

**Module 1:**

Definition: The Tense of a Verb shows– a) the *time* of an action or event and  
 b) suggests its *state* of action.

1. I *write* this letter to please you.
2. I *wrote* the letter in his very presence.
3. I *shall write* another letter tomorrow.

- In sentence 1, the Verb write refers to present time.
- In sentence 2, the Verb wrote refers to past time.
- In sentence 3, the Verb shall write refers to future time.

Thus, to express the tense (time) of the verb of action, we can categorize them as following:

1. Present Tense
2. Past Tense
3. Future Tense

To express its *state*, it is further categorized four parts within each type of time sense:

1. Present Tense	Present Simple	I drive.
	Present Continuous	I am driving.
	Present Perfect	I have loved.
	Present Perfect Continuous	I have been driving.
2. Past Tense	Past Simple	I loved.
	Past Continuous	I was driving.
	Past Perfect	I had loved.
	Past Perfect Continuous	I had been loving.
3. Future Tense	Future Simple	I shall/will love.
	Future Continuous	I shall/will be loving.
	Future Perfect	I shall/will have loved.
	Future Perfect Continuous	I shall have been loving.

- In the sentence for the Present Simple, the Verb shows that the action is mentioned simply, without anything being said about the completeness or incompleteness of the action.
- In the sentence for Present Continuous, the Verb shows that the action is mentioned as incomplete or continuous, that is, as still going on.
- In the sentence for Present Perfect, the Verb shows that the action is mentioned as finished, complete, or perfect, at the time of speaking.
- The tense of the Verb in the sentence for Present Perfect Continuous is such, because the verb shows that the action to be going on continuously, and not completed at this present moment.

Thus we see that the Tense of a verb shows not only the time of an action or event, but also the state of an action referred to.

**Module 1.1- Uses of Present Tense:**

➤ **Present Simple-**

(1) To express a habitual action

He drinks tea every morning.  
 I get up every day at five o'clock.  
 My watch keeps good time.

**University of Asia Pacific**  
**HSS 101: Tenses (An Introduction)**  
**Module: 4**

(2) To express general truths	The sun rises in the east. Honey is sweet. Fortune favours the brave
(3) In exclamatory sentences beginning with here and there to express what is actually taking place in the present	Here comes the bus ! There she goes !
(4) In vivid narrative, as substitute for the Simple Past	Soharab now rushes forward and deals a heavy blow to Rustam. Immediately the Sultan hurries to his capital.
(5) To express a future event that is part of a fixed timetable or fixed programme	The next flight is at 7,00 tomorrow morning. The match starts at 9 o'clock. When does the coffee house reopen?

➤ **Present Continuous-**

(1) For an action going on at the time of speaking	She is singing (now). The boys are playing hockey.
(2) For a temporary action which may not be actually happening at the time of speaking	I am reading ' <i>David Copperfield</i> ' (but I am not reading at this moment).
(3) For an action that has already been arranged to take place in the near future	I am going to the cinema tonight. My uncle is arriving tomorrow.

➤ **Present Perfect-**

(1) To indicate completed activities in the immediate past (with just)	Ile has just gone out. It has just struck ten.
(2) To express past actions whose time is not given and not definite	Have you read ' <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> '? I have never known him to be angry. Mr. Hasan has been to Japan.
(3) To describe past events when we think more of their effect in the present than of the action itself	Sonia has eaten all the biscuits (i.e., there aren't any left for you). I have cut my finger (and it is bleeding now). I have finished my work (= now I am free).
(4) To denote an action beginning at some time in the continuing up to the present moment (often with since- and/or-phrases)	I have known him for a long time. Ile has been ill since last week. We have lived here for ten years. We haven't seen Puspita for several months.

➤ **Present Perfect Continuous-**

(1) The Present Perfect Continuous is used for an action which began at some time in the past and is still continuing	Ile has been sleeping for five hours (and is still sleeping). They have been building the bridge for several months. They have been playing since four o'clock.
(2) The tense is sometimes used for an action already finished. In such cases the continuity of the activity is emphasized as an explanation of something.	'Why are your clothes so wet?' - 'I have been watering the garden'.

**Module 1.2- Uses of Past Tense:**

➤ **Past Simple-**

(1) The Simple Past is used to indicate an action completed in the past. It often occurs with adverbs or adverb phrases of past time	The steamer sailed yesterday. I received his letter a week ago. She left school last year.
(2) Sometimes this tense is used without an adverb of time. In such cases the time may be either implied or indicated by the context.	I learnt English in London. I didn't sleep well (i.e, last night).
(3) The Simple Past is also used for past habits	He studied many hours every day. She always carried an umbrella.

➤ **Past Continuous-**

(1) The Past Continuous is used to denote an action going on at some time in the past. The time of the action may or may not be indicated.	We were watching TV all evening. It was getting darker. The light went out while I was reading. ** When I saw him, he was playing chess. **
(2) This tense is also used with always, continually, etc. for persistent habits in the past.	He was always grumbling.

[NOTE (\*\*): The Past Continuous and Simple Past are used together when a new action happened in the middle of a longer action. The Simple Past is used for the new action.]

➤ **Past Perfect-**

(1) The Past Perfect describes an action completed before a certain moment in the past	I met him in Dhaka in 1996. I had seen him last five years before.
(2) . If two actions happened in the past, it may be necessary to show which action happened earlier than the other. The Past Perfect is mainly used in such situations. The Simple Past is used in one clause and the Past Perfect in the other.	When I reached the station the train had started (so I couldn't get into the train). I had done my exercise when Han came to see me. I had written the letter before he arrived.

➤ **Past Perfect Continuous-**

(1) The Past Perfect Continuous is used for an action that began before a certain point in the past and continued up to that time.	When Mr. Muntasir came to the school in 1995, Mr. Alim had already been teaching there for five years. At that time he had been writing a novel for two months.
--	--

**Module 1.3- Uses of Future Tense:**

➤ **Future Simple-**

(1) The Simple Future Tense is used to talk about things which we cannot control. It expresses the future as fact.	I shall be twenty next Saturday. It will be Christmas in a week. We will know our exam results in May.
(2) We use this tense to talk about	I think Bangladesh will win the match. **

**University of Asia Pacific**  
**IISS 101: Tenses (An Introduction)**  
**Module: 4**

what we think or believe will happen in the future.	I'm sure Neela will get a first class. **
(3) Using the 'Going to' form: We use the going to form (be going to + base of the verb) when we have decided to do something before talking about it.	"Have you decided what to do?" – "Yes. I am going to resign the job." "Why do you want to sell your motorbike?" – "I'm going to buy a car."
(4) Using the 'Going to' form: We also use the going to form to talk about what seems likely or certain, when there is something in the present which tells us about the future.	It is going to rain; look at those clouds. She is going to have a baby.
(5) Using the 'Be about to' form: Be about to + base form can be used for the immediate future.	Let's get into the train. It's about to leave. Don't go out now. We are about to have lunch.

➤ **Future Continuous-**

(1) This is used to talk about actions which will be in progress at a time in the future.	I suppose it will be raining when we start. This time tomorrow I will be sitting on the beach in Singapore.
(2) This tense is used to talk about actions in the future which are already planned or which are expected to happen in the normal course of things.	I will be staying here till Sunday. He will be meeting us next week. The postman will be coming soon

➤ **Future Perfect-**

(1) This is used to talk about actions that will be completed by a certain future time.	I shall have written my exercise by then. 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 Continuous- (\*\*)**

(1) The Future Perfect Continuous tense is used for actions which will be in progress over a period of time that will end in the future.	By next March we shall have been living here for four years. I'll have been teaching for twenty years next July.
--	---

[NOTE (\*\*): This tense is not very common.]

Content Source:

Wren, P.C. & Martin, H. *High School English Grammar and Composition*. S.Chand: New Delhi, 2013. Print.

University of Asia Pacific  
 IIS 101: Tenses (An Introduction)  
 Module: 4

IIS 101 –TENSES (Exercises)

**Exercise 1: Point out the Verbs in the following sentences and name their Moods and Tenses**

1. The river flows under the bridge. *pre. int.*
2. I will answer the email tonight. *fut. ind.*
3. I knew he was there, for I had seen him come. *past. per. / past ind. / past. per.*
4. It has been raining all night. *pre. p. con.*
5. They will have learnt their lessons. (future perfect)
6. He had sought the permission of his boss.
7. He takes but little pride in his work.
8. I have been living here for months.
9. We have been waiting for them.
10. By this time tomorrow I shall have reached my home.

**Exercise 2: Choose the correct or more suitable forms of the verbs to fill in the blanks**

1. The plane ----- at 3.30. (arrives, will arrive)
2. I will phone you when he -----back, (comes, will come)
3. When I get home, my dog ----- at the gate waiting for me. (sits, will be sitting)
4. I ----- the Rahmans this evening, (visit, am visiting)
5. Look at those black clouds. It ----- . (will rain, is going to rain)
6. The train ----- before we reach the station, (arrives, will have arrived)
7. Perhaps we ----- Sylhet next month, (visit, will visit)
8. Unless we ----- now we can't be on time, (start, will start)
9. I ----- into town later on. Do you want a lift? (drive, will be driving)
10. The next term ----- on 16th November. (begins, is beginning)