

Past Simple or Past Continuous?

A. Do you use the past simple or past continuous in these situations? Write the letter in the correct box below.

- You want to emphasize that an action took some time.
- You want to talk about a state or situation that was true in the past.
- You want to emphasize something happened again and again over time.
- You want to emphasize change or growth over time.
- You want to talk about a one-time completed action or event. The duration isn't important.
- You want to talk about a relatively long action that was ongoing at a particular time.
- You want to talk about a repeated, completed action or event. The duration isn't important.
- You want to talk about a relatively long action that was interrupted by a shorter one.
- You want to talk about a relatively short action or event that happened during a longer one.
- You want to talk about a plan that would have been completed in the past but was changed.

| Past simple | Past continuous |
|-------------|-----------------|
| | |

B. Complete the sentences in the past simple or continuous using the verbs in brackets.

- Oh man, my back (ache) all day.
- I (take) a shower when the package arrived.
- I (do) my homework after I (get) home from school.
- Her chess game (get) better slowly.
- Sorry, I didn't answer the phone before. I was driving when you (call).
- What you (do) on the night of the murder?
- I often (stop) for tea in the morning before I (get) married.
- I didn't have lunch, so I really (need) something to eat when I got home.
- He always (talk) about his bowling scores, but no one cared.
- We (plan) to buy you a cake for your birthday, but the shop was closed.

C. Match the sentences above with the situations in Exercise A.

- | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. |
| 6. | 7. | 8. | 9. | 10. |