

Verb Tense: Past



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<Simple Past> = [Verb + d/ed]

Use when stating:

Examples:

<p>Completed actions that happened at specific times</p>	<p>This morning, Mary had pancakes for breakfast.</p> <p>The police arrested a man at 2:45 a.m. in connection with a robbery.</p>
<p>Completed actions that indicate durations</p>	<p>My mother taught English in middle school for 20 years.</p> <p>Some children in my neighborhood were members of the baseball team for several years.</p>
<p>Habitual actions in the past</p>	<p>We always had roast chicken on Sundays like British people do.</p> <p>My father took me to a place for cream tea every time I did well on the test.</p>
<p>Series of actions that happened in the past</p>	<p>As soon as I came home, I took a shower and went to bed.</p> <p>At the party, the president of the company briefly gave a speech, made a toast and drunk some wine.</p>

*Adapted from: *Ready for FCE*, Roy Norris (2001)

Verb Tense: Past

<Past Continuous> = [was/were + gerund (Verb + ing)]

Use when stating:

Examples:

Temporary activities	We were swimming in the sea last Monday. Jude was travelling in Asia last summer.
Situations in progress in the past	I was arguing with my mother when Billy visited me. My husband was walking down the street when the lightning struck the tower.
Situations/activities happening at the same time	I was studying English while my brother was taking a shower. Some ice skaters were already rehearsing on the rink when Lisa was putting on makeup.

<Past Perfect> = [had+ past participle (Verb + d/ed)]

Use when stating:

Examples:

An action/event that happened earlier than another one	I had known Jane before she <i>became</i> famous. Women had not been able to vote in the US until the law <i>was changed</i> in 1920.
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<Past Perfect Continuous>

Use when stating:

Example:

Emphasis on the length of the first action or event	John had been waiting for me for over 2 hours at the airport when I flew in.
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