

Simple Present

FORM

[VERB] + s/es in third person

Examples:

- You **speak** English.
- **Do** you **speak** English?
- You **do not speak** English.

USE 1 Repeated Actions

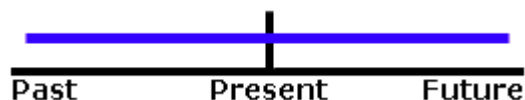


Use the Simple Present to express the idea that an action is repeated or usual. The action can be a habit, a hobby, a daily event, a scheduled event or something that often happens. It can also be something a person often forgets or usually does not do.

Examples:

- I **play** tennis.
- She **does not play** tennis.
- **Does** he **play** tennis?
- The train **leaves** every morning at 8 AM.
- The train **does not leave** at 9 AM.
- When **does** the train usually **leave**?
- She always **forgets** her purse.
- He never **forgets** his wallet.
- Every twelve months, the Earth **circles** the Sun.
- **Does** the Sun **circle** the Earth?

USE 2 Facts or Generalizations



The Simple Present can also indicate the speaker believes that a fact was true before, is true now, and will be true in the future. It is not important if the speaker is correct about the fact. It is also used to make generalizations about people or things.

Examples:

- Cats **like** milk.
- Birds **do not like** milk.
- **Do** pigs **like** milk?
- California **is** in America.
- California **is not** in the United Kingdom.
- Windows **are** made of glass.
- Windows **are not** made of wood.
- New York **is** a small city. *It is not important that this fact is untrue.*

USE 3 Scheduled Events in the Near Future



Speakers occasionally use Simple Present to talk about scheduled events in the near future. This is most commonly done when talking about public transportation, but it can be used with other scheduled events as well.

Examples:

- The train **leaves** tonight at 6 PM.

- The bus **does not arrive** at 11 AM, it **arrives** at 11 PM.
- When **do** we **board** the plane?
- The party **starts** at 8 o'clock.
- When **does** class **begin** tomorrow?

USE 4 Now (Non-Continuous Verbs)



Speakers sometimes use the Simple Present to express the idea that an action is happening or is not happening now. This can only be done with [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) and certain [Mixed Verbs](#).

Examples:

- I **am** here now.
- She **is not** here now.
- He **needs** help right now.
- He **does not need** help now.
- He **has** his passport in his hand.
- **Do** you **have** your passport with you?

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You **only** speak English.
- Do you **only** speak English?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Once a week, Tom **cleans** the car. *Active*
- Once a week, the car **is cleaned** by Tom. *Passive*

Present Continuous

FORM

[am/is/are + present participle]

Examples:

- You **are watching** TV.
- **Are** you **watching** TV?
- You **are not watching** TV.

USE 1 Now



Use the Present Continuous with [Normal Verbs](#) to express the idea that something is happening now, at this very moment. It can also be used to show that something is not happening now.

Examples:

- You **are learning** English now.
- You **are not swimming** now.
- **Are** you **sleeping**?
- I **am sitting**.
- I **am not standing**.
- **Is** he **sitting** or **standing**?
- They **are reading** their books.

- They **are not watching** television.
- What **are** you **doing**?
- Why **aren't** you **doing** your homework?

USE 2 Longer Actions in Progress Now



In English, "now" can mean: this second, today, this month, this year, this century, and so on. Sometimes, we use the Present Continuous to say that we are in the process of doing a longer action which is in progress; however, we might not be doing it at this exact second.

Examples: (All of these sentences can be said while eating dinner in a restaurant.)

- I **am studying** to become a doctor.
- I **am not studying** to become a dentist.
- I **am reading** the book *Tom Sawyer*.
- I **am not reading** any books right now.
- **Are** you **working** on any special projects at work?
- **Aren't** you **teaching** at the university now?

USE 3 Near Future



Sometimes, speakers use the Present Continuous to indicate that something will or will not happen in the near future.

Examples:

- I **am meeting** some friends after work.
- I **am not going** to the party tonight.
- **Is** he **visiting** his parents next weekend?
- **Isn't** he **coming** with us tonight?

USE 4 Repetition and Irritation with "Always"



The Present Continuous with words such as "always" or "constantly" expresses the idea that something irritating or shocking often happens. Notice that the meaning is like [Simple Present](#), but with negative emotion. Remember to put the words "always" or "constantly" between "be" and "verb+ing."

Examples:

- She **is always coming** to class late.
- He **is constantly talking**. I wish he would shut up.
- I don't like them because they **are always complaining**.

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs/ Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for [Mixed Verbs](#) cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Present Continuous with these verbs, you must use [Simple Present](#).

Examples:

- She **is loving** this chocolate ice cream. *Not Correct*
- She **loves** this chocolate ice cream. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You are **still** watching TV.
- Are you **still** watching TV?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Right now, Tom **is writing** the letter. *Active*
- Right now, the letter **is being written** by Tom. *Passive*

Simple Past

USE 1 Completed Action in the Past



Use the Simple Past to express the idea that an action started and finished at a specific time in the past. Sometimes, the speaker may not actually mention the specific time, but they do have one specific time in mind.

Examples:

- I **saw** a movie yesterday.
- I **didn't see** a play yesterday.
- Last year, I **traveled** to Japan.
- Last year, I **didn't travel** to Korea.
- **Did** you **have** dinner last night?
- She **washed** her car.
- He **didn't wash** his car.

USE 2 A Series of Completed Actions



We use the Simple Past to list a series of completed actions in the past. These actions happen 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and so on.

Examples:

- I **finished** work, **walked** to the beach, and **found** a nice place to swim.
- He **arrived** from the airport at 8:00, **checked** into the hotel at 9:00, and **met** the others at 10:00.
- **Did** you **add** flour, **pour** in the milk, and then **add** the eggs?

USE 3 Duration in Past



The Simple Past can be used with a duration which starts and stops in the past. A duration is a longer action often indicated by expressions such as: for two years, for five minutes, all day, all year, etc.

Examples:

- I **lived** in Brazil for two years.
- Shauna **studied** Japanese for five years.
- They **sat** at the beach all day.
- They **did not stay** at the party the entire time.
- We **talked** on the phone for thirty minutes.
- A: How long **did** you **wait** for them?
B: We **waited** for one hour.

USE 4 Habits in the Past



The Simple Past can also be used to describe a habit which stopped in the past. It can have the same meaning as "[used to](#)." To make it clear that we are talking about a habit, we often add expressions such as: always, often, usually, never, when I was a child, when I was younger, etc.

Examples:

- I **studied** French when I was a child.
- He **played** the violin.
- He **didn't play** the piano.
- **Did** you **play** a musical instrument when you were a kid?
- She **worked** at the movie theater after school.
- They never **went** to school, they always **skipped** class.

USE 5 Past Facts or Generalizations



The Simple Past can also be used to describe past facts or generalizations which are no longer true. As in USE 4 above, this use of the Simple Past is quite similar to the expression "[used to](#)."

Examples:

- She **was** shy as a child, but now she is very outgoing.
- He **didn't like** tomatoes before.
- **Did** you **live** in Texas when you **were** a kid?
- People **paid** much more to make cell phone calls in the past.

IMPORTANT When-Clauses Happen First

Clauses are groups of words which have meaning but are often not complete sentences. Some clauses begin with the word "when" such as "when I dropped my pen..." or "when class began..." These clauses are called when-clauses, and they are very important. The examples below contain when-clauses.

Examples:

- **When I paid her one dollar**, she answered my question.
- She answered my question **when I paid her one dollar**.

When-clauses are important because they always happen first when both clauses are in the Simple Past. Both of the examples above mean the same thing: first, I paid her one dollar, and then, she answered my question. It is not important whether "when I paid her one dollar" is at the beginning of the sentence or at the end of the sentence. However, the example below has a different meaning. First, she answered my question, and then, I paid her one dollar.

Example:

- I paid her one dollar **when she answered my question**.

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You **just** called Debbie.
- Did you **just** call Debbie?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Tom **repaired** the car. *Active*
- The car **was repaired** by Tom. *Passive*

Past Continuous

USE 1 Interrupted Action in the Past



Use the Past Continuous to indicate that a longer action in the past was interrupted. The interruption is usually a shorter action in the Simple Past. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

Examples:

- I **was watching** TV when she called.
- When the phone rang, she **was writing** a letter.
- While we **were having** the picnic, it started to rain.
- What **were you doing** when the earthquake started?
- I **was listening** to my iPod, so I didn't hear the fire alarm.
- You **were not listening** to me when I told you to turn the oven off.
- While John **was sleeping** last night, someone stole his car.
- Sammy **was waiting** for us when we got off the plane.
- While I **was writing** the email, the computer suddenly went off.
- A: What **were you doing** when you broke your leg?
- B: I **was snowboarding**.

USE 2 Specific Time as an Interruption



In USE 1, described above, the Past Continuous is interrupted by a shorter action in the Simple Past. However, you can also use a specific time as an interruption.

Examples:

- Last night at 6 PM, I **was eating** dinner.
- At midnight, we **were** still **driving** through the desert.
- Yesterday at this time, I **was sitting** at my desk at work.

IMPORTANT

In the Simple Past, a specific time is used to show when an action began or finished. In the Past Continuous, a specific time only interrupts the action.

Examples:

- Last night at 6 PM, I **ate** dinner.
I started eating at 6 PM.
- Last night at 6 PM, I **was eating** dinner.
I started earlier; and at 6 PM, I was in the process of eating dinner.

USE 3 Parallel Actions



When you use the Past Continuous with two actions in the same sentence, it expresses the idea that both actions were happening at the same time. The actions are parallel.

Examples:

- I **was studying** while he **was making** dinner.
- While Ellen **was reading**, Tim **was watching** television.
- **Were you listening** while he **was talking**?
- I **wasn't paying** attention while I **was writing** the letter, so I made several mistakes.
- What **were you doing** while you **were waiting**?
- Thomas **wasn't working**, and I **wasn't working** either.
- They **were eating** dinner, **discussing** their plans, and **having** a good time.

USE 4 Atmosphere

In English, we often use a series of parallel actions to describe the atmosphere at a particular time in the past.

Example:

- When I walked into the office, several people **were** busily **typing**, some **were talking** on the phones, the boss **was yelling** directions, and customers **were waiting** to be helped. One customer **was yelling** at a secretary and **waving** his hands. Others **were complaining** to each other about the bad service.

USE 5 Repetition and Irritation with "Always"



The Past Continuous with words such as "always" or "constantly" expresses the idea that something irritating or shocking often happened in the past. The concept is very similar to the expression "[used to](#)" but with negative emotion. Remember to put the words "always" or "constantly" between "be" and "verb+ing."

Examples:

- She **was always coming** to class late.
- He **was constantly talking**. He annoyed everyone.
- I didn't like them because they **were always complaining**.

While vs. When

Clauses are groups of words which have meaning, but are often not complete sentences. Some clauses begin with the word "when" such as "when she called" or "when it bit me." Other clauses begin with "while" such as "while she was sleeping" and "while he was surfing." When you talk about things in the past, "when" is most often followed by the verb tense [Simple Past](#), whereas "while" is usually followed by Past Continuous. "While" expresses the idea of "during that time." Study the examples below. They have similar meanings, but they emphasize different parts of the sentence.

Examples:

- I was studying **when she called**.
- While I was studying**, she called.

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for [Mixed Verbs](#) cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Past Continuous with these verbs, you must use [Simple Past](#).

Examples:

- Jane **was being** at my house when you arrived. *Not Correct*
- Jane **was** at my house when you arrived. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You were **just** studying when she called.
- Were you **just** studying when she called?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- The salesman **was helping** the customer when the thief came into the store. *Active*
- The customer **was being helped** by the salesman when the thief came into the store. *Passive*

Present Perfect

USE 1 Unspecified Time Before Now



We use the Present Perfect to say that an action happened at an unspecified time before now. The exact time is not important. You **CANNOT** use the Present Perfect with specific time expressions such as: yesterday, one year ago, last week, when I was a child, when I lived in Japan, at that moment, that day, one day, etc. We **CAN** use the Present Perfect with unspecific expressions such as: ever, never, once, many times, several times, before, so far, already, yet, etc.

Examples:

- I **have seen** that movie twenty times.
- I think I **have met** him once before.
- There **have been** many earthquakes in California.
- People **have traveled** to the Moon.
- People **have not traveled** to Mars.
- **Have** you **read** the book yet?
- Nobody **has** ever **climbed** that mountain.
- A: **Has** there ever **been** a war in the United States?
B: Yes, there **has been** a war in the United States.

How Do You Actually Use the Present Perfect?

The concept of "unspecified time" can be very confusing to English learners. It is best to associate Present Perfect with the following topics:

TOPIC 1 Experience

You can use the Present Perfect to describe your experience. It is like saying, "I have the experience of..." You can also use this tense to say that you have never had a certain experience. The Present Perfect is **NOT** used to describe a specific event.

Examples:

- I **have been** to France.
This sentence means that you have had the experience of being in France. Maybe you have been there once, or several times.
- I **have been** to France three times.
You can add the number of times at the end of the sentence.
- I **have never been** to France.
This sentence means that you have not had the experience of going to France.
- I think I **have seen** that movie before.
- He **has** never **traveled** by train.
- Joan **has studied** two foreign languages.
- A: **Have** you ever **met** him?
B: No, I **have not met** him.

TOPIC 2 Change Over Time

We often use the Present Perfect to talk about change that has happened over a period of time.

Examples:

- You **have grown** since the last time I saw you.
- The government **has become** more interested in arts education.
- Japanese **has become** one of the most popular courses at the university since the Asian studies program was established.
- My English **has** really **improved** since I moved to Australia.

TOPIC 3 Accomplishments

We often use the Present Perfect to list the accomplishments of individuals and humanity. You cannot mention a specific time.

Examples:

- Man **has walked** on the Moon.
- Our son **has learned** how to read.
- Doctors **have cured** many deadly diseases.
- Scientists **have split** the atom.

TOPIC 4 An Uncompleted Action You Are Expecting

We often use the Present Perfect to say that an action which we expected has not happened. Using the Present Perfect suggests that we are still waiting for the action to happen.

Examples:

- James **has not finished** his homework yet.
- Susan **hasn't mastered** Japanese, but she can communicate.
- Bill **has still not arrived**.
- The rain **hasn't stopped**.

TOPIC 5 Multiple Actions at Different Times

We also use the Present Perfect to talk about several different actions which have occurred in the past at different times. Present Perfect suggests the process is not complete and more actions are possible.

Examples:

- The army **has attacked** that city five times.
- I **have had** four quizzes and five tests so far this semester.
- We **have had** many major problems while working on this project.
- She **has talked** to several specialists about her problem, but nobody knows why she is sick.

Time Expressions with Present Perfect

When we use the Present Perfect it means that something has happened at some point in our lives before now. Remember, the exact time the action happened is not important.



Sometimes, we want to limit the time we are looking in for an experience. We can do this with expressions such as: in the last week, in the last year, this week, this month, so far, up to now, etc.



Examples:

- **Have you been** to Mexico **in the last year**?
- I **have seen** that movie six times **in the last month**.
- They **have had** three tests **in the last week**.
- She graduated from university less than three years ago. She **has worked** for three different companies **so far**.
- My car **has broken** down three times **this week**.

NOTICE

"Last year" and "in the last year" are very different in meaning. "Last year" means the year before now, and it is considered a specific time which requires [Simple Past](#). "In the last year" means from 365 days ago until now. It is not considered a specific time, so it requires Present Perfect.

Examples:

- I **went** to Mexico **last year**.
I went to Mexico in the calendar year before this one.
- I **have been** to Mexico **in the last year**.
I have been to Mexico at least once at some point between 365 days ago and now.

USE 2 Duration From the Past Until Now (Non-Continuous Verbs)



With [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) and non-continuous uses of [Mixed Verbs](#), we use the Present Perfect 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.

Examples:

- I **have had** a cold for two weeks.
- She **has been** in England for six months.
- Mary **has loved** chocolate since she was a little girl.

Although the above use of Present Perfect is normally limited to Non-Continuous Verbs and non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, the words "live," "work," "teach," and "study" are sometimes used in this way even though they are NOT Non-Continuous Verbs.

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You have **only** seen that movie one time.
- Have you **only** seen that movie one time?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Many tourists **have visited** that castle. *Active*
- That castle **has been visited** by many tourists. *Passive*

Present Perfect Continuous

USE 1 Duration from the Past Until Now



We use the Present Perfect Continuous 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.

Examples:

- They **have been talking** for the last hour.
- She **has been working** at that company for three years.
- What **have you been doing** for the last 30 minutes?
- James **has been teaching** at the university since June.
- We **have been waiting** here for over two hours!
- Why **has** Nancy **not been taking** her medicine for the last three days?

USE 2 Recently, Lately



You can also use the Present Perfect Continuous WITHOUT a duration such as "for two weeks." Without the duration, the tense has a more general meaning of "lately." We often use the words "lately" or "recently" to emphasize this meaning.

Examples:

- Recently, I **have been feeling** really tired.
- She **has been watching** too much television lately.
- **Have you been exercising** lately?

- Mary **has been feeling** a little depressed.
- Lisa **has not been practicing** her English.
- What **have you been doing**?

IMPORTANT

Remember that the Present Perfect Continuous has the meaning of "lately" or "recently." If you use the Present Perfect Continuous in a question such as "Have you been feeling alright?", it can suggest that the person looks sick or unhealthy. A question such as "Have you been smoking?" can suggest that you smell the smoke on the person. Using this tense in a question suggests you can see, smell, hear or feel the results of the action. It is possible to insult someone by using this tense incorrectly.

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs/ Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for [Mixed Verbs](#) cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Present Perfect Continuous with these verbs, you must use [Present Perfect](#).

Examples:

- Sam **has been having** his car for two years. *Not Correct*
- Sam **has had** his car for two years. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You have **only** been waiting here for one hour.
- Have you **only** been waiting here for one hour?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Recently, John **has been doing** the work. *Active*
- Recently, the work **has been being done** by John. *Passive*

Past Perfect

USE 1 Completed Action Before Something in the Past



The Past Perfect expresses the idea that something occurred before another action in the past. It can also show that something happened before a specific time in the past.

Examples:

- I **had** never **seen** such a beautiful beach before I went to Kauai.
- I did not have any money because I **had lost** my wallet.
- Tony knew Istanbul so well because he **had visited** the city several times.
- **Had** Susan ever **studied** Thai before she moved to Thailand?
- She only understood the movie because she **had read** the book.
- Kristine **had** never **been** to an opera before last night.
- We were not able to get a hotel room because we **had not booked** in advance.
- A: **Had** you ever **visited** the U.S. before your trip in 2006?
B: Yes, I **had been** to the U.S. once before.

USE 2 Duration Before Something in the Past (Non-Continuous Verbs)



With [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) and some non-continuous uses of [Mixed Verbs](#), we use the Past Perfect

to show that something started in the past and continued up until another action in the past.

Examples:

- We **had had** that car for ten years before it broke down.
- By the time Alex finished his studies, he **had been** in London for over eight years.
- They felt bad about selling the house because they **had owned** it for more than forty years.

Although the above use of Past Perfect is normally limited to Non-Continuous Verbs and non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, the words "live," "work," "teach," and "study" are sometimes used in this way even though they are NOT Non-Continuous Verbs.

IMPORTANT Specific Times with the Past Perfect



Unlike with the [Present Perfect](#), it is possible to use specific time words or phrases with the Past Perfect. Although this is possible, it is usually not necessary.

Example:

- She **had visited** her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.

MOREOVER

If the Past Perfect action did occur at a specific time, the Simple Past can be used instead of the Past Perfect when "before" or "after" is used in the sentence. The words "before" and "after" actually tell you what happens first, so the Past Perfect is optional. For this reason, both sentences below are correct.

Examples:

- She **had visited** her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.
- She **visited** her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.

HOWEVER



If the Past Perfect is not referring to an action at a specific time, Past Perfect is not optional. Compare the examples below. Here Past Perfect is referring to a lack of experience rather than an action at a specific time. For this reason, Simple Past cannot be used.

Examples:

- She never **saw** a bear before she moved to Alaska. *Not Correct*
- She **had never seen** a bear before she moved to Alaska. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You had **previously** studied English before you moved to New York.
- Had you **previously** studied English before you moved to New York?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- George **had repaired** many cars before he received his mechanic's license. *Active*
- Many cars **had been repaired** by George before he received his mechanic's license. *Passive*

Past Perfect Continuous

USE 1 Duration Before Something in the Past



We use the Past Perfect Continuous to show that something started in the past and continued up until another time in the past. "For five minutes" and "for two weeks" are both durations which can be used with the Past Perfect Continuous. Notice that this is related to the [Present Perfect Continuous](#); however, the duration does not continue until now, it stops before something else in the past.

Examples:

- They **had been talking** for over an hour before Tony arrived.
- She **had been working** at that company for three years when it went out of business.
- How long **had you been waiting** to get on the bus?
- Mike wanted to sit down because he **had been standing** all day at work.
- James **had been teaching** at the university for more than a year before he left for Asia.
- A: How long **had you been studying** Turkish before you moved to Ankara?
B: I **had not been studying** Turkish very long.

USE 2 Cause of Something in the Past



Using the Past Perfect Continuous before another action in the past is a good way to show cause and effect.

Examples:

- Jason was tired because he **had been jogging**.
- Sam gained weight because he **had been overeating**.
- Betty failed the final test because she **had not been attending** class.

Past Continuous vs. Past Perfect Continuous

If you do not include a duration such as "for five minutes," "for two weeks" or "since Friday," many English speakers choose to use the Past Continuous rather than the Past Perfect Continuous. Be careful because this can change the meaning of the sentence. Past Continuous emphasizes interrupted actions, whereas Past Perfect Continuous emphasizes a duration of time before something in the past. Study the examples below to understand the difference.

Examples:

- He was tired because he **was exercising** so hard.
This sentence emphasizes that he was tired because he was exercising at that exact moment.
- He was tired because he **had been exercising** so hard.
This sentence emphasizes that he was tired because he had been exercising over a period of time. It is possible that he was still exercising at that moment OR that he had just finished.

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for [Mixed Verbs](#) cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Past Perfect Continuous with these verbs, you must use [Past Perfect](#).

Examples:

- The motorcycle **had been belonging** to George for years before Tina bought it. *Not Correct*
- The motorcycle **had belonged** to George for years before Tina bought it. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You had **only** been waiting there for a few minutes when she arrived.
- Had you **only** been waiting there for a few minutes when she arrived?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Chef Jones **had been preparing** the restaurant's fantastic dinners for two years before he moved to Paris. *Active*
- The restaurant's fantastic dinners **had been being prepared** by Chef Jones for two years before he moved to Paris. *Passive*

Simple Future

FORM Will

[will + verb]

Examples:

- You **will help** him later.
- **Will** you **help** him later?
- You **will not help** him later.

FORM Be Going To

[am/is/are + going to + verb]

Examples:

- You **are going to meet** Jane tonight.
- **Are** you **going to meet** Jane tonight?
- You **are not going to meet** Jane tonight.

[Complete List of Simple Future Forms](#)

USE 1 "Will" to Express a Voluntary Action

"Will" often suggests that a speaker will do something voluntarily. A voluntary action is one the speaker offers to do for someone else. Often, we use "will" to respond to someone else's complaint or request for help. We also use "will" when we request that someone help us or volunteer to do something for us. Similarly, we use "will not" or "won't" when we refuse to voluntarily do something.

Examples:

- I **will send** you the information when I get it.
- I **will translate** the email, so Mr. Smith can read it.
- **Will** you **help** me move this heavy table?
- **Will** you **make** dinner?
- I **will not do** your homework for you.
- I **won't do** all the housework myself!
- A: I'm really hungry.
B: I'**ll make** some sandwiches.
- A: I'm so tired. I'm about to fall asleep.
B: I'**ll get** you some coffee.
- A: The phone is ringing.
B: I'**ll get** it.

USE 2 "Will" to Express a Promise

"Will" is usually used in promises.

Examples:

- I **will call** you when I arrive.
- If I am elected President of the United States, I **will make** sure everyone has access to inexpensive health insurance.
- I promise I **will not tell** him about the surprise party.
- Don't worry, I'**ll be** careful.
- I **won't tell** anyone your secret.

USE 3 "Be going to" to Express a Plan

"Be going to" expresses that something is a plan. It expresses the idea that a person intends to do something in the future. It does not matter whether the plan is realistic or not.

Examples:

- He **is going to spend** his vacation in Hawaii.
- She **is not going to spend** her vacation in Hawaii.
- A: When **are we going to meet** each other tonight?
B: We **are going to meet** at 6 PM.
- I**'m going to be** an actor when I grow up.
- Michelle **is going to begin** medical school next year.
- They **are going to drive** all the way to Alaska.
- Who **are you going to invite** to the party?
- A: Who **is going to make** John's birthday cake?
B: Sue **is going to make** John's birthday cake.

USE 4 "Will" or "Be Going to" to Express a Prediction

Both "will" and "be going to" can express the idea of a general prediction about the future. Predictions are guesses about what might happen in the future. In "prediction" sentences, the subject usually has little control over the future and therefore USES 1-3 do not apply. In the following examples, there is no difference in meaning.

Examples:

- The year 2222 **will be** a very interesting year.
- The year 2222 **is going to be** a very interesting year.
- John Smith **will be** the next President.
- John Smith **is going to be** the next President.
- The movie "Zenith" **will win** several Academy Awards.
- The movie "Zenith" **is going to win** several Academy Awards.

IMPORTANT

In the Simple Future, it is not always clear which USE the speaker has in mind. Often, there is more than one way to interpret a sentence's meaning.

No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future forms, the Simple Future cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of Simple Future, [Simple Present](#) is used.

Examples:

- When you **will arrive** tonight, we will go out for dinner. *Not Correct*
- When you **arrive** tonight, we will go out for dinner. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You will **never** help him.
- Will you **ever** help him?
- You are **never** going to meet Jane.
- Are you **ever** going to meet Jane?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- John **will finish** the work by 5:00 PM. *Active*
- The work **will be finished** by 5:00 PM. *Passive*
- Sally **is going to make** a beautiful dinner tonight. *Active*
- A beautiful dinner **is going to be made** by Sally tonight. *Passive*

Future Continuous

FORM Future Continuous with "Will"

[will be + present participle]

Examples:

- You **will be waiting** for her when her plane arrives tonight.
- **Will** you **be waiting** for her when her plane arrives tonight?
- You **will not be waiting** for her when her plane arrives tonight.

FORM Future Continuous with "Be Going To"

[am/is/are + going to be + present participle]

Examples:

- You **are going to be waiting** for her when her plane arrives tonight.
- **Are** you **going to be waiting** for her when her plane arrives tonight?
- You **are not going to be waiting** for her when her plane arrives tonight.

REMEMBER: It is possible to use either "will" or "be going to" to create the Future Continuous with little difference in meaning.

[Complete List of Future Continuous Forms](#)

USE 1 Interrupted Action in the Future



Use the Future Continuous to indicate that a longer action in the future will be interrupted by a shorter action in the future. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

Examples:

- I **will be watching** TV when she *arrives* tonight.
- I **will be waiting** for you when your bus *arrives*.
- I **am going to be staying** at the Madison Hotel, if anything *happens* and you *need* to contact me.
- He **will be studying** at the library tonight, so he will not see Jennifer when she *arrives*.

Notice in the examples above that the interruptions (*marked in italics*) are in [Simple Present](#) rather than [Simple Future](#). This is because the interruptions are in [time clauses](#), and you cannot use future tenses in time clauses.

USE 2 Specific Time as an Interruption in the Future



In USE 1, described above, the Future Continuous is interrupted by a short action in the future. In addition to using short actions as interruptions, you can also use a specific time as an interruption.

Examples:

- Tonight at 6 PM, I **am going to be eating** dinner.
I will be in the process of eating dinner.
- At midnight tonight, we **will still be driving** through the desert.
We will be in the process of driving through the desert.

REMEMBER

In the Simple Future, a specific time is used to show the time an action will begin or end. In the Future Continuous, a specific time interrupts the action.

Examples:

- Tonight at 6 PM, I **am going to eat** dinner.
I am going to start eating at 6 PM.
- Tonight at 6 PM, I **am going to be eating** dinner.

USE 3 Parallel Actions in the Future



When you use the Future Continuous with two actions in the same sentence, it expresses the idea that both actions will be happening at the same time. The actions are parallel.

Examples:

- I **am going to be studying** and he **is going to be making** dinner.
- Tonight, they **will be eating** dinner, **discussing** their plans, and **having** a good time.
- While Ellen *is reading*, Tim **will be watching** television.
Notice "is reading" because of the time clause containing "while." ([See Explanation Below](#))

USE 4 Atmosphere in the Future

In English, we often use a series of Parallel Actions to describe atmosphere at a specific point in the future.

Example:

- When I arrive at the party, everybody **is going to be celebrating**. Some **will be dancing**. Others **are going to be talking**. A few people **will be eating** pizza, and several people **are going to be drinking** beer. They always do the same thing.

REMEMBER No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future tenses, the Future Continuous cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of Future Continuous, [Present Continuous](#) is used.

Examples:

- While I **am going to be finishing** my homework, she is going to make dinner. *Not Correct*
- While I **am finishing** my homework, she is going to make dinner. *Correct*

AND REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for [Mixed Verbs](#) cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Future Continuous with these verbs, you must use [Simple Future](#).

Examples:

- Jane **will be being** at my house when you arrive. *Not Correct*
- Jane **will be** at my house when you arrive. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You will **still** be waiting for her when her plane arrives.
- Will you **still** be waiting for her when her plane arrives?
- You are **still** going to be waiting for her when her plane arrives.
- Are you **still** going to be waiting for her when her plane arrives?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- At 8:00 PM tonight, John **will be washing** the dishes. *Active*
- At 8:00 PM tonight, the dishes **will be being washed** by John. *Passive*
- At 8:00 PM tonight, John **is going to be washing** the dishes. *Active*
- At 8:00 PM tonight, the dishes **are going to be being washed** by John. *Passive*

NOTE: Passive forms of the Future Continuous are not common.

Future Perfect

FORM Future Perfect with "Will"

[will have + past participle]

Examples:

- You **will have perfected** your English by the time you come back from the U.S.
- **Will** you **have perfected** your English by the time you come back from the U.S.?
- You **will not have perfected** your English by the time you come back from the U.S.

FORM Future Perfect with "Be Going To"

[am/is/are + going to have + past participle]

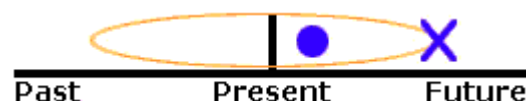
Examples:

- You **are going to have perfected** your English by the time you come back from the U.S.
- **Are** you **going to have perfected** your English by the time you come back from the U.S.?
- You **are not going to have perfected** your English by the time you come back from the U.S.

NOTE: It is possible to use either "will" or "be going to" to create the Future Perfect with little or no difference in meaning.

[Complete List of Future Perfect Forms](#)

USE 1 Completed Action Before Something in the Future



The Future Perfect expresses the idea that something will occur before another action in the future. It can also show that something will happen before a specific time in the future.

Examples:

- By next November, I **will have received** my promotion.
- By the time he *gets* home, she **is going to have cleaned** the entire house.
- I **am not going to have finished** this test by 3 o'clock.
- **Will** she **have learned** enough Chinese to communicate before she *moves* to Beijing?
- Sam **is** probably **going to have completed** the proposal by the time he *leaves* this afternoon.
- By the time I *finish* this course, I **will have taken** ten tests.
- How many countries **are** you **going to have visited** by the time you *turn* 50?

Notice in the examples above that the reference points (*marked in italics*) are in [Simple Present](#) rather than [Simple Future](#). This is because the interruptions are in [time clauses](#), and you cannot use future tenses in time clauses.

USE 2 Duration Before Something in the Future (Non-Continuous Verbs)



With [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) and some non-continuous uses of [Mixed Verbs](#), we use the Future Perfect to show that something will continue up until another action in the future.

Examples:

- I **will have been** in London for six months by the time I leave.
- By Monday, Susan **is going to have had** my book for a week.

Although the above use of Future Perfect is normally limited to Non-Continuous Verbs and non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, the words "live," "work," "teach," and "study" are sometimes used in this way even though they are NOT Non-Continuous Verbs.

REMEMBER No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future forms, the Future Perfect cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions

such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of Future Perfect, [Present Perfect](#) is used.

Examples:

- I am going to see a movie when I **will have finished** my homework. *Not Correct*
- I am going to see a movie when I **have finished** my homework. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You will **only** have learned a few words.
- Will you **only** have learned a few words?
- You are **only** going to have learned a few words.
- Are you **only** going to have learned a few words?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- They **will have completed** the project before the deadline. *Active*
- The project **will have been completed** before the deadline. *Passive*
- They **are going to have completed** the project before the deadline. *Active*
- The project **is going to have been completed** before the deadline. *Passive*

Future Perfect Continuous

FORM Future Perfect Continuous with "Will"

[will have been + present participle]

Examples:

- You **will have been waiting** for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.
- **Will** you **have been waiting** for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives?
- You **will not have been waiting** for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.

FORM Future Perfect Continuous with "Be Going To"

[am/is/are + going to have been + present participle]

Examples:

- You **are going to have been waiting** for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.
- **Are** you **going to have been waiting** for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives?
- You **are not going to have been waiting** for more than two hours when her plane finally arrives.

NOTE: It is possible to use either "will" or "be going to" to create the Future Perfect Continuous with little or no difference in meaning.

[Complete List of Future Perfect Continuous Forms](#)

USE 1 Duration Before Something in the Future



We use the Future Perfect Continuous to show that something will continue up until a particular event or time in the future. "For five minutes," "for two weeks," and "since Friday" are all durations which can be used with the Future Perfect Continuous. Notice that this is related to the [Present Perfect Continuous](#) and the [Past Perfect Continuous](#); however, with Future Perfect Continuous, the duration stops at or before a reference point in the future.

Examples:

- They **will have been talking** for over an hour by the time Thomas *arrives*.
- She **is going to have been working** at that company for three years when it finally *closes*.
- James **will have been teaching** at the university for more than a year by the time he *leaves* for Asia.
- How long **will you have been studying** when you *graduate*?
- We **are going to have been driving** for over three days straight when we *get* to Anchorage.
- A: When you *finish* your English course, **will you have been living** in New Zealand for over a year?
- B: No, I **will not have been living** here that long.

Notice in the examples above that the reference points (*marked in italics*) are in [Simple Present](#) rather than [Simple Future](#). This is because these future events are in [time clauses](#), and you cannot use future tenses in time clauses.

USE 2 Cause of Something in the Future



Using the Future Perfect Continuous before another action in the future is a good way to show cause and effect.

Examples:

- Jason will be tired when he gets home because he **will have been jogging** for over an hour.
- Claudia's English will be perfect when she returns to Germany because she **is going to have been studying** English in the United States for over two years.

Future Continuous vs. Future Perfect Continuous

If you do not include a duration such as "for five minutes," "for two weeks" or "since Friday," many English speakers choose to use the Future Continuous rather than the Future Perfect Continuous. Be careful because this can change the meaning of the sentence. Future Continuous emphasizes interrupted actions, whereas Future Perfect Continuous emphasizes a duration of time before something in the future. Study the examples below to understand the difference.

Examples:

- He will be tired because he **will be exercising** so hard.
This sentence emphasizes that he will be tired because he will be exercising at that exact moment in the future.
- He will be tired because he **will have been exercising** so hard.
This sentence emphasizes that he will be tired because he will have been exercising for a period of time. It is possible that he will still be exercising at that moment OR that he will just have finished.

REMEMBER No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future forms, the Future Perfect Continuous cannot be used in clauses beginning with time expressions such as: when, while, before, after, by the time, as soon as, if, unless, etc. Instead of Future Perfect Continuous, [Present Perfect Continuous](#) is used.

Examples:

- You won't get a promotion until you **will have been working** here as long as Tim. *Not Correct*
- You won't get a promotion until you **have been working** here as long as Tim. *Correct*

AND REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that [Non-Continuous Verbs](#) cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for [Mixed Verbs](#) cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Future Perfect Continuous with these verbs, you must use [Future Perfect](#).

Examples:

- Ned **will have been having** his driver's license for over two years. *Not Correct*
- Ned **will have had** his driver's license for over two years. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You will **only** have been waiting for a few minutes when her plane arrives.
- Will you **only** have been waiting for a few minutes when her plane arrives?
- You are **only** going to have been waiting for a few minutes when her plane arrives.
- Are you **only** going to have been waiting for a few minutes when her plane arrives?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- The famous artist **will have been painting** the mural for over six months by the time it is finished. *Active*
- The mural **will have been being painted** by the famous artist for over six months by the time it is finished. *Passive*
- The famous artist **is going to have been painting** the mural for over six months by the time it is finished. *Active*
- The mural **is going to have been being painted** by the famous artist for over six months by the time it is finished. *Passive*

NOTE: Passive forms of the Future Perfect Continuous are not common.

Used To

FORM

[used to + VERB]

Example:

- I **used to go** to the beach every day.

It is better not to use "used to" in questions or negative forms; however, this is sometimes done in informal spoken English. It is better to ask questions and create negative sentences using [Simple Past](#).

USE 1 Habit in the Past



"Used to" expresses the idea that something was an old habit that stopped in the past. It indicates that something was often repeated in the past, but it is not usually done now.

Examples:

- Jerry **used to study** English.
- Sam and Mary **used to go** to Mexico in the summer.
- I **used to start** work at 9 o'clock.
- Christine **used to eat** meat, but now she is a vegetarian.

USE 2 Past Facts and Generalizations



"Used to" can also be used to talk about past facts or generalizations which are no longer true.

Examples:

- I **used to live** in Paris.
- Sarah **used to be fat**, but now she is thin.
- George **used to be** the best student in class, but now Lena is the best.
- Oranges **used to cost** very little in Florida, but now they are quite expensive.

"Used to" vs. Simple Past

Both [Simple Past](#) and "Used to" can be used to describe past habits, past facts and past generalizations; however, "used to" is preferred when emphasizing these forms of past repetition in positive sentences. On the other hand, when asking questions or making negative sentences, [Simple Past](#) is preferred.

Examples:

- You **used to play** the piano.
- **Did** you **play** the piano when you were young?
- You **did not play** the piano when you were young.

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- Jerry **used to pay** the bills. *Active*
- The bills **used to be paid** by Jerry. *Passive*