

Future in the past

Future in the Past

The future in the past is used to refer to something that was the future at some time in the past. It does not matter if the future event happened or not as it was thought to be the future at the time.

As for the simple future forms will, going to and the continuous, there are three future in the past forms: would, was/were going to and was/were + continuous verb.

FUTURE IN THE PAST

The future in the past is used to refer to something that was the future at some time in the past

WOULD + BARE INFINITIVE

Use for future in the past predictions without evidence and promises

- She had promised me that she **would call**
- They told me they **would be** here by 9pm
- They said it **would rain**, but it didn't

WAS/WERE GOING TO + INFINITIVE

Was/were going to is used to talk about a future in the past firm plan, intention or a prediction with evidence.

- I **was going to tell** her but I forgot
- They said they **were going to start** on Monday

CONTINUOUS PAST

Personal future in the past arrangements

- They were packing their suitcases as they **were leaving** for their holidays the next day
- I saw him last week. He said he **was leaving** for Spain to start a new life

Future in the Past

The future in the past follows similar rules as the simple future forms will going to and the continuous verb.

- Would is used to talk about a past future promise or prediction with no evidence.
- Was/were going to is used to talk about a past future firm plan, intention or a prediction with evidence.
- Was/were + continuous verb is used to talk about a future in the past that was a personal arrangement.

Future in the Past

Would + bare-infinitive verb

Examples:

- He was sure she would never help him. It turned out he had been right – a past promise
- She promised she would call me, but she never did – a past promise.

Future in the Past

- They said they would be here by 9pm, but they haven't arrived yet – a promise.
- The newspapers said it would rain but it's stayed dry – a prediction without evidence.
- I thought they would win, but it was a draw – a prediction without evidence

Future in the Past

The form for was/were going to is:

Was/were + going to + infinitive verb

Was/were going to is often used to talk about an intention or plan that didn't happen.

Future in the Past

Examples

- I was going to tell her but I didn't get time – A future plan or intention in the past.
- They were going to start the project on Monday but had to change plans due to an operational issue – A future plan or intention in the past.
- He told me he was going to travel by bus so I'll wait for him at the stop – A future intention told in the past.
- She said she was going to wash her hair tonight so couldn't go out – a future intention told in the past.

Future in the Past

The form is:

Was/Were+ Continuous Verb

We use the past continuous form was/were+ a continuous verb other than go to talk about a personal future arrangement made in the past. This is the same as for the present continuous for future arrangements.

Future in the Past

They were packing their suitcases as they were leaving for a holiday.

They were cooking as they were having a dinner party

She was nervous as she was sitting an exam that afternoon

I saw him last week. He said he was leaving for Spain to start a new life.

Different Usages of Would

Uses of 'Would'	Example	Structure
Polite for "want"	I <u>would like</u> the crab cakes.	Subject + would like + object
Polite offer	<u>Would you like</u> some rice or a salad with it?	Would you like + object
Asking someone to do something	Would you (please) pass the jelly?	Would you + simple verb form + direct object
	Would you (please) pass me the jelly?	Would you + simple verb form + indirect object + direct object
Asking someone to do something	<u>Would you mind</u> passing the jelly?	Would you mind + gerund + object

Different Usages of Would

Reported speech	Anita said that <u>she would</u> bring the drinks.	Subject + said + (that) + noun clause
Present unreal conditionals (imaginary situations)	I <u>would move</u> to Japan if I spoke Japanese.	Main clause= would + simple verb form If-clause= if + subject + simple past verb
Repeated past actions	<i>When I was little, I <u>would play</u> hopscotch with my friends.</i>	Main clause= would + simple verb form

Past Future Continuous

Past Future Continuous Tense is used to express about the idea' that in the past action/event was predicted, planned, promised, expected or obliged to be happening (being continued) in a certain period in the past future, or while simultaneously another action/event happened or was also happening (being continued) in the same period in the past future, regardless the fact that idea was not proved to be true.

Past Future Continuous

(+) Subject + should/would + be + verb-ing + Complement

Examples:

He would be jumping between the rocks at the night yesterday.

I would be studying English at 8 o'clock last night.

She would be watering the garden at this day last week.

Past Future Continuous

(-) Subject + should/would + not + be + verb-ing + Complement

Examples:

He would not be jumping between the rocks at the night yesterday.

I would not be studying English at 8 o'clock last night.

She would not be watering the garden at this day last week..

Past Future Continuous

(?) Should/would + subject + be + verb-ing + Complement?

Examples:

Would he be jumping between the rocks at the night yesterday?

Would I be studying English at 8 o'clock last night?

Would she be watering the garden at this day last week?

Let's Translate

My family would be traveling last weekend if my grandmother didn't come.

I would be working at USA last year, but I didn't because my boss fired me.

I thought that yesterday would be rainy all the day.

We would be still swimming on the beach last night if the police did not forbid us.

Let's Translate

Andy would be standing here tomorrow morning to wait you passed by.

I planned to follow speech contest yesterday and I would be preparing myself 3 hours before the contest.

I was so sure that she would not be sleeping in her room when I came home at 9 pm.

Let's Translate

SUBJECT : Future in the Past

A) Join each idea in A with an idea from B. Make sentences using WAS / WERE GOING TO and the verbs in brackets.

A

1. I (take) a taxi home last night,
2. We (write) to them when we were on holiday,
3. She (drive) to Scotland last weekend,
4. We (play) tennis yesterday afternoon,
5. She (watch) the film on TV last night,
6. I (change) my job last year.

B

- a) but it rained all afternoon, so we stayed at home.
- b) but my boss offered me more money, so I decided to stay.
- c) but I didn't have enough money, so I had to walk.
- d) but she had seen it before, so she went to bed early.
- e) but her car broke down, so she went by train.
- f) but we changed our minds and phoned them instead.

Online Exercises

<https://test-english.com/grammar-points/b2/future-in-the-past/>

<http://testyourenglish.org/test-64>

References

<https://www.theenglishbureau.com/blog/future-in-the-past/>

<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/the-many-uses-of-would-in-everyday-speech/4455867.html>