

Tenses

Read the examples carefully & choose the correct phrase to complete the rules:

PRESENT SIMPLE (base form + s/es/ies for 3rd person sg)

PRESENT CONTINUOUS (am / is / are + Ving)

1. He usually (a) **gets up** early to go to work, but today (b) **he's sleeping in**.
 - (a) present simple used for: **routines / annoying habits**
 - (b) present continuous used for: **temporary break from routine / habitual actions**
2. I usually believe what he says, but **I'm not believing don't believe** him now.
 - In the case of **state / action** verbs we normally use the present simple, not the present continuous
3. She **is being** selfish.
 - Even though *be* is a state verb, we can use it in the present continuous **to say that nothing has changed / to express a change in behaviour**
4. It seldom **rains** here.
 - present simple used for: **annoying habits / repeated actions**
5. It's always **raining!** How I wish I lived somewhere else...
 - There are exceptions when we can use the present continuous with adverbs of frequency (*always...*), but only to stress that the action is **irritating / ordinary**.
6. I'm **smelling** your flowers.
 - We don't normally use the present continuous with verbs of perception (*hear, smell, touch, see...*) because they are usually state verbs. However, there are exceptions when we can use them in the present continuous, but they either change meaning or type (they are no longer states, they are actions – like in **example 6 / example 7**)
7. Your flowers **are smelling smell** lovely.
 - Smell is a verb of perception, so we normally use it in the present simple, because it expresses a **state / action**.

PAST SIMPLE (V2)

PAST CONTINUOUS (was / were + Ving)

1. I (a) **was waiting** for the bus when (b) **I saw** Mrs. Miller.
 - (a) we use the past continuous to express a **longer / shorter** past action, usually interrupted by a shorter one
 - (b) we use the past simple to express an action that started & ended in the **past / future in the past**
2. When I was younger, mum **was phoning phoned** me every day.
 - We use the past simple to express a past habit, never the **past / present** continuous
3. When I was younger, mum **used to phone** me every day.
 - We use the structure *used to* to express a **present / past** habit. It can be used both with action and state verbs
4. When I was younger, mum **would phone** me every day.
 - The structure *would + infinitive* is perfectly synonymous with *used to*. It also expresses a past habit, BUT it can only be used with **state / action** verbs

Tenses

Read the examples carefully & choose the correct phrase to complete the rules:

PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE (have / has + V3)

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS (have / has + been + Ving)

1. He **has** just **received** his results.
 - We normally use the present perfect simple to express a recent past action that happened at an unspecified time in the **past / present**
2. The dog **has attacked** **attacked** the intruder last night.
 - When the time is specified (*last night*) we always use the **present perfect / past simple**
3. I **have been writing** this long letter I need to send since morning.
 - We use the present perfect continuous to express an action that started in the past and which is **still / not** going on in the present.
4. **It's been ages since** you **last made** a cake.
 - you can use "it has been ages" (AmE) OR "it's ages" (BrE)
 - **Fixed / Flexible expression**: Present Perfect ... SINCE ... Past Simple!
5. This is the second time you **have lost** your keys.
 - **Fixed / Flexible expression**: This is the first / second / third / etc time + PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE!

PAST PERFECT SIMPLE (had + V3)

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS (had been + Ving)

1. We were not able to get a hotel room because we **had not booked** in advance.
 - We use the past perfect simple to express a past action that took place **before / after** another past action or before a certain moment in time
2. She **had moved** **moved** to London in 1982.
 - We usually use the past perfect in comparison with another **past / present** action or with a past moment in time. Otherwise, we use the past simple.
3. By the time the police came to arrest him, he **had been flying** towards a new destination for 5 hours.
 - We use the past perfect continuous when there is a mention of a period of **space / time**. The past perfect continuous is also used to express anteriority to a past action / moment in time. The only difference to the past perfect simple is the mention of the duration.