



Past Tenses

SIMPLE PAST + PAST CONTINUOUS

Talk about what happened, what was happening, and how one event interrupted another.

SIMPLE PAST Finished actions and sequences in the past. I worked. I didn't work. Did you work?	PAST CONTINUOUS An action in progress at a specific moment in the past. I was working. They were working.
TOGETHER Use Past Continuous for the longer/background action and Simple Past for the shorter event. I was cooking when the phone rang.	WHEN / WHILE when often introduces the shorter event. while often introduces an action in progress. While I was cooking, the phone rang.

Remember: after did / didn't, use the base verb: Did you go? / I didn't go. | Past Continuous = was/were + verb-ing.



1 Simple Past: choose the correct form

Choose the correct verb form.

1. Yesterday I got / get home later than usual.
2. We had / have dinner at a new restaurant on Friday.
3. She called / calls me after the meeting.
4. I left / leave my keys in the office yesterday.
5. They solved / solve the problem very quickly.
6. My friend started / start a new job last month.
7. I heard / hear a really interesting podcast this morning.
8. He missed / miss the bus, so he arrived late.

2 Build negatives and questions

Rewrite each sentence using the instruction in parentheses.

1. I worked from home yesterday. (negative)

2. She went to the gym after work. (negative)

3. They watched a movie last night. (question)

4. He called his family on Sunday. (question)

5. I had time to cook dinner. (negative)

6. Your friend arrived early. (question)



3 Past Continuous: what was happening?

Choose the correct form.

1. At 8 p.m., I was cooking / cook dinner.
2. They were driving / drive home when I called.
3. She was preparing / prepare for a presentation at that moment.
4. We were waiting / wait outside because it was raining.
5. My friends were having / have dinner when I arrived.
6. I was listening / listen to music while I was cleaning.
7. He was sleeping / sleep when his phone rang.
8. The children were playing / play in the living room at 6 p.m.

Think of a scene: What was already happening at that moment?

4 When or while?

Complete each sentence with when or while.

1. I was taking a shower ___ the phone rang.
2. ___ I was waiting for the bus, I checked my messages.
3. She was driving home ___ she saw an accident.
4. ___ we were having dinner, the lights went out.
5. I met an old friend ___ I was shopping.
6. He was working ___ his manager called him.
7. ___ they were talking, someone knocked on the door.
8. The rain started ___ we were walking home.



5 Mix the tenses

Complete with the Simple Past or Past Continuous form of the verbs in parentheses.

1. I ____ (walk) home when it ____ (start) to rain.

2. She ____ (cook) dinner when her friend ____ (call).

3. We ____ (talk) about work when the internet ____ (stop) working.

4. They ____ (drive) to the airport when they ____ (realize) they forgot a bag.

5. I ____ (sleep) when I ____ (hear) a loud noise.

6. He ____ (wait) for the train when he ____ (see) a coworker.

7. While I ____ (study), my brother ____ (make) dinner.

8. We ____ (have) coffee when the meeting ____ (begin).

6 Find the mistake

Each sentence has one mistake. Correct it.

1. I was drive home when you called.

2. She were working at 9 p.m.

3. Did you went out last night?

4. I didn't saw him yesterday.

5. When I was cooking, the doorbell was ring.

6. They was talking when I arrived.

7. While I walked home, it started to rain.

8. What were you do when I called?

7 Word order

Put the words in the correct order. Write a complete sentence or question.

1. yesterday / I / a friend / met / after work

2. was / at 9 p.m. / I / studying / English

3. when / called / I / she / was driving

4. did / last weekend / What / you / do

5. were / What / doing / you / at 8 p.m. / yesterday

6. the lights / while / were having / went out / we / dinner

7. didn't / yesterday / I / have / much time

8. was working / when / my friend / texted me / I

8 Complete the story

Use the correct past form of the verbs in parentheses.

1. Last Saturday, I ____ (plan) to have a quiet morning.

2. I ____ (make) coffee when my phone ____ (ring).

3. A friend ____ (ask) me to help with something.

4. While we ____ (talk), I ____ (realize) I was already late.

5. I ____ (leave) home quickly and ____ (take) a taxi.

6. When I ____ (arrive), everyone ____ (wait) for me.



9 Connect the ideas

Combine the two ideas using when or while.

1. I was walking to work. I saw an old friend.

2. She was having lunch. Her manager called.

3. We were driving home. It started to rain.

4. I was studying. My family was watching TV.

5. They were waiting for the bus. They talked about the trip.

10 Make it personal

Answer in complete sentences. Add one extra detail.

1. What did you do after work or class yesterday?

2. What were you doing at 8 p.m. yesterday?

3. Tell me about something unexpected that happened recently.

4. What were you doing when you received an important call or message?

5. What did you do last weekend?

6. Tell me about a time when your plans changed suddenly.

Speaking Challenge

WHATSAPP VOICE MESSAGE

Your mission: Send your teacher a 60-90 second voice message telling a short story about something that happened to you. It can be funny, stressful, surprising or completely ordinary.

Before you record
Write only 4-6 keywords. Do not write a complete script.

Try to include

- 3 Simple Past verbs
- 2 Past Continuous verbs
- when or while
- one extra detail

Story starter ideas

A plan that changed suddenly | A problem on the way somewhere | An unexpected message or call | A funny moment with friends or family | A day when something went wrong

After your teacher gives feedback: record the same story one more time. Try to speak more smoothly instead of adding more information.

Self-check

First recording: I needed a lot / some / little time to organize my ideas.

Second recording: I felt more / the same / less confident.