

# PAST SIMPLE

## Formation

Regular verbs: verb + ed (ex: walked, called, phoned)

Irregular verbs: different form (ex: wake --> woke; break --> broke; feel --> felt)

**Affirmative**: I walked / I felt bad

**Negative**: I did not [didn't] walk / I did not [didn't] felt bad

**Interrogative**: Did I walk? / Did I felt bad?

## Uses

Finished action in the past.

Action starts and finishes in the past: *I saw a movie yesterday*

Past states or habits (alternative to *used to* or *would*): *We went to the same beach every summer.*

**Time expressions**: a month / year ago, last week / month, yesterday, in 2018 / January, when, the other day

# PAST CONTINUOUS

## Formation

WAS/WERE & VERB + ING

**Affirmative**: I was playing

**Negative**: You were not [weren't] listening / He was not [wasn't] working

**Interrogative**: Was she studying?

## Uses

Finished action in the past

Actions starts before a certain end and continues at that point: *What were you doing at 8 p.m. last night? I was studying.*

Activity was in progress for some time, not just for a moment: *We were cleaning the house all morning*

**Time expressions**: as, while / whilst, at nine o'clock, yesterday

Past continuous is likely to be accompanied by Past Simple. The reason why they appear together is because Past Continuous is first used to describe the context of a situation and then Past Simple is used to describe the situation:

- We were drinking at a bar when suddenly John fell from his chair and fractured his arm.

# USED TO

## Formation

USED TO & INFINITIVE

**Affirmative**: He used to work in London.

**Negative**: She did not [didn't] use to read books / He never used to read the newspaper.

**Interrogative**: Did you use to live in Elche?

## Uses

Past states that are not true any more: *We used to live in New York when I was a kid.*

Past habits: *I used to go swimming every Friday when I was at school.*

# WOULD

## Formation

WOULD & INFINITIVE (MORE FORMAL)

**Affirmative**: I would often play tennis when I was a kid.

\*Would is not usually used in negative sentences or questions or for a past state or situation.

## Uses

Repeated past actions that do not happen any more: *Every Sunday I would go on a long bike ride.*

# PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE

## Formation

HAS/HAVE & PAST PARTICIPLE

**Affirmative:** He has jumped / I have broken the dish

**Negative:** She has not [hasn't] jumped / I have not [haven't] broken the dish.

**Interrogative:** Has she jumped? / Have you broken the dish?

## Uses

Indefinite period of time. Focuses on the result.

Completed action, but still relevant to the present (*for, since* and *stative verbs*)

*I have worked here since I graduated.*

*We have arrived at the airport.*

*This is the best birthday I've ever had.*

*She has lived here all her life*

*They have written five letters already*

*I have just eaten*

**Time expressions:** already, yet, ever, never, just, lately, recently, since, for, so far, today, this week / month / year, How long, several times

# PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

## Formation

HAS/HAVE BEEN & VERB+ING

**Affirmative:** He has been working

**Negative:** She has not [hasn't] been reading

**Interrogative:** Have you been studying?

## Uses

Indefinite period of time. Focuses on the activity.

Action may continue up to the present (*for* and *since*)

~~*I have been working here since I graduated.*~~

*I've been gardening. It's so nice out there.*

*She's been reading that book all day.*

*I've been writing emails.*

*The grass looks wet. Has it been raining?*

**Time expressions:** all day / morning, lately, recently, since, for, How long

Past Simple and Present Perfect can be used together. For example, an experience can be introduced using Present Perfect tense:

- I've been injured

And then go deeper into the topic using Past Simple:

- The last time I had an injury was in 2012. I sprained my knee and couldn't play for three weeks.

Present Perfect can be also used to ask if something has happened and then use Present Simple to answer:

- Have you sent those pictures?
- Yes. I sent them last night.

# PAST PERFECT SIMPLE

## Formation

HAD & PAST PARTICIPLE

**Affirmative:** He had left

**Negative:** You had not [hadn't] met

**Interrogative:** Had you left?

## Uses

Finished action. Focuses on the result.

ShowS the order of two past actions: *We had already eaten when Alice arrived.*

Shows that an action was not done or was incomplete when the past simple action happened: *They left before I had spoken to them.*

Talks about time up to a certain point in the past: *She had published her first poem by the time she was eight.*

*It was the most beautiful photo I'd ever seen.*

**Time expressions:** after, already, as soon as, before, by the time, ever, never, already, still, just

# PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

## Formation

HAD BEEN & VERB+ING

**Affirmative:** He had been sleeping

**Negative:** You had not [hadn't] been working

**Interrogative:** Had you been cooking?

## Uses

Finished action. Focuses on the activity.

Shows the duration of the action: *I had been waiting an hour for the bus.*

Suggests a temporary situation: *She'd been living with her parents.*

**Time expressions:** all night / week, for, since

Past Perfect can rarely be used without Past Simple as it needs another action to be compared. So, both can be used to describe a succession of events, for example:

- I arrived at the restaurant. I had lunch, and then I left.

How to use all tenses in a conversation.

It is important to be aware of the relationship of each verb tense to a timeline:

Present Perfect is closest to the present

Past Simple and Past Continuous describe actions that ended in both the near and distant past.

Past Perfect refers to an action that happens before another action, both in the near and distant past:

"Johny guess what? I've found a new soccer team! I was speaking to Ron the other day and he said he'd spoken to the captain and they were looking for a new goalkeeper. So I sent them a text and they arranged a tryout earlier today."

In the example, Present Perfect is used to introduce the situation and then the rest of the tenses are used for the details.