

- **Past time: past simple, past continuous, past perfect simple, past perfect continuous, would, used to / be/get used to**

Past simple

Form	statement: I/you/he/she/it/we/they played ... negative: I/you/he/she/it/we/they didn't play ... question: Did I/you/he/she/it/we/they play ...?	Note: Irregular verbs do not take 'ed' in the past simple. Learn the past simple form of irregular verbs. See page 194.
Use	Example	
Single completed actions	Tom and I played a game of chess and he won .	
Habits in the past	Did you collect stamps when you were younger?	
Permanent situations in the past	A famous footballer lived in our house before we bought it.	
General truths and facts about the past	Crosswords didn't become popular until the 1930s.	
The main events in a story	The referee blew the whistle and Simon passed the ball to James, who ran towards the goal.	

Watch out!

- We can also use *did* in past simple statements for emphasis.
 - ✓ 'Why didn't you win your match yesterday?' 'I **did win**. Who told you I didn't?'
 - ✓ We lost 5-0 but at least we **did get** into the final.

Past continuous

Form	statement: I/he/she/it was playing ... negative: I/he/she/it wasn't playing ... question: Was I/he/she/it playing ...?	You/we/they were playing ... You/we/they weren't playing ... Were you/we/they playing ...?
Use	Example	
Actions happening at a particular moment in the past	At five o'clock, I was reading my new book.	
Temporary situations in the past	Greg was living in London at the time.	
Annoying past habits (usually with <i>always</i>)	When we were young, my brother was always borrowing my toys.	
Actions in progress over a period of time	Daniel was playing video games all morning yesterday.	
Two actions in progress at the same time	Were Ulla and her friends playing Monopoly while we were playing Draughts?	
Background information in a story	The sun was shining and the birds were singing . Lisa opened the window and looked out.	

Watch out!

- When one action in the past interrupts another action in progress, we use the past simple and the past continuous together.
 - ✓ I **was playing** on my computer when it suddenly **crashed**.
- We do **not** use the past continuous for regular or repeated actions in the past.
 - ✓ When we were on holiday, we **played** volleyball every day.
 - ✗ When we were on holiday, we **were playing** volleyball every day.
- We do not usually use stative verbs in continuous tenses. See Unit 1, page 7.

Past perfect simple

Form	<i>had</i> + past participle	
Use	Example	
Situations and states before the past	We'd lived next to the gym for a couple of months before I decided to join.	
Completed actions before a moment in the past	I'd already bought the computer game when I saw it was cheaper in another shop.	
Completed actions where the important thing is the result at a moment in the past	We didn't feel like playing Scrabble because we had just finished a long game of Monopoly.	

Watch out!

- There is often little or no difference in meaning between the past perfect simple and the past simple.
✓ *We'd **lived** next to the gym for a couple of months before I decided to join.*
✓ *We **lived** next to the gym for a couple of months before I decided to join.*
- After we have used the past perfect simple once, we often then use the past simple instead of continuing to use the past perfect. *I **had** already **had** one flying lesson, which **was** great fun, and I **knew** immediately that I **wanted** to get my pilot's licence.*
- Phrases such as *It was the first/second/etc time ...* are followed by the past perfect simple.
✓ *It was the second time I'd **been** on a plane.*

Past perfect continuous

Form statement: I/you/he/she/it/we/they **had been playing ...**
negative: I/you/he/she/it/we/they **hadn't been playing ...**
question: **Had** I/you/he/she/it/we/they **been playing ...?**

Use	Example
Actions continuing up to a moment in the past	<i>When you saw us, we had been running for six miles – and we still had a mile to go!</i>
Actions stopping just before a moment in the past	<i>Sarah looked tired because she had been exercising all morning.</i>

would

Form would + bare infinitive

Use	Example
Past habits, particularly for the distant past	<i>When I was very young, my grandfather would take me to the park to play.</i>

Watch out!

- We don't often use *would* in questions or negative statements with this meaning. In negative statements, we can use *would never*.
✓ *We **would never** play games together as a family when I was growing up.*

used to

Form used to + bare infinitive
statement: I/you/he/she/it/we/they **used to** train three times a week.
negative: I/you/he/she/it/we/they **didn't use to** be good at football.
*I/you/he/she/it/we/they **never used to** be so good at football.*
*I/you/he/she/it/we/they **used not to** be good at football.*
question: **Did** I/you/he/she/it/we/they **use to** play hockey here?

Use	Example
Past habits and states, particularly for the distant past	<i>My mother used to play a lot of squash before I was born.</i>

Watch out!

- To talk about a past state, we can use *used to*, but **not** *would*.
✓ *We **used to** have a house that was right next to the park.*
✗ *We ~~would~~ have a house that was right next to the park.*

be/get used to

Form be/get used to + -ing form / noun

Use	Example
A situation that is familiar or no longer strange	<i>I didn't like being the goalkeeper at first but now I'm used to it.</i>

Watch out!

- When we want to talk about the process of becoming familiar with something, we use *get used to*.
✓ *I'm gradually **getting used to** being in a new team.*

F Circle the incorrect words or phrases and rewrite them correctly.

- 1 I had paint on my shoes because I'd painted my bedroom all morning.
.....
- 2 I missed the start of the film because I buy popcorn.
.....
- 3 It was obvious that Bill has worked because he was very tired when I saw him.
.....
- 4 We had been tidying the garden for hours and I was needing a rest.
.....
- 5 When the bus was arriving, we missed it because we were talking.
.....
- 6 During the Christmas holiday, I was eating too much and watching too much TV!
.....
- 7 Julian was learning all about computer games by the time he was six.
.....
- 8 My grandfather was owning a hotel by the beach until he sold it last year.
.....

G Circle the correct word or phrase.

- 1 When she was a girl, my mum **would / used to** live in a village.
- 2 I really can't **be / get** used to having a new baby brother.
- 3 People **would / are used to** die of diseases in the past that we can cure today.
- 4 There **would / used to** be a cinema on this corner, but they knocked it down.
- 5 It was strange at first, but I'm used to **play / playing** the bagpipes now.
- 6 Didn't you **use to / be used to** have blonde hair?
- 7 Christopher was **being / getting** used to the idea of joining the army.
- 8 People never **would / used to** be so worried about crime in this area.

H Complete each second sentence using the word given, so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence. Write between two and five words in each gap.

- 1 People walked more fifty years ago than they do now. **would**
Fifty years ago, than they do now.
- 2 My parents wouldn't let me stay out late when I was young. **used**
My parents let me stay out late when I was young.
- 3 Did you know that Carol played basketball for her country? **to**
Did you know that Carol basketball for her country?
- 4 Sending messages around the world instantly is no longer unusual. **got**
We messages around the world instantly.
- 5 When he was a teacher, my dad often used to get home quite late. **would**
When he was a teacher, my dad quite late.
- 6 Do you think you could learn to live without your mobile phone? **used**
Do you think you could without your mobile phone?

- 7 In the past, people wouldn't go as far away on holiday as they do today. **use**
In the past, people as far away on holiday as they do today.
- 8 This town has a lot more cinemas than it had in the past. **used**
This town so many cinemas.

I Find the extra word in each line.

Childhood

- 1 Childhood would used to be quite different from what it is today. Young
- 2 people didn't use not to have so much leisure time. Today's children may
- 3 complain about their schoolwork, but our great-grandparents would to go
- 4 out to work at a very young age. They had often been left school by
- 5 the time they were fourteen and were found a job. This meant that they
- 6 have had little free time for hobbies or leisure activities, especially when
- 7 they had been working hard all day. Of course, they got themselves used
- 8 to working long hours eventually, but it would meant that they had to
- 9 grow up very quickly. Today, we are got used to having some free time to
- 10 do things we enjoy, a luxury people in the past rarely were had.

J Write one word in each gap.

The night before

Jane lay awake. She had (1) preparing for the next day (2) a long time and now she couldn't sleep. Her team (3) playing the local champions at water polo in the final and Jane was the captain. She (4) feeling the pressure. She turned over and remembered how she (5) learned to swim. Her father had taught her. They (6) go to the local pool every day after school and her father (7) to show her what to do. She hadn't liked the water at first, but she soon (8) used to it. She learned quickly and joined the water polo team. She had (9) their youngest member!

She quickly got used to scoring goals and (10) under pressure, but tomorrow was different. It was the biggest match of her life. She closed her eyes again and tried to get to sleep. 'I (11) used to have problems sleeping,' she thought to herself. 'But then again, I didn't (12) to be the captain of the team.' She watched the clock change slowly and knew that it was going to be a long night.