

Grammar

Tenses

eBook

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Tenses

Tenses are used to express the time reference and the action done at any point in time. These two things are used in a combination to form tenses. To depict time reference Past, Present and Future is used and to depict action Simple, Continuous, Perfect and Perfect Continuous is used. These different types combine and form 12 different tenses which are as follows:

1. Present

- Simple present tense
- Present Continuous tense
- Present perfect tense
- Present perfect Continuous tense

2. Past

- Simple past tense
- Past Continuous tense
- Past perfect tense
- Past perfect Continuous tense

3. Future

- Simple Future tense
- Future Continuous tense
- Future perfect tense
- Future perfect Continuous tense

Chapter 2: Present Tense

2.1 Simple Present Tense

Simple present tense (also known as present indefinite tense) is used when an action is happening currently, or when it happens at regular or irregular intervals.

Depending on the subject, the simple present tense is formed by using the root form or by adding -s or -es at the end of the root word.

Let us see simple present tense usage as per different subject. Sentences here used are Positive and Negative:

Subject	Positive	Negative
I/ you/ we/ they/plural nouns	1 st form of verb	Do + not + 1 st form of verb

Example:

Positive: You write a letter

Negative: You do not write a letter

Subject	Positive	Negative
He/ She/It/Singular nouns	1 st form of verb + s/es	Does + not + 1 st form of verb

Example:

Positive: He writes a letter

Negative: He does not write a letter

Note: Do and does are always followed by 1st form of verb

2.2 Present Continuous Tense

The present Continuous tense (also known as present progressive tense) is used to depict an action that is happening now, frequently, and may continue into the future. We add 'to be' verbs (i.e. is, am, are) to the sentences in present Continuous tense.

Let us see present Continuous tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
I+ 1 st form of verb	am+ 1 st form of verb+ ing	am + not + ing
You/ we/ they + 1 st form of verb + /plural nouns	are + 1 st form of verb+ ing	are + not +1 st form of verb+ ing
He/ She/It/Singular nouns	is + 1 st form of verb + ing	is + not + 1 st form of verb + ing

Example:

Positive: I am going to the shop

Negative: I am not going to the shop

Positive: We are going to the shop

Negative: We are not going to the shop.

Positive: *Nick is going to the shop*

Negative: *Nick is not going to the shop*

2.3 Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect tense is the action or condition that either occurred at some point of time in the past (e.g., we have talked before) or began in the past and continued to the present time. This tense is formed by adding have/has to the sentences.

Let us see present perfect tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
I/ you/ we/ they/plural nouns	have + 3 rd form of verb	have + not + 3 rd form of verb
He/ She/It/Singular nouns	has + 3 rd form of verb	has + not + 3 rd form of verb

Example:

Positive: I have done my homework

Negative: I have not done my homework

Positive: *She has done her homework*

Negative: *She has not done her homework*

2.4 Present Perfect Continuous Tense

The present perfect Continuous tense (also known as the present perfect progressive tense) shows that something started in the past and is continuing at the present time. This tense is a combination of present perfect tense and present Continuous tense. Also in present perfect Continuous tense sentences, we need the time since when the action started.

Let us see present perfect Continuous tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
I/ you/ we/ they/plural nouns	have + been+ 1 st form of verb +ing	have + been+ 1 st form of verb +ing
He/ She/It/Singular nouns	has + been+ 1 st form of verb +ing	has + been+ 1 st form of verb +ing

Example:

Positive: They have been running for 10 minutes now.

Negative: They have not been running for 10 minutes now.

Positive: The dog has been hiding in the kitchen since morning

Negative: The dog has not been hiding in the kitchen since morning

Chapter 3: Past Tense

3.1 Simple Past Tense

The simple past tense (also known as Past Indefinite Tense) is used to talk about things that happened or existed before. Simple past tense emphasises that the action has finished.

Simple past tense usage:

Subject	Positive	Negative
All Subjects	2 nd form of verb	Did + not + 1 st form of verb

Example:

Positive: Ria met him yesterday.

Negative: Ria did not meet him yesterday .

3.2 Past Continuous Tense

The past Continuous tense (also known as the past progressive tense) is used to depict a continuing action or state that was happening at some point in time in the past. It is formed by using the past tense of to be verbs (i.e., was/were).

Let us see past Continuous tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
You/ we/ they/plural nouns	were+ 1 st form of verb +ing	were+ 1 st form of verb +ing
I/He/ She/It/Singular nouns	was+ 1 st form of verb +ing	was+ 1 st form of verb +ing

Example:

Positive: They were drowning in the lake.

Negative: They were not drowning in the lake.

Positive: I was drowning in the lake yesterday.

Negative: I was not drowning in the lake yesterday.

3.3 Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense is used to talk about actions that were completed at some point in time in the past. In case one wants to talk about some point in the past and want to reference an event that happened even earlier, using the past perfect allows you to convey the sequence of the events.

Let us see past perfect tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
All Subjects	had+ 3 rd form of verb	had+ not + 3 rd form of verb

Example:

Positive: *Doctors had told her about her mother's illness last night*

Negative: *Doctors had not told her about her mother's illness last night*

3.4 Past Perfect Continuous Tense

The past perfect Continuous tense (also known as the past perfect progressive tense) indicates that an action began in the past, continued in the past, and also ended at a defined point in the past. This is what makes it different from the present perfect Continuous, which on the other hand indicates an action that began in the past and continued up to the present

Let us see past perfect Continuous tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
All Subjects	had+ been+1 st form of verb + ing	Had + not + been+1 st form of verb + ing

Example:

Positive: *We had been drinking whole night yesterday*

Negative: *We had not been drinking whole night yesterday.*

Chapter 4: Future Tense

4.1 Simple Future Tense

The simple future tense (also known as Future indefinite) is used to discuss about things that haven't happened yet. One must use this tense for actions or conditions that will begin and end in the future. This tense is formed by using will/shall in sentences.

Will is used to state certainty of an action to happen whereas shall is mainly used with I and we to make an offer or suggestion, or to ask for advice. With the other persons (you, he, she, they) shall is only used in literary devices or poems.

Let us see Simple Future tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
All Subjects	Will/shall+1 st form of verb	Will/shall+ not+1 st form of verb

Example:

Positive: We will visit America next month.

Negative: We will not visit America next month.

4.2 Future Continuous Tense

The future Continuous tense (also called future progressive tense) indicates that something will occur in the future and continue for a period of time in future. It is formed by using will/shall + be.

Let us see Future Continuous tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
All Subjects	Will/shall+be+1 st form of verb +ing	Will/shall+not+be+1 st form of verb +ing

Example:

Positive: *I will be dancing at his birthday party.*

Negative: *I will not be dancing at his birthday party.*

4.3 Future Perfect Tense

The future perfect is used to depict actions that will be completed before some other point of time in the future. This tense construction is similar to that of present perfect but has some variations.

Let us see Future perfect tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
All Subjects	Will/shall+have+3 rd form of verb	Will/shall+have+not+be +3 rd form of verb

Example:

Positive: *I will be dancing at his birthday party.*

Negative: *I will not be dancing at his birthday party.*

4.4 Future Perfect Continuous Tense

The future perfect Continuous (also known as future perfect progressive) depicts actions that will continue up until a point in the future. These activities might begin in Past, Present or future but will definitely end in the future.

Let us see Future perfect Continuous tense usage as per different subject.

Subject	Positive	Negative
All Subjects	Will/shall+ have+ been+ 3 rd form of verb	Will/shall+ have+ been+ 3 rd form of verb

Example:

Positive: *You will have been taking exam by tomorrow afternoon*

Negative: *You will not have been taking exam by tomorrow afternoon.*

Chapter 5: Rule of Tenses

Tense	Affirmative/ Negative/ Question	Use	Signal Words
Simple Present	A : He speaks N: He does not speak Q: Does he speak?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action in the present taking place once, never or several times • Facts • Actions taking place one after another • Action set by a time table or schedule 	Always, every..., never, normally, often, seldom, sometime s, usually if sentences type I (if I talk,...)
Present Progressive	A: He is speaking. N: He is not	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action taking place at 	at the moment, just, just

speaking.
Q: Is he
speaking?

the
moment of
speaking

now,
Listen!,
Look!,
now, right
now

- Action taking place only for a limited period of time
- Action arranged for the future

Simple Past

A : He
speaks
N: He does
not speak
Q: Does he
speak?

- Action in the past taking place once, never or several times
- Actions taking place one after

Yesterday,
2 minutes
ago, in
1990, the
other day,
last Friday
if
sentence
type II (If I
talked, ...)

- another
Action
taking
place in the
middle of
another
action

**Past
Progressive**

A: He was
speaking.
N: He was
not
speaking.
Q: Was he
speaking?

- action
going on at
a certain
time in the
past
 - actions
taking
place at the
same time
 - action in
the past
that is
interrupted
by another
action
- when,
while, as
long as

Present

A : He has

- Putting
- Already,

Perfect Simple	spoken N: He has not spoken Q: Has he spoken?	emphasis on the result <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action is still going on• Action that stopped recently• The finished action that has an influence on the present• Action that has taken place once, never or several times before the moment of speaking	ever, just, never, not yet, so far, till now, up to now
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Present Perfect Progressive	<p>A: He has been speaking.</p> <p>N: He has not been speaking.</p> <p>Q: Has he been speaking?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • putting emphasis on the course or duration (not the result) • action that recently stopped or is still going on • the finished action that influenced • the present 	<p>all day, for 4 years, since 1993, how long? the whole week</p>
Past Perfect Progressive	<p>A : He had been speaking</p> <p>N: He had not been speaking</p> <p>Q: Had he been</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action taking place before a certain time in the past • Sometimes 	<p>for, since, the whole day, all day</p>

speaking?

interchangeable with past perfect simple

- Putting emphasis on the duration course of an action

Future I Simple

A: He will speak.
N: He will not speak.
Q: Will he speak?

- action in the future that cannot be influenced
- spontaneous decision
- assumption with regard to the future

In a year, next ..., tomorrow
If-Sat Type/I (If you ask her, she will help you.)
assumption: I think, probably, perhaps

Future I

A : He is

- Decision

In one

Simple	going to speak. N: He is not going to speak Q: Is he going to speak?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made for the future • Conclusion with regard to the future 	year, next week, tomorrow
Future I Progressive	A: He will be speaking. N: He will not be speaking. Q: Will he be speaking?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • action that is going on at a certain time in the future • action that is sure to happen in the near future 	in one year, next week, tomorrow
Future II Simple	A: He will have spoken. N: He will not have spoken Q: Will he	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action that will be finished at a certain time in the future 	By Monday, in a week

	have spoken?		
Future II Progressive	<p>A: He will have been speaking.</p> <p>N: He will not have been speaking.</p> <p>Q: Will he have been speaking?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • action taking place before a certain time in the future • putting emphasis on the course of action 	for ..., the last couple of hours, all day long
Conditional I Simple	<p>A: He would speak.</p> <p>N: He would not speak</p> <p>Q: Would he speak?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action that might take place 	If sentences type II (If I were you, I would go home.)

**Conditional
II
Progressive**

A: He would
have been
speaking.

N: He would
not have
been
speaking.

Q: Would he
have been
speaking?

- action that
might
have taken
place in
the past
 - puts
emphasis
on the
course /
duration of
the action
-