

Tenses play a crucial role in the English language. It denotes the time an action takes place. In this chapter, we will study the rules related to tenses.

TENSE FORMS

Tense shows the time and the flow of an action.

Kinds of Tense

Present Tense	Past Tense	Future Tense
Simple Present	Simple Past	Simple Future
Present Continuous	Past Continuous	Future Continuous
Present Perfect	Past Perfect	Future Perfect
Present Perfect Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous	Future Perfect Continuous

1. Present Tense

A verb that refers to present time is said to be in Present tense.

e.g. Sachin plays cricket. Present tense is further divided into four sub-types

(i) Simple Present Tense

It expresses habitual and routine actions related to present time.

Affirmative Subject + verb¹ or verb¹ + s/es + object.

e.g. Rohit writes a letter.

Negative Subject + do/does + not + verb¹ + object.

e.g. Rohit does not write a letter.

Interrogative Do/Does + subject + verb¹ + object ?

e.g. Does Rohit write a letter?

(ii) Present Continuous Tense

It expresses the action in progress at the time of spoken.

Affirmative Subject + is/are/am + verb¹ + ing + object.

e.g. Rohit is writing a letter.

Negative Subject + is/are/am + not + verb¹ + ing + object.

e.g. Rohit is not writing a letter.

Interrogative Is/Are/Am + subject + verb¹ + ing + object ?

e.g. Is Rohit writing a letter?

(iii) Present Perfect Tense

It expresses complete action with a present effect.

Affirmative Subject + has/have + verb³ + object.

e.g. Rohit has written a letter.

Negative Subject + has/have + not + verb³ + object.

e.g. Rohit has not written a letter.

Interrogative Has/Have + subject + verb³ + object ?

e.g. Has Rohit written a letter?

(iv) Present Perfect Continuous Tense

It expresses an action that started in past and is still going on.

Affirmative Subject + has/have + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time.

e.g. Rohit has been writing a letter for ten minutes.

Negative Subject + has/have + not + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time.

e.g. Rohit has not been writing a letter since morning.

Interrogative Has/Have + subject + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time ?

e.g. Has Rohit been writing a letter for two hours?

2. Past Tense

A verb that refers to past time is said to be in Past tense.

e.g. Sachin played cricket.

Past tense is further divided into four sub-types.

(i) Simple Past Tense

It expresses an action that started in past and ended in past.

Affirmative Subject + verb² + object.

e.g. I met him yesterday.

Negative Subject + did not + verb¹ + object.

e.g. I did not meet him yesterday.

Interrogative Did + subject + verb¹ + object ?

e.g. Did I meet him yesterday?

(ii) Past Continuous Tense

It expresses an action that was going on at some point in the past.

Affirmative Subject + was/were + verb¹ + ing + object.

e.g. The boys were playing in the ground.

Negative Subject + was/were + not + verb¹ + ing + object.

e.g. The boys were not playing in the ground.

Interrogative Was/Were + subject + verb¹ + ing + object ?

e.g. Were the boys playing in the ground?

(iii) Past Perfect Tense

It expresses the action that was completed before the time of speaking.

Affirmative Subject + had + verb³ + object.

e.g. She had read the story.

Negative Subject + had + not + verb³ + object.

e.g. She had not read the story.

Interrogative Had + subject + verb³ + object ?

e.g. Had she read the story?

(iv) Past Perfect Continuous Tense

It expresses an action that started in past and was continued up until another time in past.

Affirmative Subject + had + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time.

e.g. They had been waiting for us for three hours.

Negative Subject + had + not + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time.

e.g. They had not been waiting for us since 10 o'clock.

Interrogative Had + subject + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time ?

e.g. Had they been waiting for us since morning?

3. Future Tense

A verb that refers to future time is said to be in future tense.

e.g. Sachin will play cricket.

Future tense is further divided into four sub-types.

(i) Future Simple Tense

It expresses an action that is performed in future time.

Affirmative Subject + will/shall + verb¹ + object.

e.g. He will send a letter.

Negative Subject + will/shall + not + verb¹ + object.

e.g. He will not send me a letter.

Interrogative Will/Shall + subject + verb¹ + object ?

e.g. Will he send me a letter?

(ii) Future Continuous Tense

It expresses an action that will be continuous in future time.

Affirmative Subject + will/shall + be + verb¹ + ing + object.

e.g. Reena will be cooking food.

Negative Subject + will/shall + not + be + verb¹ + ing + object.

e.g. Reena will not be cooking food.

Interrogative Will/Shall + subject + be + verb¹ + ing + object ?

e.g. Will Reena be cooking food?

(iii) Future Perfect Tense

It expresses an action that is assumed to be completed in future time.

Affirmative Subject + will/shall + have + verb³ + object.

e.g. You will have seen the car.

Negative Subject + will/shall + not + have + verb³ + object.

e.g. You will not have seen the car.

Interrogative Will/Shall + subject + have + verb³ + object ?

e.g. Will you have seen the car?

(iv) Future Perfect Continuous Tense

It expresses an action that is assumed to continue up until a point in the future.

Affirmative Subject + will/shall + have + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time.

e.g. Mother will have been cleaning house for two hours.

Negative Subject + will/shall + not + have + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time.

e.g. Mother will not have been cleaning house since 2 o'clock.

Interrogative Will/Shall + subject + have + been + verb¹ + ing + object + since/for + time ?

e.g. Will mother have been cleaning house for 10 minutes?

PRACTICE EXERCISE

Directions (Q. Nos. 1-5) *Identify the suitable tense form of the following sentences.*

1. He stole my pen last night.

- (a) Present Continuous (b) Past Simple
(c) Future Simple (d) Present Perfect

2. Mohan was watching a movie on TV.

- (a) Past Continuous
(b) Past Simple
(c) Future Simple
(d) Present Perfect

3. I have been to Agra in January.
 (a) Present Continuous (b) Past Simple
 (c) Future Simple (d) Present Perfect
4. Mohan was absent in last class.
 (a) Present Continuous (b) Past Simple
 (c) Future Simple (d) Present Perfect
5. He will have been teaching in this college after his PhD.
 (a) Present Continuous
 (b) Past Simple
 (c) Future Simple
 (d) Future Perfect Continuous

Directions (Q. Nos. 6-10) Complete the following sentences with the correct form of verb tense.

6. The Prime Minister said that it him great pleasure to meet the soldiers that evening.
 (a) gives (b) gave
 (c) was giving (d) is giving
7. This an easy quiz so far.
 (a) has been (b) had been
 (c) was (d) will have been
8. They in an apartment right now because they can't find a cheap house.
 (a) have been living (b) are living
 (c) had been living (d) were living
9. Everyone when the earthquake hit the small town.
 (a) is sleeping (b) slept
 (c) was sleeping (d) will be sleeping
10. He by herself since his divorce.
 (a) has been living (b) had been living
 (c) is living (d) was living
11. I was angry that I (make) such a stupid mistake.
 (a) has made (b) had made
 (c) am making (d) None of these
12. I predict that by 2020, man (land) on Mars.
 (a) will have landed (b) will land
 (c) will be landing (d) None of these
13. I (see) a wonderful film in the cinema last night.
 (a) see (b) saw
 (c) have seen (d) None of these
14. The plane (take off) in a few minutes.
 (a) will be taking off (b) is taking off
 (c) took off (d) None of these
15. I (get up) at 7 every morning but today I was late.
 (a) got up (b) will get up
 (c) get up (d) None of these

Directions (Q. Nos. 16-20) In the following questions, a sentence is given with an error in it. Find out that part of the sentence which has the error. If there is no error; the answer is (d). (Ignore errors of Punctuation, if any.)

16. I missed the last bus which I usually catch (a)/and have to stay back (b)/at the bus stop last night. (c)/No error (d)
17. Her goal is to win gold medal (a)/in the Asian games and (b)/made her country proud. (c)/No error (d)
18. He firmly believe that (a)/ if any disease is detected early then (b)/ it can be cured by yoga. (c)/No error (d)
19. Ram takes charge of (a)/ the project within a few days (b)/ of appointment. (c)/No error (d)
20. Economists have predicted that (a)/ the country's economic growth (b)/falls low to eight per cent this year. (c)/No error (d)

Answers

1	(b)	2	(a)	3	(d)	4	(b)	5	(d)	6	(b)	7	(a)	8	(b)	9	(c)	10	(a)
11	(b)	12	(a)	13	(b)	14	(b)	15	(c)	16	(b)	17	(c)	18	(a)	19	(a)	20	(c)