

# Past tenses in a narrative

## Past continuous

Express something that was happening in a specific moment in the past.

## Simple past

We use this tense for things that happened at a definite time in the past, and also for finished actions in the past.

## Present Perfect

This tense describes something that happened in the past, but that is related to something in the present.

It is also used to talk about life experiences, recent events or states or things that started in the past and hasn't changed.

## Past perfect

Express an action you did or finished in the past, and when you retell actions in the past use past perfect for things you did before another action

Simple past	Past continuous	Present perfect	Past perfect
I <b>lived</b> in Lyon in 1989.	I <b>was living</b> in Lyon while I <b>study</b> at the university	I <b>have lived</b> in Lyon two times when I was 5 and then at 18.	I <b>had lived</b> in Paris, Lyon and Nice then we <b>moved to</b> Paris again.
They <b>ate</b> Thai food last night.	They <b>were eating</b> Thai food when I arrived home	They <b>have eaten</b> Thai food since they <b>visited</b> Thailand.	Before they <b>went out</b> the restaurant, they <b>had eaten</b> Thai food
Where <b>did you see</b> 'Othello'?	Were they <b>seeing</b> Otelo last night?	Have you <b>seen</b> 'Othello'?	I <b>had seen</b> "Othello" in a theater, it was a beautiful play.
When <b>did you go to</b> Ireland?	When <b>were you going to</b> Ireland?	We <b>have been</b> to Ireland.	<b>Had you been</b> in Ireland?

## Connectors:

Then, after, before, later, .. finally

In the following sentences, which tense is needed? Simple past, past continuous, past perfect or present perfect?

Ex. When I was a little boy, we \_\_\_\_\_ in Barranquilla then we \_\_\_\_\_ to Bogota.    **was living / lived / have lived / had lived**    **moved / have moved / had moved**

1. The bus \_\_\_\_\_ (just – arrive) to the station when I bought my ticket

have just arrived      has just arrived      had just arrived      just arrived      was just arriving

2. My kids \_\_\_\_\_ (play) video games when I arrived home last night.

played      has played      had played      was playing      were playing

3. She \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to Spain last year to study Spanish.

4. He \_\_\_\_\_ (finish) his degree last year before he started a specialization.

finished      was finishing      has finished      had finished      finishes

5. Oh no, look! Zoe \_\_\_\_\_ (eat) all the cake!

6. Max knew Paris pretty well because he \_\_\_\_\_ (visit) the city several times.

visited      has visited      have visited      was visiting      had visited

I'm sorry, Emily isn't here. She \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to the shops.

went      has gone      was going      had gone      have gone

8. I went to the shops yesterday and \_\_\_\_\_ (buy) lots of food for everyone.

was buying      has bought      had bought      bought

9. I think I have read all the books Jodi Picoult has written so far.

read      has read      had read      have read      was reading

10. I really (love) my grandmother. She was an amazing person.

love

loved

has loved

have loved

had loved

11. I \_\_\_\_\_ (try) so many different types of chocolate, so now I think I'm an expert.

was trying

tried

have tried

has tried

had tried

12. I \_\_\_\_\_ (break) my leg last year.

broke

has broken

have broken

was breaking

had broken

13. I \_\_\_\_\_ (be) really good friends with Philippa since I was 14.

was

has been

had been

was being

have been

14. I \_\_\_\_\_ (fall) asleep when the telephone rang.

has fallen

fell

was falling

have fallen

had fallen

15. He \_\_\_\_\_ (never – see) a bear before she moved to Canada.

never has seen

never saw

has never seen

had never seen