Tenses

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

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. No officer, I didn't do it! At 5PM yesterday I **was driving** towards Brasov. I was nowhere near Timisoara.
   - We use the past continuous to express an action that was **in progress / completed** at a specific moment in the past.

4. 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

5. 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

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, like in the example above.

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.