**2.4 TENSES**

**Introduction to the Topic**

A word ‘tense’ refers to the form of a verb. To refer to the time of an action, we use verbs in their appropriate tenses.

Tenses have three main categories:

**■ Simple Present Tense**

**■ Simple Past Tense**

**■ Simple Future Tense**

and all the categories have their specific rules to refer to particular time.

**Relevance in CAT**

Tenses is a generalised topic, which forms a basis for grammatically usage of English while speaking and writing. Hence, it has importance in sentence correction questions in CAT and also in GD’s and PI’s as well as to speak correct English.

**■ Type of Tenses**

● Present Tense

● Past Tense

● Future Tense

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Present Tense** | **Past Tense** | **Future Tense** |
| **Simple (Indefinite)** | verb1 + s/es | verb2 | shall/ will + verb1 |
| e.g. She walks. | e.g. She walked. | e.g. She will walk. |
| **Continuous (Progressive)** | is/am/are + verb1 + ing | was/were + verb1 + ing | will be + verb1 + ing |
| e.g. She is walking. | e.g. She was walking. | e.g. She will be walking. |
| **Perfect** | has/have + verb3 | had + verb3 | shall/will have + verb3 |
| e.g. She have walked. | e.g. She had walked. | e.g. She will have walked. |
| **Perfect Continuous** | has/have been + verb + ing | had been + verb1 + ing | will/shall have been + verb1 + ing |
| e.g. She have been walking. | e.g. She had been walking. | e.g. She will have been walking. |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I, We | → | I person | → | play, eat, write |
| You | → | II person | → | play, eat, write |
| He, She, It | → | III person (Singular) | → | plays, eats, writes, goes |
| They | → | III person (Plural) | → | play, eat, write |

**Note:** This table shows that with III person singular in simple present tense, the verb follows ‘s’/‘es’.

e.g. I go to school.

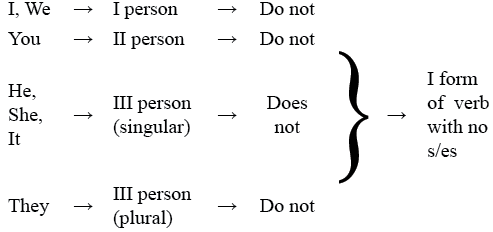
You go to school.

They go to school.

But, He / She goes to school.

Similarly,

In **negative** sentences,



e.g. I do not copy.

You do not copy.

They do not copy.

He / She does not copy.

In **Interrogative** sentences

e.g. Do I look good?

Do you eat your breakfast?

Do they eat their breakfast?

Does she eat her breakfast?

**■ Present Tense**

Indicates an action in present, relative to the speaker or writer.

**● Present Indefinite Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** I form of the verb + s/es. |

I. To describe permanent truths and habitual or customary activities. It is found with such adverbs as these:

● Generally, usually frequently, often, always, rarely

● With adverbial phrases as everybody, once, a week etc.

e.g. The sun rises in the east.

II. When we speak of the events that will take place in future time but have been planned beforehand. Only a few verbs are used in this way; to be, open, close, begin, start, end, finish, arrive, come, leave, return

e.g. The train leaves at 2 p.m. in the afternoon.

III. In exclamatory sentences, beginning with ‘here’ and ‘there’.

e.g. Here comes the chief guest!

IV. In general statements:

e.g. Your child dances very well.

V. Used to express general truths such as scientific fact, as in the following sentences.

e.g. Triangles have three sides.

**● Present Continuous Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** is/am/are + I form of verb + ing. |

I.. For an action going on at the time of speaking.

e.g. The boy is writing an application.

II. For a temporary action which may not be actually happening at the time of speaking.

e.g. I am reading a novel nowadays.

III. For an action that has already been arranged to take place in the near future.

e.g. The President of the United States is arriving on Republic Day.

IV. For habitual actions which continues in spite of warning.

e.g. You are always busy chatting with your friends.

V. Negative sentences

e.g. She is not washing the cloths.

VI. Interrogative sentence

e.g. Is he going to America?

VII. Interrogative negative sentences

Is, am, are + not + first form of the verb + ing

e.g. Aren’t you sleeping?

**● Present Perfect Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** has/have + III from of the verb. |

I. To indicate completed activities in the immediate past (with just).

e.g. She has just completed her homework.

II. For an action whose time is not definite

e.g. Neha has gone to her home town.

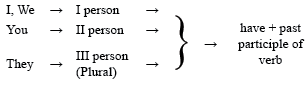
III. For the past event whose effect is felt in the present. (And not action)

e.g. They have taken all the tests. (There aren’t any left for you)

IV. For an action that began in the past and continued in the present moment:

e.g. My mother has eaten this particular medicine for 3 years.

**■ Some other Points**



e.g. He has not come yet.

Has she completed her homework?

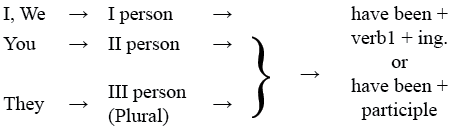
Haven’t you completed the breakfast yet?

**● Present Perfect Continuous Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** has/have been + I form of verb + ing. |

I. To show that something started in the past and has continued up until now. “For five minutes” “for two weeks,” and “since Tuesday” are all durations which can be used with the Present Perfect Continuous.

e.g. The baby has been crying since morning.



e.g. They have been playing since morning.

II. He, She → III person (Singular) → has been + participle

e.g. She has been sleeping since midnight.

**■ Past Tense**

Indicating that the event being referred to happened in the past.

**●** Past Indefinite Tense:

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Subject + II form of verb + predicate. |

I. For an action-taking place in the past.

e.g. He went to watch a magic show yesterday.

II. For an action in the past (regular habit, event)

e.g. He called me regularly for three years.

III. In negative sentences,

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** did not + I form of verb. |

e.g. I did not sleep properly yesterday.

IV. In interrogative sentences,

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Did + subject + I form of verb. |

e.g. Did the kid wake up last night?

When did they go?

**Note:** With ‘did’ always use I form of verb, no matter what.

**● Past Continuous Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Was/were + I form of verb + ing. |

I. To denote an action going on at some time in the past. It may not indicate the time of the action though.

e.g. They were roaming around in the mall throughout the evening.

II. You may also study the use of this tense with always etc. for showing a habit in the past.

e.g. He was always eating in the class.

**● Past Perfect Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Had + III form of verb with all  persons both in singular and the plural. |

I. To describe an action completed in the past. Take a situation of two actions happening in the past, in such cases it may be necessary to show which action happened earlier than the other.

e.g. She had gone to Mumbai last week before her mother came.

II. Sometimes preceding action is implied and is indicated by the use of – ‘ever, just, recently, already, yet, so far, till (time), by the time (by), before, after etc.’

e.g. I had finished the breakfast before they came.

I had already taken breakfast.

III. This tense is also used as time expression with – ‘since, for, how long, whole, all, throughout, all along, etc.’

e.g. She had owned this mansion for five years.

**● Past Perfect Continuous Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Had been + I form of verb + ing. |

I. It shows an action that began in the past before a certain point and also has continued up to that time.

e.g. I had been driving for 2 hours.

**■ Future Tense**

Indicate the event described by the verb as not having happened yet, but expected to happen in the future.

**● Future Indefinite Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Shall/will + I form of the verb. |

**Note:** Ordinarily, ‘shall’ is used with first person of pronoun ‘I’ and ‘we’, ‘will’ is used with second and third person.

I. To express the future as fact.

e.g. I shall be 24 next Month.

II. To talk about what is expected to happen in the future.

e.g. I think India will win the World Cup.

III. In negative sentences,

e.g. We shall not fight with them.

IV. In interrogative sentence,

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Will/shall + subject + I form of the verb |

e.g. Shall we complete the project.

Will you eat breakfast with me?

**● Future Continuous Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Shall/will be + I form of the verb + ing. |

I. This tense is used to express an action that will be in progress with a point of time in future.

e.g. She will be sleeping when I reach her home.

Get home at once. Your parents will be wondering where you are.

II. This tense is also used to express the future indefinite tense or definite future arrangement.

e.g. He will be going to school by bus today.

She will be arriving tomorrow to meet her old friends.

**● Future Perfect Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Shall/will have + III from of verb. |

I. To show the completion of an action by a certain time in the future.

e.g. I think the news will not have been published so far.

He will have suffered a lot by now since his birth.

**● Future Perfect Continuous Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Rule:** Shall/will have been + I form of verb + ing. |

I. For action that will be in progress over a period of time that will end in the future.

e.g. By next march we shall have been staying here for two years.

**■ Some future expressing events**

I. It is used when the speaker is making a prediction based on evidence.

e.g. It’s going to rain.

II. When the speaker already has an intention or plan.

e.g. We’re going to enjoy the party tomorrow.

III. It is used to talk about the impending event.

e.g. He is about to make a change in the plan.

**Some Important Points**

● With **'did'** always use I form of verb.

e.g. She did go to school.

● Use **‘am’** 1st form of verb and **'ing'** are used.

e.g. I amgoing to school.

● With **'does'** no s/es is put with the verb.

e.g. She does go to school.

**Practice Exercise – Easy**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1 − 13):** *Find the best way of writing the underlined part of the sentence.*

1. She eats her breakfast and left for work.

a. had eaten her breakfast

b. eaten her breakfast

c. ate her breakfast

d. would eat her breakfast

2. We are waiting for prime minister for the past two hours.

a. We have been waiting for

b. We are waiting to

c. We have waiting for

d. We have been waiting to

3. Did the child fallen from the chair?

a. the child fallen

b. the child fell

c. the child fall

d. the child has fallen

4. In spite of being a fresher, he conducts the meeting aplombly.

a. conducted the meeting with aplomb

b. conducts the meeting in aplomb

c. conducted the meeting using aplomb

d. conducted the meeting through aplomb

5. Why she has gone to Chennai?

a. has she going to

b. she had gone to

c. has she gone to

d. had she gone to

6. I had to reach to the factory a little early today.

a. had to reach the factory

b. have to reach in factory

c. had to be reach the office

d. had to be reached to office

7. He has got married yesterday.

a. got married

b. had got married

c. have got married

d. was got married

8. I posted the letter before he arrived.

a. had posted the letter

b. am posting the letter

c. have posted the letter

d. was posted the letter

9. I went to the park this morning.

a. have gone to the park

b. was gone to the park

c. am going to the park

d. No error

10. She has left school last year.

a. left school

b. was left school

c. had left school

d. No error

11. You just started a three months contract.

a. just had started.

b. just will start.

c. have just started

d. No error

12. Let’s get into the bus. It will leave in a minute.

a. was to leave

b. left

c. is going to leave

d. No error

13. They have been building the bridge for several months.

a. are building

b. build

c. had been building

d. No error

**Directions (Q. Nos. 14 − 25):** *Given below is a sentence divided into different parts. Find the part which has an error.*

14. a. John did not come

b. to see the circus

c. last night because

d. he has seen it before.

15. a. A cold wind

b. is blowing

c. for the last four days

d. in Cochin.

16. a. They haven’t been feeling

b. as low as

c. they do now

d. for a long time.

17. a. He told him that

b. if she broke her promise,

c. she would never speak to her again.

d. No error

18. a. He was sitting

b. on the bank fishing

c. when he had seen a woman’s hat

d. floating down the river.

19. a. Something extremely strange

b. has happened yesterday

c. while we were out cycling.

d. No error.

20. a. I am carrying

b. this letter around for days

c. and haven’t even looked at it.

d. No error

21. a. As soon as you

b. finish your dinner,

c. I would like you to go to bed.

d. No error

22. a. By the year 2030,

b. linguists will be studying and

c. defining the Indo-European language family

d. for more than 200 years.

23. a. If had known

b. that they were coming

c. I would have told Rohan.

d. No error

24. a. She hated games

b. and always manage

c. to avoid children’s parties.

d. No error

25. a. I’m afraid

b. I forgotten my book,

c. so I don’t know what to do.

d. No error

**Practice Exercise – Medium**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1 − 33):** *Each set of the following sentences comprises four alternatives (a), (b), (c) and (d). Choose the most suitable alternative in accordance with the correct use of tense.*

1.

a. While they were having dinner, lights went out.

b. While they have dinner, lights went out.

c. While they had dinner, lights went out.

d. While they were having dinner, lights have gone out.

2.

a. He seldom has junk food.

b. He is seldom having junk food.

c. He had seldom have junk food.

d. He has seldom had junk food.

3.

a. It is looking that it may run away.

b. It is looked that it may run away.

c. It looks that it may run away.

d. It was looking that it may run away.

4.

a. Why were you cooking today?

b. Why are you cooking today?

c. Why do you cook today?

d. Why have you been cooking today?

5.

a. She did not open the door because she had washed her hair.

b. She did not open the door because she washed her hair.

c. She did not open the door because she has been washing her hair.

d. She did not open the door because she was washing her hair.

6.

a. I found that my pocket was picked.

b. I found that my pocket has been picked.

c. I found that my pocket had been picked.

d. I found that my pocket have been picked.

7.

a. He had brushed his teeth every night.

b. He brushes his teeth every night

c. He had been brushing his teeth every night.

d. He is brushing his teeth every night.

8.

a. He have just had his lunch.

b. He just had his lunch.

c. He just has had his lunch

d. He has just had her lunch.

9.

a. She did not cook her dinner yet.

b. She has cooked her dinner yet.

c. She have not cooked her dinner yet.

d. She has not cooked her breakfast yet.

10.

a. I know her since 1990.

b. I knew her since 1990.

c. I have known her since 1990.

d. I had known her since 1990.

11.

a. I have been received your confirmation this morning.

b. I had received your confirmation this morning.

c. I received your confirmation this morning.

d. I have been receiving your confirmation this morning.

12.

a. By tomorrow afternoon the flight will take off for Paris.

b. By tomorrow afternoon the flight will be taken off for Paris.

c. By tomorrow afternoon the flight will be taking off for Paris.

d. By tomorrow afternoon the flight will have taken off for Paris.

13.

a. I found that she recently went out.

b. I found that she recently gone out.

c. I found that she have recently gone out.

d. I found that she had recently gone out.

14.

a. For the last eight months I have worked on the thesis.

b. For the last eight months I have been working on the thesis.

c. For the last eight months I am working on the thesis.

d. For the last eight months, I was working on the thesis.

15.

a. Since she started journey, she has felt sick.

b. Since she started journey, she is feeling sick.

c. Since she started journey, she has been sick.

d. Since she started journey, she have been feeling sick.

16.

a. He lived in Paris for three years when I went there.

b. He had been living in Paris for three years when I went there.

c. He was living in Paris for three years when I went there.

d. He has been living in Paris for three years when I went there.

17.

a. They did not go out as it still rained.

b. They have not gone out as it was still raining.

c. They did not go out as it was still raining.

d. They were not gone out as it still rained.

18.

a. To this day I have not forgotten his good deeds.

b. To this day I am not forgot his good deeds.

c. To this day I don’t forget his good deeds.

d. To this day I had not forgotten his good deeds.

19.

a. She has scored a century a week ago.

b. She has scored a century before a week.

c. She did scored a century before a week.

d. She scored a century a week ago.

20.

a. By seven o’clock yesterday I caught only one fish.

b. By seven o’clock yesterday I will have caught only one fish.

c. By seven o’clock yesterday I had caught only one fish.

d. By seven o’clock yesterday I have caught only one fish.

21.

a. I have been writing six letters since morning.

b. I was writing six letters since morning.

c. I have written six letters since morning.

d. I am writing six letters since morning.

22.

a. The news of her death was not declared so far.

b. The news of her death has not been declared so far.

c. The news of her death has been not declared so far.

d. The news of her death have no declared so far.

23.

a. I don’t think we were met before.

b. I don’t think we had met before.

c. I don’t think we met before.

d. I don’t think we have met before.

24.

a. I saw two robbers who prowled near the well.

b. I saw two robbers who are prowling near the well.

c. I saw two robbers who were prowling near the well.

d. I seen two robbers who have been prowling near the wall.

25.

a. India has won freedom in 1947.

b. India win freedom in 1947.

c. India won freedom in 1947.

d. India had won freedom in 1947.

26.

a. The courts don’t open on Sunday.

b. The courts have not open on Sunday.

c. The courts had not opened on Sunday.

d. The courts are not opening on Sunday.

27.

a. Rohan was married to her for ten years by then.

b. Rohan had been married to her for ten years by then.

c. Rohan has been married to her for ten years by then.

d. Rohan have married to her for ten years by then.

28.

a. Last week I had gone to the movie twice.

b. Last week I gone to the movie twice.

c. Last week I have gone to the movie twice.

d. Last week I went to the movie twice.

29.

a. When I called on him he did his home work.

b. When I had called on him he was doing his home work.

c. When I called on him he was doing his home work.

d. When I called on him he has been doing his home work.

30.

a. Before he comes the train will depart.

b. Before he comes the train will be departing.

c. Before he comes the train will have departed.

d. Before he came the train will depart.

31.

a. Which book you read last year?

b. Which book have you read last year?

c. Which book did you read last year?

d. Which book had you read last year?

32.

a. How long are you reading the autobiography?

b. How long have you read this autobiography?

c. How long have you been reading this autobiography?

d. How long were you reading this autobiography?

33.

a. They have been owning this property for the last ten years.

b. They have owned this property for the last ten years.

c. They own this property for the last ten years.

d. They were owning this property for the last ten years.

**Practice Exercise – Difficult**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1 − 7):** *In each questions below, four different ways of writing a sentence are indicated. Choose the best way of writing the sentence.*

1. a. The composition into which history have being thus divided, the one may be compared to a map, the other to a painted landscape.

b. The composition into which history having been thus divided, the one may be compared to a map, the other to a painted landscape.

c. The composition into which history has being thus divided, the one may be compared to a map, the other to a painted landscape.

d. The composition into which history has been thus divided, the one may be compared to a map, the other to a painted landscape.

2. a. Your climbing harness is not just a mere equipment but it became part of you when you’re climbing.

b. Your climbing harness is not just a mere equipment but is becomes of part of you when you’re climbing.

c. Your climbing harness is not just a mere equipment but it became part of you when you climb.

d. Your climbing harness is not just a mere equipment but it becomes a part of you when you’re climbing.

3. a. Environmental pollution are one of the most hazardous problems of this era across the globe.

b. Environmental pollution were one of the most hazardous problem this era across the globe.

c. Environmental pollution is one of the most hazardous problem of this era across the globe.

d. Environmental pollution been one the most hazardous problem of this era across the globe.

4. a. Adventure tourism are motivating by a desire to experience physical activities and challenging situations in natural environments.

b. Adventure tourism is motivated by a desire to experience physical activities and challenging situations in natural environments.

c. Adventure tourism motivates by a desire to experience physical activities and challenging situations in natural environments.

d. Adventure tourism motivate by a desire to experience physical activities and challenging situations in natural environments.

5. a. The corporate scenario seen a revolution from the 1990 onwards when the Government of India liberalize its economic policies.

b. The corporate scenario seeing a revolution from the 1990 onwards when the Government of India liberalized its economic policies.

c. The corporate scenario saw a revolution from the 1990 onwards when the Government of India liberalized its economic policies.

d. The corporate scenario seeing a revolution from the 1990 onwards when the Government of India liberalizing its economic policies.

6. a. Her research resulting in some amazing discoveries.

b. Her researches results in some amazing discoveries.

c. Her researches result in some amazing discoveries.

d. Her researches resulted in some amazing discoveries.

7. a. Time and again marketing practitioners have waxed eloquent about the potential of the rural market.

b. Time and again marketing practitioners has waxed eloquent about the potential of the rural market.

c. Time and again marketing practitioners having waxed eloquent about the potential of the rural market.

d. Time and again marketing practitioners have been waxed eloquent about the potential of the rural market.

**Directions (Q. Nos. 8 − 17):** *Choose the appropriate verb-form to fill in the blanks and rewrite the sentence.*

8. The efficiency of a machine \_\_\_\_\_ by the load it can take.

a. knows

b. is known

c. has been known

d. has known

9. Every day last week my uncle \_\_\_\_\_ a plate.

a. break

b. has broken

c. broke

d. has broken

10. If I \_\_\_\_\_ two more questions, I would have passed.

a. had answered

b. would have answered

c. would answer

d. answered

11. She promised \_\_\_\_\_\_ me a post in his department.

a. to have given

b. having given

c. have given

d. to give

12. Please don’t \_\_\_\_\_ when you go out.

a. have opening the door

b. leave the door open

c. leave the door opened

d. leave open the door

13. No. I \_\_\_\_\_\_ John in town and we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the theatre.

a. was meeting; are going.

b. am meeting; are going.

c. had met; were going.

d. met; had went.

14. I \_\_\_\_\_\_ him in Chennai in 2000. I \_\_\_\_\_\_ him last 3 years before.

a. met: had seen

b. meet; seen

c. will meet; have seen

d. met; saw

15. At that time he \_\_\_\_\_\_ a novel for two months.

a. wrote

b. had been writing

c. writes

d. have written.

16. By the time the troops \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the combat group will have spent several weeks waiting.

a. will arrive

b. arrived

c. were arriving

d. arrive

17. February 21st is my brother’s wedding anniversary. Next month my brother and my brother’s wife \_\_\_\_\_\_ for three years.

a. will have been married

b. will be married

c. got married

d. were married.