

6 Rewrite each sentence beginning as shown. Use a participle clause.

a) Norman collected the parcel, but then he realised it was the wrong one.

After *collecting the parcel*, Norman realized it was the wrong one.

b) Sue left the house but first she checked that she had her keys.

Before

c) Mark was parking his car when he noticed the wing-mirror was broken.

While

d) Julia cleaned the house, but then she fell asleep on the sofa.

After

e) Brian bought a new television, but first he checked all the prices.

Before

f) Alan was skiing in Switzerland and met his old friend, Ken.

While

g) Kate took two aspirins, and then she felt a lot better.

After

h) Sheila went out for the evening, but first she washed her hair.

Before

Key points

1 The past simple describes completed events in the past, such as the main events in a narrative. It can also describe habits and routines in the past.

2 The past continuous is used for:

a) background description.

b) actions in progress, often contrasted with a sudden event.

The past continuous cannot be used to describe past routines and habits.

3 Participle clauses can introduce a clause giving the main event.

The subjects of both clauses must be the same.

4 The past perfect describes a past event which took place before another past event. If *before* or *after* is used, the past perfect is optional.

The past perfect is not used for an event that happened a long time ago in the past.

5 *Used to* only refers to past time, and has no present form.

6 *Would* can be used to describe habitual actions in the past, usually in writing. It does not make such a strong contrast with the present as *used to*. Compare:

Jim would always make his mother a cup of tea after lunch.

Jim used to drink tea, but now he prefers coffee.

Would cannot be used to describe states.

Sally used to be a dancer.

SEE ALSO

Grammar 2: Present perfect
Grammar 5: Consolidation
Grammar 7 and 8: Conditional
 Wishes and related forms
Grammar 14: Time expressions