GRAMMAR Past simple and continuous

1 **Read the examples. Which verb is in the past continuous? How do we form the past continuous?**

1 Immediately I heard the noise of a loud motorbike.
2 She was waiting at the side of the road.

2 **Choose the correct words to complete the rules.**

a We use the past *simple / continuous* to talk about a completed action at a past time.
b We use the past *simple / continuous* to talk about actions in progress at a past time.

3 **Choose the correct form of the verbs.**

1 I couldn't call you. The thief *stole / was stealing* my phone!
2 I saw someone in front of your house yesterday. She *tried / was trying* to open your car door.
3 What *did the burglars take / were the burglars taking*?
4 I phoned you last night but there was no answer. What *did you do / were you doing*?
5 We weren't at home last night. We *travelled / were travelling* back from a relative's house.

4 **Read the examples from the stories. Then complete the rules with *past simple* or *past continuous*.**

1 We were crossing the road, when I got out my phone.
2 While the officers were checking the bikes, they noticed that several of them didn't have bells.
3 When we arrived, my brother and I got changed straight away and jumped in.

We often use the past continuous and the past simple together.
a The _____ talks about a past action in progress.
b The _____ talks about a completed shorter action that interrupted the action in progress.
c If one action happens after the other, we use the _____ for both actions.

UNIT 5 PAST SIMPLE AND CONTINUOUS

- We use the past continuous to talk about actions and events in progress at a particular time in the past.
  *At lunchtime, I **was texting** a friend.*
  *It **was raining**.*
  *The students **weren't playing** computer games.*
  ***Was** the teacher **riding** her motorbike?*
- We use the past simple to talk about:
  - completed actions in the past, often with the time when they happened.
    *I **met** my friends at the shopping centre yesterday.*
    *We **didn't buy** anything, but we **looked** at some new phones.*
  - two or more actions which happened after one another.
    *Amy **showed** me her new bag and then I **went** home.*
    *When Jules **lost** his key, we all **helped** to look for it.*
    *I **finished** my drink and **washed** the glass.*
- We use the past simple and past continuous together when a shorter action in the past interrupted an action or event that was in progress. We use the past simple for the action that interrupts and the past continuous for the action that was in progress.
  *I **was chatting** with some friends when I **saw** you on the bus.*
  *The singer **threw** his guitar at some fans because they **were annoying** him.*
  *She **didn't eat** anything for lunch because she **was feeling** nervous.*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Practice

1 **Complete the sentences with the verbs in the box.**

emailed talked were talking watch
was watching waited were emailing
were waiting

1 I _____ the TV when the phone rang.
2 I got to the airport and _____ for my friend to arrive.
3 I _____ a film, and then I went to sleep.
4 We chatted while we _____ for the bus.
5 I _____ to Ben two days ago.
6 They _____ to each other when I saw them.
7 She _____ me ten times yesterday!
8 When we _____ each other, we sent lots of jokes and photos.

2 **Choose the correct form of the verbs.**

1 I *didn't hear* / *wasn't hearing* Elinor come into my room because I *wore* / *was wearing* headphones.
2 We *all celebrated* / *were all celebrating* when we *got* / *were getting* our exam results.
3 My grandad *found* / *was finding* some gold coins when he *worked* / *was working* in his garden.
4 I *broke* / *was breaking* my arm when I *learned* / *was learning* to ski.
5 My mum *drove* / *was driving* home from work when she *got* / *was getting* my text, so she couldn't answer it.
6 When Sonja *opened* / *was opening* the garage door she *discovered* / *was discovering* her new bike.
7 I *chatted* / *was chatting* to a friend on the phone when the train *went* / *was going* into a tunnel and I never *heard* / *was hearing* the end of her story.
8 Tomas *emailed* / *was emailing* me twice while I *mended* / *was mending* my bike but I *didn't check* / *wasn't checking* my laptop until later.

3 **Complete the story. Use the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs.**

Marcus Jones was very lucky last weekend. He [0] *was cycling* (cycle) home from the city centre. It [1] _____ (snow) and the road was icy. Suddenly his bike [2] _____ (slip) and he [3] _____ (fall off) onto the pavement. He [4] _____ (pick up) his bike off the road when he [5] _____ (see) something in the sky. It [6] _____ (move) towards him very fast. He [7] _____ (jump) back onto the pavement and the object [8] _____ (hit) the road. It was a piece of a meteorite. 'I was glad I [9] _____ (not stand) there!' he [10] _____ (tell) journalists later.

4 **Make sentences. Use the past continuous or past simple form of the verbs.**

1 I / visit / my friends. Afterwards, I / take / the bus home.
_____
2 Luke / walk / into the door because he / not look / ahead.
_____
3 It / snow / at lunchtime, so I / not go / for a walk.
_____
4 I / not be / hungry, so I / not have / anything to eat.
_____
5 My sister / crash / into a traffic light when she / ride / her scooter.
_____
6 I / think / about the holidays. Then suddenly, I / realise / the time.
_____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

5 Correct the mistake in each sentence.

1. I read a book when a woman screamed.
2. We are talking when a policeman asked me my name.
3. We went to my house and we were watching TV.
4. When I walked near the river, I saw a dog in the water.
5. While we're waiting for the bus, I heard a cry.
6. He was quite tall and wears a loose-fitting tracksuit.

6 Complete the story with the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs.

Couple find 'Goldilocks' burglar

When Martin Holtby and Pat Dyson got home from their holiday recently, they [1] _____ (notice) something strange immediately. Their unopened letters were on the table. There was some food shopping in the kitchen. While Martin [2] _____ (look) around the house, he [3] _____ (find) more strange things. A man's clothes [4] _____ (hang) in the bathroom. Their bath was full of hot water. [5] _____ a burglar _____ (live) in their house?

When Martin [6] _____ (go) into the bedroom, he found the answer. A man [7] _____ (sleep) in their bed! The couple quickly called the police and when they [8] _____ (arrive), they took him away.

The man was fined £200. He didn't steal anything while he [9] _____ (stay) in the house. He wasn't actually a burglar. He thought the house was empty and he [10] _____ (need) somewhere to sleep!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1 Choose the best answer in each sentence.

1 What were you doing when the pickpocket stole your wallet?
   a I listened to music and sent a text message.
   b I was listening to music and sending a text message.
2 Who were you talking to this morning?
   a My mum. She phoned because she wanted me to buy some bread.
   b My mum was phoning me because she wanted me to buy some bread.
3 What happened to your computer?
   a I was playing a game and it was hacked.
   b I played a game and it was hacked.
4 Did you see what the burglar looked like?
   a No, it was dark. He ran away.
   b No, it was dark. He was run away.
5 Did you hear the doorbell?
   a No, I was sleeping.
   b No, I slept.

2 Make sentences using the past simple or past continuous.

1 I / answer questions / about / vandals / at the police station.

.....

2 Those boys / steal / money / from my bag.

.....

3 Mum / tell / us / a story about / Grandma / when / her phone / ring.

.....

4 Mark / not wave / at Julie / because / he / not / see her.

.....

5 In the newspaper / it say / that in our city / theft / increase / this year.

.....

3 Complete the conversation with the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs in the box.

be	get	imagine	look	love
run	see	sing	take	think

A: That's a good photo. Tell me about it!
B: I [1]_____ late for school and I [2]_____ down the road. It was a beautiful day and the birds [3]_____. I [4]_____ about my English homework. I had to write a story about a photo. I didn't know what to write. You know, when you have no ideas! But then I [5]_____ up and I [6]_____ this amazing graffiti art on the wall near the supermarket! I [7]_____ out my phone and [8]_____ a photo.
A: Did you write about it for your homework?
B: I did! I [9]_____ the lives of the graffiti artists. Some people think they are criminals; some don't. That's what interested me. My teacher [10]_____ the story! I got a great mark!

4 Correct the mistakes in these sentences or tick (✓) any you think are correct.

1 They steal chocolate from the shop when I saw them.

.....

2 On Saturday, although it was raining, I went to the fun fair with my friends.

.....

3 We were sitting on the bus when the vandals write on the windows.

.....

4 It snowed when I woke up this morning.

.....

5 I arrived home in the morning, but then I was sleeping all day.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS