

# UNIT 4: TENSES

In English, there are **simple tenses**, **progressive tenses**, and **perfect tenses**.

The time of an action or a state will decide the form of the verb in a sentence. In English, the verb forms show different tenses.

	Present	Past	Future
Simple tenses	Present simple tense I work She works	Past simple tense I worked She worked	Future simple tense I will work She will work
Progressive tenses	Present progressive tense I am working She is working	Past progressive tense I was working She was working	Future progressive tense I will be working She will be working
Perfect tenses	Present perfect tense I have worked She has worked	Past perfect tense I had worked She had worked	Future perfect tense I will have worked She will have worked

## 1 The Past Perfect Tense

The Past Perfect tense (*had + past participle*) is used to talk about an action which happened before a specific time in the past. Generally it describes:

### 1) An action before another action in the past

- When we arrived at the station, they **had already departed**.  
→ They had already departed before we arrived.
- She said that she **had bought** a house located near the company.  
→ She had bought it before the time of speaking.

### 2) A continuous progress until a specific time in the past. This is used to describe an event happening for a period of time prior to a fixed time in the past.

- He **had been sick** for two weeks when the doctor came to visit.  
→ He had been sick for two weeks before the doctor came.

## 2 The Past Simple Tense

The Past Simple tense is used to talk about an action, a state, or an experience in the past. Common adverbs of time used with the Past Simple tense are *yesterday*, *ago*, *last*, *in 1987*, *then*, *at that time*, etc.

- The office equipment **became** completely operational **three days ago**.

## 3 The Present Perfect Tense

The Present Perfect tense (*have* + past participle) is used to talk about events in the past that still have an effect on the present moment. Generally it describes:

### 1) An action which completed right at the present time

- I **have just finished** arranging tables and chairs outside.

### 2) A progress which began in the past and continues to the present time. This is often used with the following sentence patterns:

#### ① **since** + a definite time in the past/**since** + subject + verb in a past tense

- The company **has been** in trouble **since last year's ground-breaking ceremony**.
- I've **been working** on the project **since I was promoted**.

#### ② **for (the last/past)** + a period of time

- Profits **have steadily increased for the last few years**.

### 3) An experience up to the present time. This is often used with adverbs such as *before*, *ever*, *never*, or [*~ times*].

- I **have seen** him **twice before**.
- We **have never** done any volunteer work.

## 4 The Present Simple Tense

The Present Simple tense is used to talk about general facts, conditions, habits or routines at the present time.

An *-s/-es* is added to the base form of the verb when the subject is a singular third person. The Present Simple tense is often used with adverbs of frequency such as *usually*, *sometimes*, or *always*.

- Libraries **usually** charge a fee for the late return of books.
- The speaker **sometimes** gives a lecture in the auditorium.

## 5 The Future Tenses

Future tenses (*will*/[*be going to*] + base form of the verb) are used to talk about actions that will happen in the future. The Future tenses are often used with the following expressions:

tomorrow      next + time      in + time      at the end of this year

- My supervisor promises that I **will get** a raise **at the beginning of next year**.

### Practice 1:

- 1 Mr. Sanchez \_\_\_\_ his first job twenty-five years ago and now he is the head of accounting.  
(A) starts  
(B) was starting  
(C) has started  
(D) started
- 2 It is likely that the negotiators \_\_\_\_ supply order contracts by the end of next week.  
(A) finish  
(B) finished  
(C) will finish  
(D) have finished
- 3 The public relations division has a lot of applications that it \_\_\_\_ over the past 3 weeks.  
(A) collected  
(B) has collected  
(C) collects  
(D) will collect
- 4 We \_\_\_\_ a number of changes in the way we do business since the new president came in.  
(A) saw  
(B) had seen  
(C) have seen  
(D) will see
- 5 Mr. Baker \_\_\_\_ widely recognized over the last five years because of his popular mystery novel.  
(A) is  
(B) was  
(C) has been  
(D) can be
- 6 The food company \_\_\_\_ an effective marketing campaign in the foreseeable future.  
(A) develop  
(B) develops  
(C) developed  
(D) will develop
- 7 Since Ms. Grig joined the company last October, sales \_\_\_\_ to our surprise.  
(A) double  
(B) doubled  
(C) have doubled  
(D) are doubling
- 8 Because Mr. Chin is retiring, a farewell party \_\_\_\_ on Friday next week.  
(A) holds  
(B) held  
(C) will be held  
(D) is holding
- 9 It is expected that growing competition will cause a decline in sales \_\_\_\_.  
(A) properly  
(B) shortly  
(C) carefully  
(D) highly
- 10 The company is \_\_\_\_ enjoying increased revenues because of a new line of clothing.  
(A) previously  
(B) currently  
(C) soon  
(D) regularly



## **Practice 2:**

Questions 131-134 refer to the following memo.

From: Janine Farber  
To: Barker Marketing Group employees  
Date: September 25  
Subject: Entryway improvements

As many of you have noticed, the main entrance of our building is in \_\_\_\_\_ condition. It is in  
desperate need of attention. Therefore, beginning at 6 P.M. on Friday, the main entrance \_\_\_\_\_ for  
approximately one month as it is renovated. The changes will give the entryway a more  
streamlined and contemporary appearance.

\_\_\_\_\_ the main entrance is closed, employees and visitors may use the side entrances to gain  
access to the building. \_\_\_\_\_.

131. (A) poor  
(B) stable  
(C) physical  
(D) excellent

132. (A) close  
(B) was closing  
(C) will be closed  
(D) had been closed

133. (A) While  
(B) During  
(C) Sometimes  
(D) In the meantime

134. (A) All ground floor offices will remain accessible.  
(B) The construction firm has won several awards.  
(C) The building is more than 50 years old.  
(D) The board of directors is discussing the project.

Questions 135-138 refer to the following article.

(May 2)—Automotive-manufacturing company Lybera, Inc., today announced that Harvey Ramirez has been appointed as the new chairperson of its board of directors. He \_\_\_\_\_ Helen McGavick, who has resigned in order to pursue a new business venture.

135.

"We thank Ms. McGavick for her service and wish her success in her \_\_\_\_\_ endeavors," said Fen Wang, Lybera's president and CEO.

136.

Mr. Ramirez has spent ten years as CEO of aerospace-engineering firm Elia Aviation.

\_\_\_\_\_, he held a variety of senior management roles across public and private sectors.

137.

"Mr. Ramirez's familiarity with sophisticated technology, combined with his leadership experience, makes him well suited to lead our company," said Mr. Wang. "\_\_\_\_\_."

138.

135. (A) replaces  
(B) was replacing  
(C) has been replaced  
(D) would have replaced

136. (A) advancing  
(B) future  
(C) certain  
(D) instant

137. (A) Again  
(B) Consequently  
(C) Previously  
(D) However

138. (A) These meetings take place on a regular basis.  
(B) The product is currently being developed.  
(C) We hope to learn more about the position.  
(D) We look forward to his guidance.

Questions 139-142 refer to the following letter.

25 February

Dear Ms. Nguyen,

We appreciate your feedback regarding Medusa Airways' flight 859, which was scheduled to depart at 9:35 A.M. on 19 February. We are sorry that this flight <sup>139.</sup> . We have decided to compensate you for the <sup>140.</sup> . We have refunded the unused portion of your ticket, valued at \$410. Also, we will reimburse the \$200 you paid in hotel charges resulting <sup>141.</sup> the disruption. <sup>142.</sup> . Please allow up to five business days for the transactions to process.

Sincerely,

Yeeking Lai  
Customer Relations Manager

139. (A) was canceled  
(B) will be canceled  
(C) had to cancel  
(D) is canceling

140. (A) work  
(B) time  
(C) drawback  
(D) inconvenience

141. (A) above  
(B) near  
(C) from  
(D) beyond

142. (A) We hope you have an enjoyable trip.  
(B) Both amounts have been credited to your account.  
(C) Your complaint will soon be reviewed.  
(D) Thank you for your understanding.

Questions 143-146 refer to the following e-mail.

To: Film crew  
From: Sandeep Goswami  
Date: Monday, October 2  
Subject: Barn scene retake

Dear Crew,

This is a reminder that on Saturday we will be doing a retake of the advertisement featuring the horses at Willow Stables. Filming with animals can be unpredictable, and last week we were not able to get the footage we needed. \_\_\_\_\_, I would like to begin promptly at 8:00 A.M. so that we can film from a number of angles before lunch. As long as everyone is punctual and everything goes well, we should get the footage we need by then. \_\_\_\_\_.

I also want to \_\_\_\_\_ the fact that the set is closed to all who are not absolutely essential to the filming of the scene. Anyone else will be too much of a \_\_\_\_\_.

Sandeep Goswami  
Monarda Productions

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 143. (A) Otherwise<br>(B) In either case<br>(C) If possible<br>(D) Alternatively   | 145. (A) research<br>(B) challenge<br>(C) avoid<br>(D) stress             |
| 144. (A) I was impressed by the rehearsal.<br>(B) Luckily, it is not noticeable to viewers.<br>(C) We will need different equipment.<br>(D) However, it may take the full day. | 146. (A) distraction<br>(B) distracting<br>(C) distracted<br>(D) distract |