

Grammar in context

Past continuous

1a Look at sentences 1–4 and match them with the explanation of their uses in a–d.

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|---|---|---|
| 1 | Somebody was crying. | <small>1. somebody was crying</small> |
| 2 | While I was watching the programme,
I suddenly heard a loud noise. | <small>2. while I was watching the programme, I suddenly heard a loud noise</small> |
| 3 | I went towards the kitchen. | <small>3. I went towards the kitchen</small> |
| 4 | I studied in my room for an hour or
two and then I had dinner. | <small>4. I studied in my room for an hour or two and then I had dinner</small> |
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- | | |
|---|--|
| a | a completed action in the past. |
| b | two completed actions in the past that happened one after the other. |
| c | an activity in progress in the past. |
| d | an activity in progress in the past interrupted by a sudden action. |

1b Complete this rule.

We make the past continuous with the past simple of
+ verb -ing

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- 5 Complete the dialogue by putting the verbs in the correct form of the past continuous or past simple.



- POLICE OFFICER:** So, can you tell us, sir? What (a) were you doing (do) at 10pm last night?
- ROBIN BANKS:** Let's see. I think I (b) _____ (help) my mum with the shopping at 10pm.
- POLICE OFFICER:** Really? When we (c) _____ (ring) your mum last night at 10pm she (d) _____ (not do) the shopping. She (e) _____ (watch) TV at home.
- ROBIN BANKS:** Ah, now I remember. I (f) _____ (run) at that time.
- POLICE OFFICER:** (g) _____ anybody (h) _____ (see) you while you (i) _____ (run)?
- ROBIN BANKS:** Erm. Yes, my friend Jack Door saw me.
- POLICE OFFICER:** Jack Door? Impossible. Didn't you know? He's in prison.
- ROBIN BANKS:** Oops! Anyway, why are you asking me all these questions?
- POLICE OFFICER:** Well, Mr Banks, our cameras (j) _____ (catch) you running last night. You (k) _____ (run) out of the National Bank and you (l) _____ (carry) a bag with ten thousand pounds in it.