GRAMMAR Past continuous and past simple

1 **Look at the example sentences from the text. Find and underline all the verbs in the sentences. Which verbs are past simple and which verbs are past continuous?**

a Gary was building everything for their new home, while Paula was working.
b They were looking at homes on the internet one day, when Tim, Gary's dad, had an idea.
c Finally, Gary finished the work on the lorry and they moved in.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Match i–iii to sentences a–c in Exercise 1.

i One action follows the other.
ii The actions are happening at the same time.
iii One action interrupts the other.

a Gary was building everything for their new home, while Paula was working.
b They were looking at homes on the internet one day, when Tim, Gary's dad, had an idea.
c Finally, Gary finished the work on the lorry and they moved in.

3 Choose the correct words to complete the sentence.

To form the past continuous, we use the *present* / *past* simple of the verb *be* and the *present* / *past* participle.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Past continuous

Positive	I / He / She / It **was eating** a sandwich. You / We / They **were standing** on the balcony.
Negative	I / He / She / It **wasn't working** in the garden. You / We / They **weren't reading** a book.
Questions	**Was** I / he / she / it **building** some cupboards? **Were** you / we / they **painting** the gate?
Short answers	Yes, I / he / she / it **was**. No, he / she / it **wasn't**. Yes, you / we / they **were**. No, you / we / they **weren't**.

Spelling: *-ing* form

Most verbs add *-ing*	*play**ing**, go**ing**, learn**ing***
verbs ending in *-e*, remove *-e* and add *-ing*	*live → liv**ing**,* *make → mak**ing***
verbs ending in *-ie*, change the *-ie* to *-y* and add *-ing*	*lie → l**ying***
one-syllable verbs ending in a vowel + a consonant (except *w*, *x* or *y*), double the consonant and add *-ing*	*sit → si**tting**,* *swim → swi**mming***
two-syllable verbs ending in a stressed vowel + a consonant, double the consonant and add *-ing*	*begin → begi**nning*** (**but** *open → opening*)
In British English, we double the final *l* in *travel*	*travel → trave**lling*** (American English: *travel → traveling*)

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Past continuous and past simple

We use the **past continuous**:

- to describe activities happening at a particular moment in the past. Sometimes, these activities happen at the same time. We're not interested when the activities started or finished.
  *Mum and Dad **were cooking**, my brother **was playing** and I **was doing** my homework.*
- after *while* to refer to a longer action or event that happened at the same time as another action.
  *While Gary **was painting** the bedroom, Paula **was painting** the living room.*

We use the **past simple**:

- when one action follows another.
  *I **put** on my coat and I **left** the house. Then, it **started** to rain.*
- after *when* to refer to a shorter action or event that happened in the middle of a longer one or interrupted it.
  *I **was putting** on my coat when it **started** to rain.*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1 Use the past continuous to write complete sentences.

At 7.30 last night ...

0 Mum / drive / her car into the garage.

Mum was driving her car into the garage.

1 It / rain.

2 Dad / cook / dinner.

3 My brother and I / watch TV in the living room.

4 My sister / read.

5 My grandparents / leave their apartment.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Choose the correct options to complete the sentences.

0 I was studying in my bedroom when I *heard* / *was hearing* a strange noise.
1 While I was surfing, it *started* / *was starting* to rain.
2 My friends *played* / *were playing* football in the classroom when the teacher came in.
3 We walked to the park and then we *had* / *were having* a game of football.
4 Ed rang me while I *did* / *was doing* my homework.
5 We *packed* / *were packing* our suitcases when the phone rang.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3 Complete the email with the past simple or past continuous form of the verb in brackets.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

4 Complete the sentences using the past simple or the past continuous. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

1 While my brother was painting his bedroom, my sister _____ (help) our mum in the garden.

2 We _____ (live) in an apartment for a year and then we moved to a house.

3 My dad _____ (cook) dinner in the kitchen when I arrived home from school.

4 I did my homework and we _____ (eat) dinner in the kitchen.

5 When mum phoned me, I _____ (leave) my classroom with my friends.

6 While my parents _____ (watch) TV, I was playing computer games with my friends.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

5 Correct the mistakes in the sentences.

1 I felt very nervous while we watched the match.
2 We waited at a bus stop when we first met.
3 We were amazed when we were finding so much money.
4 While I cleaning the kitchen, I saw the broken window.
5 It is snowing when we went outside.
6 I was leaving the house just after you called me.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1 Match the sentence halves.

1 I was making a sandwich _____
2 I was sending a text message _____
3 I was playing tennis with my sister _____
4 I was playing an online video game on my laptop _____
5 I was closing the garage door _____

a when my phone stopped working.
b when I remembered the dog was still inside!
c when I cut my finger on the bread knife.
d when I broke my racket.
e when the wi-fi stopped working.

2 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

0 I *was reading* (read) a book about NASA when Kelly *texted* (text) me.
1 Marta _____ (swim) in the sea when it _____ (start) raining heavily.
2 Charlie _____ (phone) while you _____ (play) football.
3 Dina _____ (walk) home from the sports club when she _____ (see) her French teacher, Mr Roland.
4 Jim's mum _____ (buy) his birthday present while he was _____ (play) tennis at the club.
5 Sarah _____ (watch) a film in the cinema when someone _____ (take) her bag.
6 Bruna and I _____ (fly) to London when a storm _____ (begin).
7 It was very busy in our house at seven o'clock this morning. While I _____ (make) breakfast, my mum _____ (talk) on the phone, my dad _____ (clean) the floor and my sisters _____ (play) with the dog.
8 Katie _____ (do) her homework when her best friend _____ (arrive) to see her.

LIVEWORKSHEETS