

Changes

by Adrian Doff

Level: Intermediate and above

Time: 30–40 minutes

Assumed knowledge: Learners should already have a basic idea of the present perfect tense and how it is used.

Aim: – To talk about changes and alterations.
– To talk about how things have changed.

There are three ways of using this worksheet:

- Give the worksheet to students to work through independently and then in the next lesson go through the exercises and deal with any points that arise.
- Use the worksheet for an active classroom lesson. The notes below give ideas for doing this.
- Do not give the worksheet out in class but use it as the basis for your own lesson, getting ideas and phrases from the students and presenting language on the board (use the notes below to help you). Then give out the worksheet at the end and ask students to do the exercises for homework.

Warm-up

Warm-up: Establishing the concept

Write the word *change* on the board. Ask students to write a sentence using the word. Then ask them to read out their sentences. Use this to establish that we can use *change*:

- as a noun or as a verb (*The world has changed, There have been many changes*)
- as a transitive or as an intransitive verb (*The office has changed, They've changed the office*).

Give out the worksheet.

Worksheet

Language focus

1. **Present perfect tense.** Read through the extracts from emails and quickly establish what they are about:

1. a press release (= publicity for a newspaper or magazine) which the writer has revised;
2. a message about a meeting sent round to all the people who are invited.

Focus on the examples of the present perfect tense (*I have made, we have rewritten, have changed*). Point out:

- the form of the tense: *have/has* + past participle (write the forms on the board if necessary).
- why we use this tense. This is a typical use of the present perfect: we are saying that things are now different from before (= they have changed).

To reinforce this idea, look at the examples on the worksheet:

- *They have moved to a new address* (= now we are in a new place)
- *The chief accountant has retired* (= he/she worked here before, but not now)
- *We have replaced all our computers* (= now we have new computers)

2. **change.** Read through the examples on the worksheet. Point out that:

- *change* can be a transitive verb (you can change something), either active or passive:

We have changed the time of the meeting.

The time of the meeting has been changed (by us).

- it can also be an intransitive verb:

The time of the meeting has changed. (= it is now different)

- it can also be used as a noun in the expressions *make a change to* and *make changes to*:

We've made a few changes to the programme.

To practise, give a few transitive sentences and ask students to change them into passive or intransitive sentences, e.g.:

They've changed the clock times.

Someone has made changes to my room.

Someone has made a change to the document.

Changes

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They've changed the train timetable.

3. **alter.** Read the examples. Point out:

- the pronunciation of *alter* and *alteration*
- that it means *(make) a small change, or a change to certain parts of something*. Give a few examples of alterations: alterations to clothes (e.g. making trousers longer), alterations to a building (e.g. changing the windows or the rooms), alterations to a programme (e.g. meeting half an hour later).

4. **Verbs that mean 'change'.** Read through the examples.

Alternative: Ask students to turn over the worksheet. Give examples and see if students can give you the correct verb, e.g.:

- Someone writes a document, then you read through it and make a some changes to it. (= revise)
- You take a document and you write it again so that it is quite different from before. (= rewrite)
- You buy an old building which is in very bad condition. You make it look as it was when it was built. (= restore) etc.

Practice

1. **Talk or write:**

Preparation: Quickly go through the worksheet and suggest some of the things students might write about, e.g. maybe someone has retired or your office has moved. Or maybe you have replaced something in your office. Or maybe there have been changes to the staff ..., etc.

Writing: Students write sentences. Then ask them to read out what they have written.

Alternative: Give students a few moments to think about the topic and possibly make a few notes. Then ask them in turn to talk about it.

Larger classes: Do this as pairwork, then ask a few students what they said.

2. **Exercises:**

Do the exercises together round the class; or let students do them alone or in pairs, then go through them together.

Possible answers:

- In the new model, they have made a few alterations to the engine.
- We need to rethink our marketing strategy.
- Our managing director has been replaced.
- The new government has made radical changes to the tax system.
- I've changed the topic of my presentation (or The topic of my presentation has changed).
- I've slightly altered my opinion of her (or My opinion of her has altered slightly).

Other language areas you could explore:

1. **Other common 'verbs of change':**

- *grow up, get old, die; go away, move (to), go abroad*
- *widen, shorten, lengthen, enlarge; increase, decrease*
- *pull down, cut down, rebuild*

2. **modify, amend**

- *modify (an engine, a computer, equipment)*
- *make (minor, slight) modifications to ...*
- *a modified version of ...*
- *amend (a document, article, report)*
- *make (minor) amendments to (a programme, a report, a law)*

3. **Other uses of the present perfect tense**

- Experience: *I've been to Japan before. / I've never worked with Excel.*
- Announcing news: *We've had a baby. / War has broken out.*
- Achievements: *I've finished my report. / They've agreed on a name for the product.*

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A Attached is a **revised** version of the press release. We have **made a few minor alterations** to the text, and we have **re-written** the last paragraph so that it includes up-to-date information about our future projects.



excerpts from emails

B Just to let you all know that the time and venue of the meeting **have changed**. It will now be at 3.00 pm, and we will meet in Room 564, not in my office.

Present perfect tense

To talk about changes, we often use the **present perfect tense**:

- things are different now from before, so they **have changed**. Look at these examples:

They **have moved** to a new address. (= now they are in a different place)

The chief accountant **has retired**. (= he worked here before, but now he doesn't)

We **have replaced** all our computers. (= now there are new ones)

change

Change can be a transitive or intransitive verb: you can *change something*, or *something can change*.

We **have changed** the time of the meeting. (transitive)

The time of the meeting **has been changed**. (passive)

The time of the meeting **has changed**. (intransitive)

Verb: change
Noun: change

We've **changed** tomorrow's programme.
We've **made a few changes to** tomorrow's programme.
There has been **a slight change to** the programme.

alter

Alter is similar in meaning to *change*. It often means to make a *small change* or only change *some parts*:

They've **altered** the plans of the building. The entrance is now on the other side.

After his first heart attack, he decided to **alter** his lifestyle.

Verb: alter
Noun: alteration

We've **altered** tomorrow's programme. (= it's slightly different)
We've **made a few alterations to** tomorrow's programme. (= small changes)

make	extensive major sweeping radical significant	changes (to ...)
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make	a few one or two (some) minor	changes alterations (to ...)
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Verbs that mean 'change'

These verbs mean *make changes* or *do something again*:

revise a text or a document

rewrite a text or a document

restore a building

redecorate a room or a building

reorganize an office or a department

replace equipment or staff

restructure an organization or a company

rethink a project or a strategy

Exercise

Rewrite each sentence, using the word in brackets. Make any necessary changes.

- a) In the new model, they have altered the engine slightly. (**alterations**)
- b) We need to think again about our marketing strategy. (**rethink**)
- c) We now have a new managing director. (**replace**)
- d) The new government has radically changed the tax system. (**changes**)
- e) My presentation now has a different topic. (**changed**)
- f) My opinion of her is now slightly different. (**altered**)

Talk or write



What changes have there been in your company recently? Write a few sentences using expressions from this worksheet.