

## See somebody do and see somebody doing

A

Study this example situation:

Tom got into his car and drove away. You saw this.

You can say:

- ☐ I saw Tom **get** into his car and **drive** away.

In this structure we use **get/drive/do** etc.

(not to get / to drive / to do).

Somebody **did** something + I saw this

I **saw** somebody **do** something



TOM

But after a *passive* ('he **was seen**' etc.), we use **to**:

- ☐ He was seen **to** get in the car.

B

Study this example situation:

Yesterday you saw Kate. She was waiting for a bus.

You can say:

- ☐ I saw Kate **waiting** for a bus.

In this structure we use **-ing** (**waiting/doing** etc.):

Somebody **was doing** something + I saw this

I **saw** somebody **doing** something



KATE

C

Study the difference in meaning between the two structures:

I saw him **do** something = he **did** something (*past simple*) and I saw this. I saw the complete action from beginning to end:

- ☐ He **fell** off the wall. I saw this. → I saw him **fall** off the wall.  
☐ The accident **happened**. Did you see it? → Did you see the accident **happen**?

I saw him **doing** something = he **was doing** something (*past continuous*) and I saw this. I saw him when he was in the middle of doing it. This does not mean that I saw the complete action:

- ☐ He **was walking** along the street. } I saw him **walking** along the street.  
 I saw this when I drove past in my car.

Sometimes the difference is not important and you can use either form:

- ☐ I've never seen her **dance**. or I've never seen her **dancing**.

D

We use these structures with **see** and **hear**, and a number of other verbs:

- ☐ I didn't **hear** you **come** in. (you came in – I didn't hear this)  
☐ Lisa suddenly **felt** somebody **touch** her on the shoulder.  
☐ Did you **notice** anyone **go** out?  
☐ I could **hear** it **raining**. (it was raining – I could hear it)  
☐ A man was **seen running** away a short time after the break-in.  
☐ **Listen to** the birds **singing**!  
☐ Can you **smell** something **burning**?  
☐ We looked everywhere for Paul, and finally we **found** him **sitting** under a tree in the garden and **eating** an apple.