

Past Continuous – Was going to – Used to – Be/Get used to

6



Listen and repeat. Then act out.

How did the thief get away? *Weren't you following him while he was trying to get away?*

Well, *I was following him when he suddenly ran into the cinema.*

Why didn't you follow him into the cinema?

I was going to but I've already seen that film twice!

Past Continuous: **was/were + verb -ing**

Affirmative	Interrogative	Negative	
		Long form	Short form
I was helping	Was I helping?	I was not helping	I wasn't helping
You were helping	Were you helping?	You were not helping	You weren't helping
He was helping	Was he helping?	He was not helping	He wasn't helping etc.
She was helping	Was she helping?	She was not helping	Negative - Interrogative
It was helping	Was it helping?	It was not helping	
We were helping	Were we helping?	We were not helping	
You were helping	Were you helping?	You were not helping	
They were helping	Were they helping?	They were not helping	
			Wasn't I helping?
			Weren't you helping? etc.

Time words used with the Past Continuous: **while, when, as**

1 The fire alarm went off at the Crown Hotel last night. Put the verbs in the **past continuous** to describe what each person was doing.

- When the fire alarm went off, Mr Cook *was talking* (talk) on the phone.
- A porter (carry) some luggage.
- Miss Jones (read) a magazine.
- Two men (sit) in the reception area.

Past Continuous versus Past Simple

Past Continuous is used:

- for an action that was in the middle of happening at a stated time in the past.
At 8 o'clock last night she **was watching** TV.
- for two or more actions which were happening at the same time in the past (simultaneous actions).



At 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon Ben **was doing** his homework while his dad **was cooking** dinner.

- for a past action which was in progress when another action interrupted it. We use Past Continuous for the interrupted action and Past Simple for the action which interrupts it.



Linda **was watching** TV when the phone **rang**.

- to describe the background to the events in a story.

We **were walking** in the woods. It **was raining** hard ...

Past Simple is used:

- for an action completed at a stated time in the past.
He **finished** his homework at 7 o'clock.
- for actions which happened one after another (sequence of actions).

He **slipped**,
fell over and **hurt** his ankle.



- with non-continuous verbs: **appear** (=seem), **believe**, **belong**, **cost**, **feel**, **forget**, **hate**, **have** (=possess), **know**, **like**, **love**, **mean**, **need**, **prefer**, **realise**, **remember**, **see**, **seem**, **smell**, **sound**, **suppose**, **taste**, **think**, **understand**, **want**, etc.



Sylvia **saw** Alex at the party yesterday.

- for people who are no longer alive.

Shakespeare **wrote** a lot of plays.
(Shakespeare is dead. He won't write any more.)

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2 Use the *past continuous* or the *past simple* and the phrases to label the pictures. Then identify the speech situations.

- ~~action in the middle of happening~~ • sequence of actions • interrupted action
- simultaneous actions • completed action • people who are no longer alive

1 *action in the middle of happening*



(they sleep/at 11 o'clock/yesterday evening)
They were sleeping at 11 o'clock yesterday evening.

2



(wash up/feed the dog/an hour ago)

.....
.....
.....

3



(last night/Mrs Smith knit/Mr Smith watch TV)

.....
.....
.....

4



(they sunbathe/start to rain)

.....
.....
.....

5



(Gustave Eiffel/build/the Eiffel Tower)

.....
.....
.....

6



(Claire/have first birthday / 2 days ago)

.....
.....
.....

Was / Were going to

Was going to is used to express fixed arrangements in the past, unfulfilled plans or an action which someone intended to do in the past but didn't do.

He got up early. **He was going to** catch the 6 o'clock train. (fixed arrangement in the past)

She was going to travel around Europe but she didn't because she fell ill. (unfulfilled plan)

She was going to buy a new car but in the end she repaired her old one. (She intended to buy a car but she didn't.)