparable prefixes: ich habe verstanden.