

Until now vs. To date

This Kibbitzer is based on a report by a Chinese-speaking postgraduate student of education:

Original	Revision
<p>Until now, a questionnaire has been constructed, the methodology of the study has been identified, and the related literature has been analysed and reviewed.</p>	<p>To date, a questionnaire has been constructed, the methodology of the study has been identified, and the related literature has been analysed and reviewed.</p>

A concordance of *until now* shows that it is mainly used to emphasise the change between what has happened until now, and what will happen after now. This is shown clearly by the following citations: for each of them, you might like to try identifying the situation before now, and the situation after now.

1. The most important advantage the device has over previous sensors is that it can be used to measure glutamate changes in 'real time', a feat that has been impossible **until now**.
2. **Until now** Hansard has been available only on paper microfiche, so searching involved a laborious trawl through the index. CD-ROM will make searching much quicker and more accurate.
3. **Until now**, most doctors have believed that certain women would benefit more from tamoxifen than others, depending on the capacity of the breast tumour to take up oestrogen. The new results show that whatever the tumour's properties, tamoxifen helps.
4. Water solubility might greatly extend the range of reactions of the football-shaped carbon molecules known as fullerenes. But **until now** it has not been possible to make these hydrophobic, or water-hating, molecules dissolve in water. Now a team of Swedish researchers claims to have solved the problem.
5. Rocks containing grains of zircon 4.2 billion years old have been found in Australia, and these are thought to be the remains of older rocks. Many researchers suspect that there was continental crust on the Earth earlier than this, but **until now** they have lacked solid evidence.

Going back to the student's draft, it is clear (and was confirmed in the course of the consultation) that she did not intend to talk about a change in the situation, but rather the accumulation of work done up to the present. For that meaning, we find the expression *to date* being used in academic English:

1. **To date** four catalysts have been announced.
2. **To date** Britain has not built a full-scale PFBC plant. This has allowed Sweden to take the lead; it has designed and built three commercial power stations.
3. Most studies **to date** have shown that people of all social classes and educational backgrounds are unwilling to continue taking tablets when they feel well, whether the tablets are antibiotics, antimalarials or for high blood pressure.

4. [To date](#) few householders have taken advantage of the NRPB's free radon surveys or carried out remedial work to get rid of the radon gas.
5. Geoffrey Schild, head of the AIDS Directed Programme at Britain's Medical Research Council, said British researchers working with SIV were tested for the virus every 3 months; none has become infected [to date](#).

In the following citations, what is the missing phrase - [until now](#) or [to date](#)?

1. _____, scientists have identified eight Hox genes in the fruit fly and more than 40 in the mouse. The DNA sequences of these genes are so similar that they are unlikely to have evolved independently.
2. In July last year the Social Market Foundation published the most penetrating study _____ on the reform of legal aid.
3. The house has made the reputation of its young and (_____) relatively unknown architect, Anthony Hudson
4. The most important advantage the device has over previous sensors is that it can be used to measure glutamate changes in 'real time', a feat that has been impossible _____.
5. "Our investigations _____ have found no medical or scientific evidence of a Gulf War syndrome, or any medical condition peculiar to service in the Gulf" Mr Soames said.
6. Grose has produced what must be the most comprehensive account _____ of the CIA's deeds and misdeeds during the cold-war years.
7. Nylon, a fabric that, _____, has been looked down upon as old-fashioned and sweaty, has been given a new lease of life.
8. _____ the New Zealand flatworm, which consumes native earthworms, was thought to have no natural predator in Britain and to be unstoppable in its gradual spread through the country. However, scientists at the Institute of Cell, Animal and Population Biology at Edinburgh University have found by chance that the larvae of some common beetles will feed on the alien.

[Check](#) your answers