Tense is a grammatical concept that indicates the time when an action or state described by a verb occurs. In English, there are three tenses: past, present, and future. Each tense has four aspects, which provide additional information about the duration, completion, or ongoing nature of the action. The aspects include indefinite, continuous (progressive), perfect, and perfect continuous.

| **Tenses** | **Rules and Formula** | **Examples** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [Simple Present](https://www.careerpower.in/simple-present-tense.html) | Subject + Base form of the verb (+s/es for third-person singular) | Rajesh **eats** bread and butter before going to school. |
| [Present Continuous](https://www.careerpower.in/present-continuous-tense.html) | Subject + **Helping Verb(am/is/are) + Main verb + ing**+ the rest of the sentence | Students **are going**to school. |
| [Present Perfect](https://www.careerpower.in/present-perfect-tense.html) | Subject + have/has + past participle | She **has lived** here all her life. |
| [Present Perfect Continuous](https://www.careerpower.in/present-perfect-continuous-tense.html) | Subject + **Have/Has + been + Verb+ ing**+ the rest of the sentence | I **have been working** on this project for a week. |
| [Simple Past](https://www.careerpower.in/simple-past-tense.html) | Subject + **Verb + en / verb in the past tense**+ the rest of the sentence | Nupur **went**to the supermarket yesterday. |
| [Past Continuous](https://www.careerpower.in/past-continuous-tense.html) | Subject + **Helping Verb(was/were) + Main verb + ing**+ the rest of the sentence | It **was snowing**today. |
| [Past Perfect](https://www.careerpower.in/past-perfect-tense.html) | Subject + **Helping Verb (had) + Past participle of the main verb** + the rest of the sentence along with the time frame. | She**had met**him before the party. |
| [Past Perfect Continuous](https://www.careerpower.in/past-perfect-continuous-tense.html) | Subject + **Had + Been + Verb + ing +** the rest of the sentence | He **had been drinking** milk when Mom walked into the kitchen. |
| [Simple Future](https://www.careerpower.in/simple-future-tense.html) | Subject +**will/shall + V1** + Object | I **will write** articles on different topics. |
| [Future Continuous](https://www.careerpower.in/future-continuous-tense.html) | Subject + **will be/shall be + V1 + ing** + Object | I**will be waiting** here for three hours by six o'clock. |
| [Future Perfect](https://www.careerpower.in/future-perfect-tense.html) | Subject + **will have/shall have + V3 +** Object | I **will have dressed up**by the time you reach home. |
| Future Perfect Continuous | Subject + **will have been + V1 + ing**+ Object | I**will have been waiting** here for three hours by six o'clock. |

Different functions of tenses:

* **Simple Present:** Subject + first form of verb (add s/es to the verb when the subject is in third person singular)

1. To express a habitual action:

* I drink tea every morning
* He dances and moves about a lot.
* **We go for a walk after dinner every evening.**
* **She reads a book before going to bed every night.**
* They always eat lunch together.

1. To express General truths:

* **The Earth orbits around the sun.**
* **Sound travels faster through solids than through air.**
* Honey is sweet.
* **The human body needs oxygen to survive.**

1. In exclamatory sentences beginning with here and there to express what is actually taking place in the present; as,

* Here comes the Auto!
* There he goes!

4) In vivid narrative, as substitute for the Simple Past:

* Sohrab now rushes forward and deals a heavy blow to Rustam.
* Therefore, the Sultan changes his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad.

1. To express a future event that is part of a fixed timetable or fixed programme

* The next meeting is at 7.00 tomorrow morning.
* The movie starts at 9 o'clock.
* The train leaves at 5.20.
* When does the pizza house reopen?

1. It is used, instead of the Simple Future Tense, in clauses of time and of condition; as,

* I shall wait till you finish your dinner.
* If it rains we shall get wet.
* **PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE:** Subject+ is/am/are + base form of verb +ing

1. For an action going on at the time of speaking;

* She is singing (now).
* The boys are playing hockey.

1. For a temporary action which may not be actually happening at the time of speaking; as,

* I am reading 'The way of the world' (but I am not reading at this moment).
* **They are renovating their house this month.**
* **They are staying at a hotel while their house is being painted.**

1. For an action that has already been arranged to take place in the near future; as,

* I am going to the party tonight.
* My uncle is arriving tomorrow.

1. The following verbs, on account of their meaning, are not normally used in the continuous form: Verbs of perception, e.g. see, hear, smell, notice, recognize.

Verbs of appearing, e.g., appear, look, seem.

1. However, the verbs listed above can be used in the continuous tenses with a change of meaning:

* She is tasting the soup to see if it needs more salt. (taste = test the flavor of)
* I am thinking of going to Malaysia. (think of/ consider the idea of )
* **I am having dinner with my friends tonight.**
* **They are feeling the warmth of the sun while on the beach.**
* **PRESENT PERFECT TENSE:** Subject + have/has+ third form of the verb (past participle form)

1. To indicate completed activities in the immediate past (with just); as,

* **They have just arrived at the airport.**
* **I have just sent the email.**
* He has just gone out.
* It has just struck ten.

1. To express past actions whose time is not given and not definite; as,

* I have visited Paris. (The time of the visit is unspecified.)
* She has learned to play the piano. (The exact time of learning is not mentioned.)
* They have eaten at that restaurant before. (The specific time of eating there isn't stated.)
* He has read that book. (No specific time of reading is mentioned.)
* We have traveled to many countries. (The exact times or when these travels occurred are not specified.)

1. To describe past events when we think more of their effect in the present than of the action itself; as,

* Gopi has eaten all the biscuits (i.e., there aren't any left for you).
* I have cut my finger (and it is bleeding now).
* I have finished my work (= now I am free).

1. To denote an action beginning at some time in the past and continuing up to the present moment (often with since- and for-phrases); as,

* I have known him for a long time.
* He has been ill since last week.
* We have lived here for ten years.
* We haven't seen Priya for several months.
* **PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE:** Subject +have been/has been +base form of verb +ing

1. The Present Perfect Continuous is used for an action which began at some time in the past and is still continuing; as,

* **She has been practicing the piano since she was five years old.**
* **They have been working on this project since last month.**
* He has been sleeping for five hours (and is still sleeping).
* They have been building the bridge for several months.
* They have been playing since four o'clock
* **PAST TENSE: SIMPLE PAST TENSE:** Subject + second form of the verb (past form)

1. The Simple Past is used to indicate an action completed in the past. It often occurs with adverbs or adverb phrases of past time.

* **They watched a movie two days ago.**
* **She graduated from college in 2010.**
* The steamer sailed yesterday, I received his letter a week ago.
* She left school last year.

1. Sometimes this tense is used without an adverb of time. In such cases the time may be either implied or indicated by the context.

* I learnt Punjabi in Nagpur.
* I didn't sleep well (ie., last night).
* **He studied architecture.**
* **She baked a cake.**

1. The Simple Past is also used for past habits; as,

* He studied many hours every day.
* She always carried an umbrella.
* **He played basketball with his friends after school.**
* **They studied Spanish for an hour every evening.**
* **PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE:** Subject+ was/were+ base form of verb +ing

1. The Past Continuous is used to denote an action going on at some time in the past. The time of the action may or may not be indicated.

* We were listening to the radio all evening.
* It was getting darker.
* **They were playing football at 4 PM yesterday.**
* She was studying when the phone rang.
* When I saw him, he was playing Badminton.

1. This tense is also used with always, continually, etc. for persistent habits in the past.

* He was always grumbling.
* **She was always talking about her travels around the world.**
* **They were constantly arguing about small things.**
* **She was forever checking her phone for updates.**
* **PAST PERFECT TENSE:** Subject + had + third form of the verb (past participle form)

1. The Past Perfect describes an action completed before a certain moment in the past;

* I met him in Kolkata in 1995. I had seen him last three years before.

1. If two actions happened in the past, it may be necessary to show which action happened earlier than the other. The Past Perfect is mainly used in such situations in one clause and the Past Perfect in the other;

* Before I reached the station the train had started (so I couldn’t get into the train)
* I had done my exercise when Hari came to see me.
* I had written the letter before he arrived.
* **PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSES:** Subject +had been +base form of the verb+ ing

1. The Past Perfect Continuous is used for an action that began before a certain point in the past and continued up to that time:

* At that time, he had been writing a book for two months.
* Mr. Shekh had already been teaching there for five years.
* **THE FUTURE: SIMPLE FUTURE:** Subject +will/shall+ first form of verb
  + - 1. This tense can be used with a time expression for a definite future arrangement:
* I will attend the meeting tomorrow morning.
* We shall overcome this challenge together.
* **FUTURE CONTINUOUS:** Subject +will be/shall be+ first form of verb+ ing

1. We use the Future Continuous Tense to talk about actions which will be in progress at a time in the future.

* I suppose it will be raining when we start.
* This time tomorrow I will be sitting on the beach in Singapore.
* “Can I see you at 5 o'clock?” – “Please don t come then I will be watching the tennis match on TV.

1. We also use this tense to talk about actions in the future which are already planned or which are expected to happen in the normal course of things.

* I will be staying here till Sunday.
* He will be meeting us next week.
* The postman will be coming soon
* **FUTURE PERFECT:** Subject + **will have/shall have + V3 +** Object

1. The Future Perfect Tense is used to talk about actions that will be completed by a certain future time.

* I shall have written my exercise by then.
* He will have left before you go to see him.
* By the end of this month I will have worked here for five years.
* **FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS:** Subject + **will have been + V1 + ing**+ Object

1. The Future Perfect Continuous tense is used for actions which will be in progress over a period of time that will end in the future.

* By next March we shall have been living here for four years.
* I’ll have been teaching for twenty years next July.
* In six months, we will have been travelling around Europe for half a year.
* They will have been working on the project for two months by the time it's completed.