**Mixed Use of Tense/ Sequence of Tense**

Mixed Use of Tense is also called Sequence of Tense.

Rules for Mixed Use of Tense

1. Principal Clause: Simple Past

Subordinate Clause: Corresponding Past (would/ could + V1)

e.g.

Gita said that she would go to London the next day.

He said that he could easily do that.

Exception

Principal Clause: Simple Past Tense

Subordinate Clause (if indicating universal truth or present habit): Simple Present Tense

e.g.

The teacher said that the sun rises in the east.

Hari said that he takes a cup of tea every day in the morning.

She said that water freezes at zero degree Celsius.

2. If Subordinate Clause beginning with 'since' is in Simple Past Tense, Principal Clause is in Present Perfect Tense.

e.g.

I have known him since he started living in this village.

He has not met her since she eloped with Hari Bahadur.

3. Principal Clause: Imperative structure

Subordinate Clause beginning with 'lest' : (S + Should + V1)

e.g.

Labour hard lest you should fall.

Note down my address lest you should forget.

4. Suppose two actions happened at intervals in the past. We use Past Perfect Tense for the first action and Simple Past Tense for the second one.

e.g.

When the police came the thieves had already run away.

He went for a walk after he had done his homework.

5. If, out of the two actions happened in the past, one happened while another was going on, we use Simple Past and Past Continuous Tenses for the actions respectively.

e.g.

He did nothing while those girls were reading.

When I returned home she was cooking food.

6. If two actions happen or happened at the same time, same tense is used for both the actions.

e.g.

When he pressed on the brakes, the bus stopped.

When you switch on the light, your room gets light.

7. To express doubt over an action of the present time, the clause beginning with 'as if' or 'as though' is written in Simple Past Tense and the principal clause in Simple Present Tense.

e.g.

She behaves as though she didn't know her culture.

She walks as though she were drunk.

He talks as if he were illiterate.

8. To mention the real action or event of the past, Past Perfect Tense is used in the clause beginning with 'as if' or 'as though' and Simple Past Tense in principal clause.

e.g.

She walked as if she had got drunk.

He spoke as though he had not prepared well..

9. To express 'desire', Simple Past or (would/ could +V1) is used in the clause after 'I wish/ If only'.

e.g.

I wish I had a car.

I wish I was/were an engineer.

If only I had an umbrella.

I wish I would meet her.

If only I could lift that box.

10. To express regret, Past Perfect Tense is used in the clause after 'I wish/If only'.

e.g.

I wish I had not left my home.

If only I had stayed in the village.

11. If two clauses joined by the conjunction 'and' have the same subjects, they are written in the same tense.

But if time adverbials are given, tense is used according to the adverbials.

e.g.

He bought a necklace and gave it to his girlfriend.

He brushes his teeth at 7 a.m. and takes his breakfast at 7:30 a.m.

She visits the zoo today and will visit the museum tomorrow.

12. The two clauses joined by 'than' or 'as' have the same tense.

e.g.

He drinks much more than his friend does. She drove her car as carefully as her father did.

13. If that-clause is in Simple Present Tense, main clause is also in Simple Present Tense. And if that–clause is in Past Continuous Tense or Past Perfect Tense, main clause is in Simple Past Tense.

e.g.

He knows that his friend is clever.

He saw that she was cooking food.

14. The clause after 'but this.....' or 'but today' is in Present Continuous Tense and the clause before 'but this........' or 'but today' is in Simple Present Tense.

e.g.

He always writes in Nepali but today he is writing in English.

She generally sings songs but this afternoon she is dancing.

15. If the Relative Clause beginning with 'who', 'which', 'that', is in Simple Present Tense, the Principal Clause is also in Simple Present Tense. And if the Relative clause is in Simple Past Tense, the Principal Clause is also in Simple Past Tense.

e.g.

I dislike those boys who tease girls.

He beat those boys who teased girls.

16. This/It + is + the first/second ...... time + Present Perfect Tense

e.g.

This/It is the first time I've ever visited London.

This/It is the second time he has got the chance.

17. This/It + is + the + superlative degree…… + Present Perfect Tense.

e.g.

This/It is the worst book I have ever read.

This/It is the best wine I have ever drunk.

18. It's time / It’s high time + Simple Past (Present meaning)

It's time she went to bed.

I'm getting tired. It's high time we went home.

It's time you washed those trousers.

19. It is + period of time + since + Simple Past Tense/Present Perfect Tense

e.g.

It is three years since I saw Bill.

It is two months since Tom smoked a cigarette.

It is five years since she has lived in Kathmandu.

20. No sooner + Past Perfect Tense + than + Simple Past Tense

e.g.

No Sooner had he reached the station than the train left.

No sooner had the police come than the thieves ran away.

21. Hardly + Past Perfect Tense + when + Simple Past Tense

e.g.

Hardly had I corrected one set of papers, when another set arrived.

Hardly had he solved one problem, when another problem came.

22. If principal clause is in Simple Present Tense and has the following verbs, sub-ordinate clause is in Simple Future Tense.

Verbs: assume, be afraid, be sure, feel, believe, doubt, expect, hope, know, suppose, think, wonder, etc.

e.g.

I'm sure he'll come back.

I think he'll sell the house.

He hopes he will pass his exam.

I know he will be late.

23. Imperative structure + until + Simple Present Tense

e.g.

Heat the water until it boils.

Wait here until your bus comes.

**EXERCISES**

A. Use the verbs given within brackets in the correct tense.

1. He used to smoke forty cigarettes a day. Nowadays he (smoke) only ten.

2. Don't make a noise. The baby (sleep) now.

3. When the light went out I (finish) writing the letter.

4. She said that she already (visit) Pokhara.

5. Whenever he goes to town nowadays, he (spend) a lot of money.

6. He generally sings in English but today he (sing) in Nepali.

7. The light went out while we (have) supper.

8. When I saw Hari, he (run) to the winning post.

9. When Nila pushed Binod, he (fall) into the lake.

10. She (scrub) the house when he came back from his office yesterday.

11. When a policeman came the thief (run) away.

12. He (learn) English since he was a child.

13. Sita (wash) her hands when the telephone rang.

14. He (walk) in the park when he met me.

15. When you last (see) your father?

16. When he woke up in the morning he saw that it (snow) during the night.

17. Where did Mr. Rana go while we (talk)?

18. I wish I (know) the answer to that question.

19. He (go) out after he had prepared the lesson.

20. Ram (read) a magazine when she came back.

21. She cooks her food after she (come) back from her office.

22. When they stopped work that night they (plant) almost all the rice.

23. By the time the firemen came the house (burn) down.

24. When I reached the stadium the match already (start).

25. While I (drive) my car, the brakes failed.

26. The newspaper (come)? Yes, Father is reading it.

27. When it rained, the road (become) muddy.

28. He (go) to the market yesterday and bought some vegetables.

=went

29. He (collect) postal stamps ever since he left school.

=Has collected

B Use the verbs given within brackets in the correct tense:

1. Whenever he comes back from Pokhara he (bring) an English novel.

=brings

2. When I gave him his book he (throw) it away in anger.

=threw

3. He will study medicine after he (pass) the +2 exam.

=has passed

4. It (become) dark before the sun went down.

=had become

5. When the president (come) here tomorrow he will be warmly welcomed.

=comes

6. I (finish) my homework before Mahesh starts it.

=will finished

7. He never (quarrel) with anybody since he came to this college.

=has quarreled

8. He has already learnt English before he (leave) for England.

=left

9. He died after he (be) ill for a long time.

=had been

10. When she arrived, the dinner already (begin).

=had already begun

11. After you (go), I wanted to sleep.

=had gone

12. After I had heard the news, I (hurry) to see him.

=hurried

13. They dressed after they (wash).

=had washed

14. As soon as you (go), I wanted to see you again.

=went

15. They (not make) any mistakes since I taught them last week.

=have not make

16. I have not seen any film since I (return) from Kathmandu.

=returned

17. She looked as if he (not wash) for years.

=had not washed

18. He behaves as if we (be) his slaves.

=were

19. I (return) just from Pokhara and (go) to Biratnagar tomorrow.

=have just returned , will go

20. They wish they (not leave) their village.

=had not left

21. She wishes she (have) a lot of money.

=had

22. He told me he (catch) a young lion and (shoot) two others.

=caught, shot

23. We asked him what countries he (visit). =had visited

24. He wondered why I (not visit) him before.

=had not visited

25. He told us he (go) to the seaside for a holiday.

=had gone

26. He asked why we (come) so early.

=came

27. They told him they (not meet) him before.

=had not met

28. I think she (sell) her scooter.

=will sell

29. This is the best film I ever (see) in my life.

=have ever seen

30. It's high time he (get) the job.

=got

31. It (be) a week since I met that lady.

=is

33. No sooner she (reach) the airport than the plane took off.

=had she reached

34. Hardly I (repair) one of her computers, when she brought another.

=

35. It (be) a long time since he telephoned me.

=has been