

Grammar in Use

Past Tenses

1. Mark the tenses with **PS** (past simple), **PC** (past continuous), **PPS** (past perfect simple), **PPC** (past perfect continuous). Then match them to the correct descriptions.

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| 1 | a | PS | Elizabeth II became the Queen of the United Kingdom in 1953. |
| 2 | | | She was steering the boat while he was playing the guitar. |
| 3 | | | They had been skating together for five years before they entered the competition. |
| 4 | | | He was driving home when his car broke down. |
| 5 | | | They had already sat down for dinner by 7 o'clock. |
| 6 | | | Frank Sinatra, one of the best-selling music artists of all time, won eleven Grammy Awards. |
| 7 | | | First, he read the message. Then, he called his boss. |
| 8 | | | At 3 o'clock yesterday they were sitting at an outdoor café. |
| 9 | | | She had been working hard that day, so she was tired. |

- a event which happened at a stated past time
- b past action in progress interrupted by another past action
- c action which happened at a definite past time
- d past actions which happened one after the other
- e two simultaneous past actions
- f emphasis on the duration of an action which started and finished in the past before another past action
- g past action which occurred before a stated time in the past
- h past action of certain duration which had visible results in the past
- i action in progress at a stated time in the past

2. Choose the correct form of the verb.

- I _____ to work when I heard the news on the radio.
- We _____ around town when we bumped into Mary.
- They were hiking up the hill when the volcano _____.
- What _____ at 6 o'clock? I couldn't get in touch with you.
- Jake had only been talking for a minute _____ the microphone went dead.
- Harry _____ asleep while he was watching TV.

3. Put the verbs in brackets into the correct present tense.

- We (drive) along when this man (jump) out in front of the car.
- Tom (have) a coffee while he (read) a magazine.
- It (snow) for hours and no planes (be) able to take off.
- Ian (ask) Tina out yesterday but she (already/make) plans.
- Two days ago Mary (return) the book I (lend) her.