

Past tenses

Simple Past ?

Form

Take the base verb and change the word form to the past tense form. Usually this means adding **/ed/** to the end of the word. However, there are a lot of irregular verbs which you need to learn. Pay attention to the pronunciation of -ed endings, [click here](#) for more details.

Uses

Use 1: Actions completed in the past

Past Continuous ?

Form

The past form of *to be* (was, were) + verb + ing

Uses

Use 1: Describing a past action that hasn't been completed yet

Use 2: Describing a past action that was interrupted by another action

Use 3: When describing two past events that took place at the same time, this tense is used to describe the **longer** of the two events.

Use 4: Describing a past action that took place in a specific time period and may have continued afterward

Past Perfect ?

Form

had+ past form of a verb

Uses

Use 1: When describing a series of actions, use past perfect to describe the action that happened first

Use 2: When you are describing two past actions that take place at the same time, you can use past perfect tense to describe the **shorter** action. The longer action can be described using simple past tense or past continuous tense.

Use 3: Describing a past action that was finished in a specific time period:

Past Perfect Continuous ?

Form

had + been + verb + ing

Uses

Use 1: Describing an action that began further in the past than other actions, but overlaps with actions that began later.

Use 2: Describing an a past action that was interrupted or stopped by another action.

Use 3: Describing an action that caused a later action.