

Tenses

There are three main verb tenses in English:

1. Present
2. Past
3. Future

The present, past and future tenses are divided into four aspects:

1. Simple,
2. Continuous
3. Perfect
4. Perfect Continuous

The times and aspects combine to make 12 tenses in English.

Simple Present Tense

Form: subject + verb (present/first form of the verb)

Examples:

- Jay *drinks* tea every morning. (To express a habitual action)
- The sun *rises* in the east. (Fact)
- Honey *is* sweet. (Fact)
- There she *goes*! (Exclamatory sentence beginning with here/there)
- The match *starts* at 9 p.m. (To express a future event)
- When *does* the coffee house reopen

Present Continuous Tense

Form: subject + is/am/are + verb(-ing)

Examples:

- Jay *is drinking* tea. (action going on at the time of speaking) (now)
- It *is raining*. (now)
- I *am reading* "David Copperfield." (temporary action)
- My sister *is learning* to speak French. ((temporary action)
- I *am going* to watch a movie tonight. (actions already arranged to take place in future)
- Scientists say that the earth *is getting* warmer. (changes taking place now)

I	am
He/She/It	is
They/We	are

Simple Past Tense

Form: subject + verb(past/2nd form of verb)

Example:

- I *received* his letter a week ago. (action completed in the past)
- She left college last year. (action completed in the past)
- I learnt Spanish in school. (time is implied by context)
- She always carried an umbrella. (for past habits)

Past Continuous Tense

Form: subject + was/were + verb(-ing)

Examples:

- It *was getting* dark. (to denote an action going on at some point in the past)
- We *were listening* to the music all evening.
- The light went out while I *was studying*.

He/She/It	was
You/We/They	were

Present perfect Tense

Form: subject + has/have + verb(3rd form of verb)

Example:

- He *has* just *gone* out. (to indicate activities just completed in the past)
- *Have* you *read* "Gulliver's Travels"? (past action whose time is not given)
- I have taught English to many students. (to denote an action beginning at some time in past and is continuing up to the present)
- I have been ill since last week.
- I have finished my assignment. (recent action)
- Gopi has cut her finger. (recent action(and it is bleeding now))

He/She/It	has
I/You/We/They	have

Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Form: subject + have/has been + verb(-ing)

Examples:

- He has been sleeping for five hours. (an action which began at some time in the past and is still continuing)
- It has been raining all morning.
- He has been playing cricket since he was a child.

Common mistake:

- He is playing cricket since he was a child.

Past Perfect Tense

Form: subject + had + 3rd form the verb

Example:

- When I *reached* the station the train *had started*.
- When we *got to* the theatre, the movie *had started*.
- I *was* sick because I *had eaten* too much the previous night.
- I *had done* my exercise when my friend *came* to see me.

Past Perfect Continuous Tense

Form: subject + had been + verb(-ing)

Example:

- I *had been working* at the restaurant for two years when I got the promotion.
- The meeting ended after they *had been negotiating* all afternoon.
- *Had* the car *been working* well before the accident?
- Shreyas *had been playing* well when the game was interrupted due to heavy rain.

Simple Future Tense

Form: subject + is/am/are + verb

Example:

- It *will be* Christmas in a month. (talks about action which we cannot control)
- We *will know* our exam results in ten days.
- I think India *will win* the match. (prediction)
- It is raining. I *will take* an umbrella. (instant decision)
- Look at the sky. It *is going to* rain soon. (going to(to make prediction))
- We *are going to buy* a house. (going to(plan))
- I am going to start exercising regularly.

Difference between *going to* and *present continuous*

- Ben is going get married this year. (plan)
- Ben is getting married on February 21st. (arrangement)

Future Continuous Tense

Form: subject + will be + verb(-ing)

Example:

- This time tomorrow I *will be sitting* on the beach in Goa. (action which will be in progress at a time in the future)
- He *will be meeting* is next week. (action already planned)
- I *will be staying* at the Hilton hotel in Portland.

Future Perfect Tense

Form: subject + will have + verb (3rd form)

Example:

- 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 ContinuousTense

Form: subject + will have been + verb(-ing)

Example:

- By next march we *will have been living* here for 5 years.
- I *will have been taking* painting lessons for 2 years next July.

Fill in the correct form of the verb given.

1. Jeff being our bank manager at the moment. He has been here for three years. (BE, BE)
2. I was still sleeping when the alarm went off at 5.30 this morning. (STILL SLEEP, GO)
3. If everyone donates \$5, we will have enough to buy a new machine. (HAVE)
4. There was a great documentary on TV yesterday evening. Did you it? – No, I didn't. I had to take my television set back to the store to have it repaired. (BE, YOU SEE, HAVE)
5. When I returned to the car park I didn't know where I parked my car. (RETURN, PARK)

6. My uncle has been wearing the same pullover the whole winter. I guess he loves it. (WEAR, LOVE)
7. Mum was preparing dinner when the doctor arrived. (PREPARE, ARRIVE)
8. He had walking around with a limp since he had his accident a few weeks ago. (WALK, HAVE)
9. You look pretty worried. – What has happened/ happened ? (HAPPEN)
10. When we arrived at the theatre the play had already started. (ARRIVE, ALREADY START)
11. When she came home, she saw that her husband had been drinking for some time. (COME, SEE, DRINK)
12. Have you heard the good news? – Stan and Margie are getting married! – That's not new. – I have known about it for a few weeks. (YOU HEAR, GET, KNOW)

13. I have been trying to call you the whole week! – Where have you been? (TRY, YOU BE)

13. I was trying to call you the whole week! – Where were you been? (TRY, YOU BE)

14. The manager speaking to an important customer at the moment, but he will see you in a few minutes. (SPEAK, SEE)

15. Do you realize that you standing on my toes? – It hurts! (STAND)

16. I think I will take a break. I surely deserve one. (TAKE)

17. I wonder if he has forgot my number. I have been expecting for him to call for the last two hours. (FORGET, EXPECT)

18. The novel is about a man who came home from the war and started a new life. (COME, START)

19. When I was looking for my passport a few days ago, I came across this old photo of our family reunion. (LOOK, COME)

20. I am sorry that I had to leave your party so early last night. I was really enjoying myself. (HAVE, REALLY ENJOY)

I come from a very large family and recently my parents have decided (DECIDE) that they have spend (SPEND) long enough living in an overcrowded house in Birmingham. “We are moving (MOVE) to the country”, my father announced (ANNOUNCE) one evening. “I am going selling/ will sell/will selling (SELL) this house and we live/will be living/are going live (LIVE) on a farm”. So last week we loaded (LOAD) all our belongings into two hired vans, and for the last few days we trying (TRY) to organise ourselves in our new home. Yesterday, for example, my two brothers and I have started/started (START) painting the upstairs rooms. Unfortunately, while I was mixing (MIX) the paint, one of my brothers opened (OPEN) the door. Nobody told him (TELL) him that we were (BE) in the room. So instead of painting the walls we spent (SPEND) al morning cleaning paint off the floor. But worse things have happened (HAPPEN) since then. This morning, when I woke (WAKE) up, water dripping (DRIP) through the ceiling next to my bed. We had spent/have spent/spent (SPENT) the last five hours repairing the roof. It is not all bad news though. The school in the village nearby closed (CLOSE) down two years ago, and my parents not found (NOT FIND) another school for us yet.

Thank you