

past tenses

simple past: *worked, stopped, went, had, etc.*

She **was** born in Seoul. (3 10))
 They **got** married last year.
 On the way to Rome we **stopped** in Florence for the night.
 The plane **didn't arrive** on time.
 What time **did** you **get up** this morning?

- We use the simple past for finished actions in the past (when we say, ask, or know when they happened).
- Remember **Irregular verbs** p.165.

past continuous: *was / were + verb + -ing*

1 What **were** you **doing** at six o'clock last night? (3 11))
 2 I **was driving** along the freeway when it started snowing.
 3 While I **was doing** the housework the children **were playing** in the yard.
 4 It was a cold night and it **was raining**. I **was watching** TV in the living room...

- 1 We use the past continuous to talk about an action in progress at a specific time in the past.
- 2 We often use the past continuous to describe a past action in progress that was interrupted by another action (expressed in the simple past).
- 3 We often use the past continuous with *while* for two actions happening at the same time.
- 4 We often use the past continuous to describe the beginning of a story or anecdote.

a. Choose the correct form.

Example: The teacher gave Robbie a zero because he cheated / **had cheated** on the exam.

- 1 They didn't win the game although they **were training / had trained** every evening.
- 2 Mike had an accident while he **cycled / was cycling to work**.
- 3 **I cleaned / had cleaned the house when I got home**. It looked great.
- 4 When we arrived, the game **started / had started**. We got there just in time and saw the whole game!
- 5 The captain **didn't score / hadn't scored** any goals when the referee ejected him.
- 6 My son got injured while he **played / was playing** basketball last Saturday.
- 7 Luckily, we **stopped / had stopped** skiing when the snowstorm started. We were already back at the hotel.
- 8 The Lakers **weren't losing / hadn't lost** any of their games during their trip to the East Coast.
- 9 The referee suspended the game because it **was raining / rained too hard to play**.

past perfect: *had + past participle*

When they turned on the TV, the game **had** already (3 12)) **finished**.

As soon as I shut the door, I realized that I'd **left** my keys on the table.
 We couldn't get a table in the restaurant because we **hadn't booked** one.

- We use the past perfect when we are talking about the past and we want to talk about an earlier past action. Compare: *When John arrived, they went out.* (= first John arrived and then they went out)
When John arrived, they had gone out. (= they went out before John arrived)

using narrative tenses together

It was a cold night and it **was raining**. I **was watching** TV in the living room. Suddenly I **heard** a knock at the door. I **got up** and **opened** the door. But there was nobody there. The person who **had knocked** on the door **had disappeared**...

- Use the past continuous (*was raining, was watching*) to set the scene.
- Use the simple past (*heard, got up, etc.*) to say what happened.
- Use the past perfect (*had knocked, had disappeared*) to say what happened before the previous past action.

b Complete with the simple past, past continuous, or past perfect.

The marathon runner was sweating when she crossed the finish line. (sweat, cross)

- 1 The accident..... when they..... home. (happen, drive)
- 2 The crowd..... when the refereefinal whistle. (cheer, blow)
- 3 I..... her at first because she..... so much. (not recognize, change)
- 4 The police.....her on the freeway because she.....a seat belt. (stop, not wear)
- 5 Some of the players..... while the coach.....to them. (not listen, talk)
- 6 Weuse the ski slope because it.....enough. (not can, not snow)
- 7 They..... play tennis because they.....court. (not able to, not book)
- 8 The player..... a yellow card because he.....his shirt. (get, take off)