

GRAMMAR: PAST SIMPLE AND PAST CONTINUOUS

1. Look at the verbs in bold. Which are past simple (PS) and which are past continuous (PC)?

1. I **was buying** () a book when I **saw** () a famous novelist.
2. It **started** () to rain while I **was waiting** () for the bus.
3. An actor **had** () an accident while he **was working** () on a film in Hollywood.
4. What **was** your dog **doing** () when you **found** () him?
5. The phone **rang** () while I **was watching** () TV.
6. We **were studying** () when we **heard** () the news.

2. Choose the correct option of the past simple or past continuous.

Jenna **studied** / **was studying** at school when she **started** / **was starting** working as a fashion model in her free time. A well-known fashion photographer **noticed** / **was noticing** her while she **stood** / **was standing** at a bus stop with a friend. They **chatted** / **were chatting** about clothes when he **asked** / **was asking** Jenna if he could take her photo. What **did she wear** / **was she wearing** when this **happened** / **was happening**? Her school uniform!

3. Complete the sentences with the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs.

1. I (dream) about birds when I (wake) up suddenly.
2. you (become) interested in American history while you (visit) the USA ?
3. He (ride) to school when he (fall) off his bike.
4. The *Titanic* (sail) in the North Atlantic Ocean when it (hit) an iceberg.
5. She (not look) for cars when she (cross) the road.
6. Archimedes (have) an amazing idea while he (have) a bath.

4. Complete the sentences with the correct affirmative ✓, negative ✗ or question ?, past simple or past continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

J. K. Rowling **was living** in Manchester when she got the idea for the Harry Potter stories. (✓ live)

1. When _____ they _____ the first Fantastic Beasts film? (? make)
2. The first Spider-Man comic _____ in 1962. (✓ appear)
3. I _____ it stopped suddenly. (✓ read)
4. The last James Bond novel _____ a bestseller. (✗ be)
5. Who _____ you _____ when I saw you in town? (? Talk)

5. Complete the sentences with **when** or **while**.

1. _____ I was reading my book, my phone rang.
2. It was raining _____ we arrived home.
3. J. K. Rowling discovered the famous Lello bookshop _____ she was living in Porto, Portugal.
4. Dad was watching *Avatar* _____ he fell asleep.
5. Alice finished her novel _____ the rest of the family were sleeping.

6. Choose the correct option and complete the sentences with the correct past simple or past continuous form of the verb in parentheses.

When/ While I got (get) home I was really tired, so I went to bed.

1. Natalia phoned her dad **when / while** she _____ (walk) home.
2. I wasn't surprised **when / while** I _____ (see) some friends at the concert.
3. **When / While** we _____ (run) through the park, a dog attacked us.
4. What did you do **when / while** your friends _____ (get) ready for the party?
5. Marek _____ (not play) football **when / while** he injured his knee.
6. Some people _____ (chat) **when / while** the film started.
7. 'What _____ you _____ (do) **when / while** you first heard the news?' 'I was having dinner.'

7. Put the verbs in parentheses in the past simple or past continuous.

I arrived (arrive) while they were watching (watch) the news on TV.

1. He (have) a bath when he suddenly (have) a brilliant idea for a film.
2. While my parents (travel) around South America, they (take) hundreds of photos.
3. We (talk) in my bedroom when my brother (start) playing his guitar.
4. I (not concentrate) when the teacher (tell) us which page to turn to.
5. When the police officer (knock) on the door, Sarah (make) lunch.
6. My dad (tell) a story when my granddad (fall) asleep.
7. I (not buy) anything while I (look) at the website.

8. Complete the sentences with the verbs in brackets. Use the correct form of the past simple or the past continuous.

*He **wasn't watching** (not watch) a DVD when I arrived.*

1. the play (finish) while Dan was sleeping?
2. I (find) the book I wanted while I was browsing the internet.
3. Ali received the text message while he (watch) TV.
4. Charles Dickens (work) for a newspaper when he wrote his first novel?
5. I finally (understand) the film's plot while we were leaving the cinema!