

- 4.1 Complete the sentences using these pairs of verbs. Use the past simple in one space and the past continuous in the other. (A-D)

come – show    ~~get – go~~    hope – give    live – spend    look – see    play – break  
start – check in

- 1 Just as I was getting into the bath all the lights went off.
- 2 I was going to go away this weekend, but my boss gave me some work that I have to finish by Monday.
- 3 When I was living in Paris, I spent three hours a day travelling to and from work.
- 4 A friendly American couple was talking to him as he was standing at the hotel reception.
- 5 I bumped into Mary last week. She was looking a lot better than when I last saw her.
- 6 My boss was walking into the office just as I showed everyone my holiday photos.
- 7 I was playing badminton four times a week before I hurt my ankle.

This time, use the *same* tense in both spaces.

add – taste    go off – light    not listen – explain    push – run    not watch – dream

- 8 The smoke alarm was going off when he was lighting a cigarette underneath it.
  - 9 I can't remember how to answer this question. I must confess that I wasn't listening while the teacher was explaining it to us.
  - 10 She was adding more salt to the soup, and then it was tasting much better.
  - 11 Although the television was on, I wasn't watching it. Instead I was dreaming about my holidays.
  - 12 She was pushing open the door and was running into the room.
- 4.2 Look again at numbers 1, 4, 7 and 11 in 4.1. Which of these could *also* be in the past simple? What difference in meaning, if any, would there be?
- 4.3 Complete this text with either the past simple or the past continuous form of the verbs in brackets. Where alternatives are possible, think about any difference in meaning. (A-C)

I (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (buy) a new alarm clock the other day in Taylor's the jewellers, when I actually (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (see) somebody shoplifting. I'd just finished paying for my clock and as I (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (turn) round, an elderly woman (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (slowly put) a silver plate into a bag that she (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (carry). Then she (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (walk) over to another part of the shop and (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (pick up) an expensive-looking watch a number of times. When she (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (think) that nobody (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (look), she (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (drop) it into the bag. Before I (11) \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a chance to tell the staff in the shop, she (12) \_\_\_\_\_ (notice) that I (13) \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) her and (14) \_\_\_\_\_ (hurry) out. Unfortunately for her, two police officers (15) \_\_\_\_\_ (walk) past just at that moment and she (16) \_\_\_\_\_ (run) straight into them.

## Past perfect and past simple

- A** When we give an account of a sequence of past events we usually put these events in chronological order using the past simple. If we want to refer to an event out of order – that is, an event which happened *before* the last event in the sequence we have written or spoken about – we can use the past perfect. Study the use of the past perfect and past simple in the text on the right:

Don José was a wealthy Cuban landowner who **emigrated** to Mexico in 1959. The agricultural reforms **had begun** a few months before this. He **moved** again in 1965 and made his home in the United States. He **had made** his fortune in growing sugar cane as a young man in Cuba, and he brought his expertise to his new home.

Order of events:	1 made fortune 2 reforms began 3 emigrated to Mexico 4 moved to U.S.
Order events are mentioned:	1 emigrated to Mexico 2 reforms <b>had begun</b> ( <i>out of order</i> ) 3 moved to U.S. 4 <b>had made</b> fortune ( <i>out of order</i> )

- B** When we understand that we are talking about events before another past event, we don't have to continue using the past perfect:
- ☐ We **bought** a new car last month. We'd **driven** my parents' old car for ages, but it **started** (*or had started*) to fall apart. We **put** (*or had put*) a new engine in it, but that **didn't solve** (*or hadn't solved*) the problems we were having.

- C** If the order of past events is clear from the context (for example, if time expressions make the order clear) we can often use either the past perfect or the past simple:
- ☐ *After* Ivan **had finished** reading, he put out the light. (*or ...Ivan finished...*)
  - ☐ They were given help and advice *before* they **had made** the decision. (*or ...they made...*)
  - ☐ The two leaders agreed to meet, even though *earlier* talks **had failed** to reach an agreement. (*or ...talks failed...*)

- D** The past perfect is often used in reporting what was originally said or thought in the present perfect or past simple (see also Unit 35):

Talking about a past event	Reporting this past event
<input type="checkbox"/> 'I <b>have met</b> him before.' <input type="checkbox"/> 'The village <b>hasn't changed</b> much.'	<input type="checkbox"/> I was sure that I <b>had met</b> him before. ( <i>not ...I met him...</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> On my last visit to Wixton I found that the village <b>hadn't changed</b> much. ( <i>not ...the village didn't change...</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> 'Smithers <b>drowned</b> in the recent floods.' <input type="checkbox"/> 'She <b>stole</b> the watch.'	<input type="checkbox"/> Police were convinced Smithers <b>had drowned</b> in the recent floods. ( <i>or ...drowned...</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> She admitted that she <b>had stolen</b> the watch. ( <i>or ...stole...</i> )

- E** We can use either the past perfect or past simple (and often past continuous and past perfect continuous; see Units 4 and 7) when we talk about things that we intended to do, but didn't or won't now do in the future:
- ☐ I **had hoped** to visit the gallery before I left Florence, but it's closed on Sundays. (*or I hoped..., I was hoping..., I had been hoping...*)
  - ☐ Bill **planned** to retire at 60, but we have persuaded him to stay for a few more years. (*or Bill had planned..., Bill was planning..., Bill had been planning...*)

Other verbs used like this include: consider + -ing; expect to; intend to; mean to; think about + ing/of + -ing; want to.

Grammar review: past perfect → A14–A15; past simple → A6–A8

- 5.1 A number of the events in the text are listed on the right. List the events (i) in the order in which they occurred (or were thought to occur), and (ii) the order in which they are mentioned. Comparing these two lists, consider why the past perfect was used where it is marked. (A & B)

*From an account of how a house was bought*

When I first saw the old house I *had just moved* to the area. It *had been* empty for about a year and was beginning to need some repairs, but the house was exactly what I wanted. But by the time I *had put together* enough money I learnt that a property developer *had bought* it and planned to turn it into a hotel. Six months later I *had nearly given up* hope of finding anywhere to live in the village when I heard that the house was for sale again. The property developer *had decided* to invest his money in a new housing development on the edge of the village. I bought the house immediately and I've lived there happily ever since.

*Events*

I moved...  
I learnt...  
The property developer decided...  
I heard...  
I first saw the old house  
A property developer bought it  
I nearly gave up...  
I put together enough money...  
It was empty

- 5.2 Underline the correct answers. In some cases only one is correct, and in others both are correct. (C & D)

- 1 As Geoff was introduced to Mrs Snape, he realised that he *had met/ met* her before.
- 2 During the previous week, I *had been/ went* to the gym every evening.
- 3 He denied that he *had taken/ took* the money from the office.
- 4 I didn't know the marking would take so long until I *had read/ read* the first couple of essays.
- 5 The boy told me that he *had lost/ lost* his train ticket and didn't know how he would get home.
- 6 At the conference, scientists reported that they *had found/ found* a cure for malaria.
- 7 The teacher guessed that some of the children *had cheated/ cheated* in the exam.
- 8 Thomas explained that he *had gone/ went* home early because he felt ill.
- 9 The waiter took my plate away before I *had finished/ finished* eating.
- 10 Jane didn't want any dinner. She *had eaten/ ate* already.

- 5.3 Expand these sets of notes using the past perfect to begin each sentence. (E)

I/expect/operation/painful

I/hope/leave/by 9.00

He/not mean/insult/her

Lucy/not intend/become/dentist

I/not think of/cook rabbit



- 1 I had hoped to leave by 9.00, but I overslept and missed the train.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_; she always wanted to be a vet.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_, but I didn't feel a thing.
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_, until Derek told me how tasty it was.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_, but Daphne was very offended.

Present perfect continuous and  
present perfect

A

We use the present perfect continuous to express the idea of an activity (a task, piece of work, etc.) in progress until recently or until the time of speaking:

- ☐ Have you **been working** in the garden *all day*? You look exhausted.
- ☐ She's **been writing** the book *since she was in her twenties* and at last it's finished.

Notice that we often use time expressions to say how long the activity has been in progress.

We don't use the present perfect continuous with verbs such as **belong**, **know**, **(dis)like**, and **understand** that describe unchanging states:

- ☐ Have you **known** each other long? (*not* Have you been knowing...)
- ☐ I **haven't liked** ice cream since I ate too much and was sick. (*not* I haven't been liking...)

When we talk about situations (general characteristics or circumstances) that exist until the present we often use either the present perfect or present perfect continuous:

- ☐ 'Where's Dr Owen's office?' 'Sorry, I don't know. I **haven't been working** here for long.' (*or* I haven't worked here for long. Present perfect continuous emphasises the *activity* of working; present perfect emphasises the *state* of having a job.)
- ☐ We've **been looking forward** to this holiday for ages. (*or* We've looked forward to... . Present perfect continuous emphasises a mental *process*; present perfect emphasises a mental *state*.)

B

We often use the present perfect or the present perfect continuous to talk about something that has recently finished if we can still see its results. However, we generally use the present perfect continuous with verbs that suggest extended or repeated activity. Compare:

- ☐ He's **broken** his finger and is in a lot of pain. (*not* He's been breaking...) *and*
- ☐ He's **been playing** football all afternoon and needs a shower! (*more likely than* He's played...)

We use the present perfect continuous rather than the present perfect when we draw a conclusion from what we can see, hear, etc. We often use this form to complain or criticise:

- ☐ Who's **been messing around** with my papers? They're all over the place.
- ☐ You've **been eating chocolate**, haven't you? There's some on your shirt.

When we talk about the *result* of circumstances or an activity, we use the present perfect, rather than the present perfect continuous. When we focus on the *process* we often use either the present perfect or the present perfect continuous. Compare:

- ☐ Prices **have decreased** by 7%. (*not* Prices have been decreasing by 7%.) *and*
- ☐ Prices **have been decreasing** recently. (*or* Prices have decreased...)
- ☐ I've **used** three tins of paint on the kitchen walls. (*not* I've been using three tins of paint on the kitchen walls.) *and*
- ☐ I've **been using** a new kind of paint on the kitchen walls. (*or* I've used...)

C

We use the present perfect continuous to emphasise that an activity is ongoing and repeated, while the present perfect suggests that the activity happened only once or on a specified number of occasions:

- ☐ Joseph **has been kicking** a football against the wall all day. (*more likely than* ...has kicked...)
- ☐ He **has played** for the national team in 65 matches so far. (*not* He has been playing for the national team in 65 matches so far.)

Compare:

- ☐ The workers **have been calling** for the chairman's resignation. (= emphasises a number of times, probably over an extended period) *and*
- ☐ Workers **have called** for management to begin negotiations on pay. (= maybe a number of times or only once.)

Grammar review: present perfect continuous → A16–A17; present perfect → A9–A12

- 6.1 Complete the sentences with appropriate verbs, using the same one for each sentence in the pair. Use the present perfect in one sentence and the present perfect continuous in the other. Use negative forms where appropriate. (A-C)

disappear   give   move   put   read   stay   stop   swim

- 1 a Maria Harris \_\_\_\_\_ in a rented flat since returning to Liverpool.  
b We \_\_\_\_\_ at this hotel a couple of times before.
- 2 a With their win yesterday, Italy \_\_\_\_\_ into second place in the table.  
b As house prices in the cities have risen, people \_\_\_\_\_ into the countryside.
- 3 a All day, the police \_\_\_\_\_ motorists to question them about the accident.  
b Good, the noise \_\_\_\_\_. I can start concentrating on my work again.
- 4 a I \_\_\_\_\_ any of Dickens' novels.  
b I \_\_\_\_\_ this book on astrophysics for hours and I'm still only on page 6.
- 5 a Dr Fletcher \_\_\_\_\_ the same lecture to students for the last ten years.  
b Mr Goldman \_\_\_\_\_ nearly a million pounds to the charity this year.
- 6 a I did 20 lengths of the pool today. I \_\_\_\_\_ that far since I was at school.  
b I \_\_\_\_\_ and I feel exhausted.
- 7 a In recent years, Brazilian companies \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of money into developing advanced technology.  
b The South African coal company \_\_\_\_\_ the Calverton Mine up for sale.
- 8 a An important file \_\_\_\_\_ from my office.  
b Plants and vegetables \_\_\_\_\_ from my garden since we had new neighbours.

- 6.2 The government has just announced that it is cutting the money it gives to the Influenza Research Centre. Complete these texts about it with an appropriate form of the verb given. Use the present perfect continuous if possible; if not, use the present perfect or past simple. Indicate where more than one of these tenses is possible. (A-C and Unit 3)

- a *Dr Petra Adams, the Director of the Centre, talks to a reporter:*

It's remarkable to think that since 1950 influenza (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (*claim*) more than 50,000 lives in this country, and in 1957 alone around 6,000 people (2) \_\_\_\_\_. (*die*). But over the last 20 years we at the Centre (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (*make*) considerable progress on understanding the illness. We (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (*produce*) over a hundred books and articles reporting the results of our research and in 1995 they (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (*award*) the Nobel Prize for medicine to one of my colleagues. In our more recent work we (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (*look*) into the effects of influenza on heart disease and we (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (*also explore*) a possible link between climate change and the recent increase in the number of cases of influenza. It is a tragedy that the government (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (*make*) this decision now.

- b *Kenneth Sparks, the Opposition spokesperson for science, talks to a television interviewer:*

The previous government (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (*invest*) huge amounts of money into the Centre and I think it's terrible that the present government (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (*announce*) this cut when the number of cases of influenza (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (*increase*). The Centre (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (*run*) successfully for many years. But this decision is just typical of this government. It (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (*neglect*) health research ever since it was elected, and (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (*cut*) back on spending on science generally. Although the government says that the cut is necessary because of the recent world economic problems, I (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (*find*) evidence that they (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (*plan*) this for some time. I (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (*speak*) to the Minister about this yesterday and (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (*also write*) to the Prime Minister demanding that the decision should be reversed.



# Unit 7

## Past perfect continuous, past perfect and past continuous

**A** We use the past perfect continuous to talk about something that was in progress recently before or up to a past point in time, and the past perfect when we talk about a finished activity before a past time:

- ☐ I'd **been finishing** some work in the garden when Sue arrived, so I didn't hear her come in. (*not* I'd finished some work in the garden when Sue arrived, so I didn't hear her come in.) *and*
- ☐ I'd **finished** all the ironing so I started cleaning the windows. (*not* I'd been finishing all the ironing so I started cleaning the windows.)

Sometimes we can use either the past perfect continuous or the past perfect with a very similar meaning:

- ☐ I'd **been working**/I'd **worked** hard all year, so I felt that I deserved a holiday.

**B** If we talk about *how many* times something happened in a period up to a particular past time, we use the past perfect, not the past perfect continuous:

- ☐ How many times **had you met** him before yesterday? (*not* How many times **had you been meeting**...)
- ☐ I **had stayed** in the hotel twice in the 1980s. (*not* I **had been staying** in the hotel twice...)

**C** The past perfect continuous can be used to talk about a situation or activity that went on before a particular past time and (i) finished at that time, (ii) continued beyond it, or (iii) finished shortly before it:

- ☐ (i) We'd **been driving** for about an hour when the engine suddenly stopped.
- ☐ (ii) She felt terrible during the interview because she **had been suffering** from flu since the previous day.
- ☐ (iii) When I last saw John, he'd **been running** and was out of breath.

If we are not interested in how long the activity went on, we can use the past continuous instead of the past perfect continuous. Compare:

- ☐ When the merger was announced it became apparent that the two companies **had been discussing** the possibility *since last year*. *and*
- ☐ A friend told me about a conversation she'd recently overheard. Two women **were discussing** their holiday plans...
- ☐ I first met Steve and Jane when they **had been going out** together *for five years*, and they didn't get married for another three years after that. *and*
- ☐ Emma met Graham when she **was going out** with his best friend.

**D** Remember that we don't describe states with continuous tenses (see Unit 1), and we use the past perfect, not the past perfect continuous, even when we focus on the length of a situation up to a particular past time:

- ☐ We **had owned** the car for 6 months before we discovered it was stolen. (*not* We **had been owning** the car for 6 months...)

**E** The past perfect continuous is mainly used in written texts and is less common in speech. Here are two examples of the past perfect continuous used in newspaper stories:

- ☐ The body of a climber who went missing in the Alps was finally found yesterday. Carl Sims **had been climbing** alone in the dangerous area of Harz Waterfall, which has claimed many lives in the past.
- ☐ A spokesman for the company said Morgan **hadn't been working** for them long and wasn't familiar with safety procedures: 'It was an unfortunate incident...'