

### 3C Past continuous

We use the past continuous to describe actions in progress at a particular time in the past.

*I was sleeping at 7:00 this morning.*

*I was working at my desk when the telephone rang.*

We form the past continuous with the simple past of the verb *be* + the *-ing* form of the main verb.

3.10	I / he / she / it	you / we / they
+	I <b>was watching</b> TV at 6:00 last night.	We <b>were walking</b> home when it started to rain.
-	It <b>wasn't raining</b> when I got to work.	The players <b>weren't playing</b> very well.
?	<b>Was she working</b> at this office when you met her?	<b>Were you living</b> here at the beginning of the year?
Y/N	Yes, she <b>was</b> . / No, she <b>wasn't</b> .	Yes, we <b>were</b> . / No, we <b>weren't</b> .

#### Past continuous and simple past

We use the simple past to describe completed actions in the past, for example a series of actions.

*Yesterday, I woke up, I had breakfast, and then I took a shower.*



We use the past continuous with the simple past to describe an action that was in progress when a completed action happened.

The action in progress can continue.

*I was having breakfast when I heard the new song on the radio.* = I continued having breakfast.



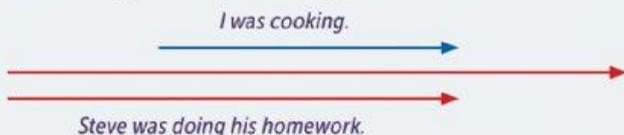
Or the action in progress may stop.

*I was sleeping when the telephone rang.* = I stopped sleeping.



We can also use two past continuous verbs together to show that two actions were happening at the same time.

*I was cooking while Steve was doing his homework.*



**Look!** We often use **when** and **while** in sentences with the past continuous.

*I broke my leg while I was playing soccer.*

*I was playing soccer when I broke my leg.*

*While I was playing soccer, I broke my leg.*

1 Complete the conversations with the past continuous form of the verbs in parentheses.

1 A \_\_\_\_\_ (you / watch) TV just now?

B No, I wasn't. It was the radio.

2 A Why didn't you see Paula and Mark?

B They \_\_\_\_\_ (walk) the dog.

3 A Why was the boss angry with Nigel?

B He \_\_\_\_\_ (not work) fast enough.

4 A Why didn't you play tennis yesterday?

B It \_\_\_\_\_ (rain) all day.

5 A Did you ask Thomas to come to the party?

B Yes, I talked to him while we \_\_\_\_\_ (have) lunch.

2 Change one verb in each sentence to the past continuous.

1 We had dinner outside while we stayed in Rome.

\_\_\_\_\_

2 When Lisa crossed the street, she dropped her phone and it broke.

\_\_\_\_\_

3 We had dinner outside when it started to rain.

\_\_\_\_\_

4 I didn't listen when the teacher told us about the exam next week.

\_\_\_\_\_

5 While we sat in the taxi, we checked the address of the hotel.

\_\_\_\_\_

3 Choose the correct form of the verbs to complete the text about a movie of Alastair Humphreys' new adventure.

#### Into The Empty Quarter

In September 2012, Alastair Humphreys <sup>1</sup>trained / *was training* for an expedition to the South Pole. Unfortunately, he <sup>2</sup>found out / *was finding out* that the trip couldn't take place because there wasn't enough money. So he <sup>3</sup>had to / *was having to* find a new adventure quickly. One day, he <sup>4</sup>looked / *was looking* through his adventure books when he <sup>5</sup>found / *was finding* the answer — a book named *Arabian Sands* about

Wilfred Thesiger's trip across the Arabian desert in the 1940s.

Alastair immediately <sup>6</sup>contacted / *was contacting* another explorer, Leon McCarron, and they started planning how to walk more than 1,600 kilometers across the desert.

They <sup>7</sup>began / *were beginning* the trip in November 2012, and were home before the end of the year. But this time they <sup>8</sup>filmed / *were filming* all their adventures, too. *Into The Empty Quarter* is their story.

