

Grammar in context

Look at this sentence from the audio in the listening lesson and answer the questions.

Last year while we **were sailing** someone fell into the water.

a) What are the two action verbs in the sentence?
_____ and _____

b) Which action was the longest? _____

c) Which action happened in the middle of another action? _____

REMEMBER

- We use the past simple to say what we did and when:
I played a video game last night.
- We use the past continuous to describe continuous actions that were happening before and after a particular time in the past:
What were you doing at 8 o'clock last night?
I was watching a film.
- We use the past continuous to talk about what was happening when another action happened. We use the past simple for the other action:
I was listening to music when my mobile phone rang.
- In stories, we use the past continuous to describe the situation and the past simple for the main things that happened:
The sun was shining, so we decided to go for a long walk.

► See Grammar reference, Unit 4, page 148

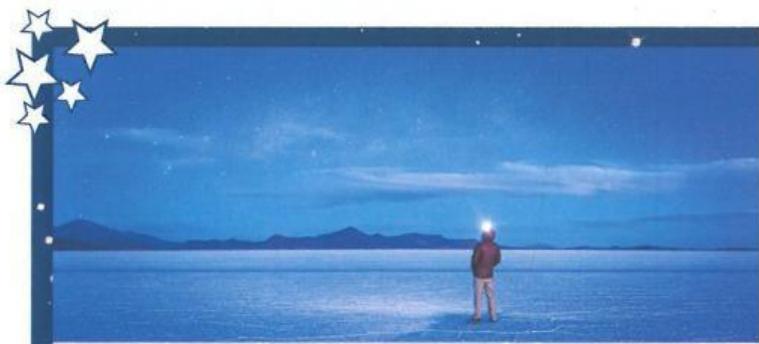
1 Choose the correct verb form to complete each sentence.

- When I **arrived** / **was arriving** at the barbecue, everyone **had** / **was having** a good time.
- I **was listening** / **listened** to my favourite song when you **called** / **were calling**.
- How **did you break** / **were you breaking** your arm? **Were you running** / **Did you run** at the time?
- I **rode** / **was riding** my bike very fast and I **fell** / **was falling** off.
- Last week the police **stopped** / **were stopping** a man because he **was driving** / **drove** his car at 135 kilometres an hour.
- While I **shopped** / **was shopping** this afternoon, I **lost** / **was losing** my backpack.

2 Complete the sentences using the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

- I _____ (say) hello to the tourists, but they didn't answer me because they _____ (look) at the sights.
- When we _____ (walk), we _____ (see) Maria. She _____ (shop).
- I _____ (not want) to get up today. It _____ (rain) outside.
- They _____ (drive) through the countryside when the car suddenly _____ (stop).
- The traffic lights _____ (change) when we _____ (chat) to each other.

3 Complete the travel blog using the past simple or past continuous of the verbs in brackets.



Sorry I (1) _____ (not post) any blogs last week while Mum, Dad and I (2) _____ (stay) on the Uyuni Salt Flats in Bolivia. There were beautiful night skies – but there wasn't any wi-fi! I (3) _____ (not stream) any videos either, so I'm posting these pictures instead. We (4) _____ (not camp) – we stayed in an old-fashioned caravan, in the middle of the salt flats. Our guide, Arturo, (5) _____ (take) us outside when it (6) _____ (begin) to get dark, so we could see the stars. I (7) _____ (look) up at the sky when at least 20 shooting stars (8) _____ (fly) past. While we (9) _____ (take) lots of photos, Arturo (10) _____ (start) a fire. Soon there was hot chocolate for everyone, which (11) _____ (keep) us warm. We stayed up all night. I (12) _____ (stand) looking at the sky when the sun came up. It was amazing!

THINK

RESEARCH | CULTURE | LEARN | ME

Work with a partner. Take turns to tell each other about the things you and your family were doing:

- last Friday evening / Saturday morning / Sunday