

## 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.

past perfect: *had + past participle*

When they turned on the TV, the game **had** already **finished**. (3 12))  
 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**... (3 13))

- 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.

### 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**.

**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 referee .....final 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 We .....use 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)