

1. The feats of a student shock-worker

Below are some very useful pairs for talking about **your academic feats**. Some are familiar, others new. A few notes on aspect:

- 1) The prefix **пере-** means “re-” (as in, rewrite). When we add it to familiar basic verbs, we “**derive**” an **imperfective** to produce a full pair.
- 2) Because of their meaning, some verbs strongly imply the “attempt / success” aspectual distinction. So, the imperfective “**решать задачу**” really means to “work on” a problem, to “try to solve it,” while the perfective “**решить задачу**” means to successfully solve it.
- 3) Similarly, the perfective “**сдать экзамен**” can mean simply to take an exam, or it could also imply doing so successfully — “passing” it!
- 4) Verbs that emphasize an “**activity**” may not really have a “**completion**” perfective. These typically form perfectives with **по-**, meaning “to do something **for a bit**.” There’s a good example below: the pair **заниматься АЙ** / **позаниматься АЙ**: to study / to study **for a bit**

делать АЙ / сделать АЙ... домашние задания	to do... homework
читать АЙ / прочитать АЙ... книгу, статью	to read... a book, article
перечитывать АЙ / перечитать АЙ	to reread
писать А ^{shift} / написать А... курсовую работу, дипломную работу, диссертацию	to write... a paper, thesis, dissertation
дописывать АЙ / дописать А ^{shift}	to finish writing
переписывать АЙ / переписать А ^{shift}	to rewrite
решать АЙ / решить И ^{end} ... задачу (по математике)	to (try to) solve... a problem (in math)
готовить И / подготовить И... презентацию	to prepare... a presentation
готовиться И / подготовиться И... к контрольной, к экзамену	to study... for a test, exam
заниматься АЙ / позаниматься АЙ... по русскому языку, по физике	to study... a subject / study a bit
заучивать АЙ / заучить И ^{shift} ... новые слова и т. д.	to learn, memorize... new words, etc.
сдавать АВАЙ / сдать ... контрольную, экзамен	to take (pass)... a test, exam
работать АЙ / поработать АЙ... над чем	to work... on (“over”) something
проваливать АЙ / провалить И ^{shift} ... контрольную, экзамен	to flunk, fail... a test, exam, course
репетировать ОВА / отрепетировать ОВА... концерт, пьесу, танец	to rehearse... a concert, play, dance
тренироваться ОВА / потренироваться ОВА + в футболе, в фехтовании	to practice... “in” soccer, fencing, etc.

2. Aspectual choice can change the focus of a question

Typically, responses to questions **mirror the grammar** of the questions themselves, and this is typically true of aspect as well. To answer the **imperfective** question, use imperfective verbs; to answer the **perfective** question, use perfective verbs!

Что ты **делал(а)** вчера? What were you up to yesterday?

Что ты **сделал(а)** вчера? What did you get done yesterday?

3. Describe what you do on a typical day

Just use the **present** tense to describe repeating events — and remember, **only imperfective** verbs can be used in the present tense!

Я **много занимаюсь, читаю** книги, **решаю** задачи... I study a lot, read books, work on problems...

4. Describe yesterday specifically

Presumably, this will involve a number of one-time events, so you’d tend to use **perfectives** (unless emphasizing a prolonged activity, etc.)

Я **прочитал** статью, **дописал** курсовую работу... I read an article, finished writing a paper...

5. Describe tomorrow specifically

Presumably, this will involve a number of one-time events, so you’d tend to use **perfectives** (unless emphasizing a prolonged activity, etc.)

Я **причитаю** статью, **допишу** курсовую работу... I’ll read an article, finish writing a paper...

6. Describe what you did last semester

Given this broad time frame, and absent any emphasis on “getting things done,” this will probably call for a series of **imperfective** verbs.

Я **много занимался, читал** книги, **решал** задачи... I studied a lot, read books, worked on problems