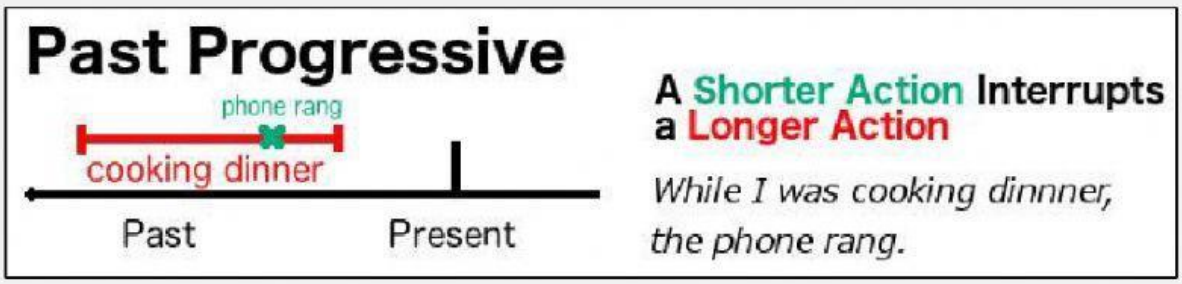
WHILE VS WHEN

When we the use of the past continuous (or progressive) we usually see a short action that interrupts the long action, like this:



This is known as "interrupted action", there is something happening, when another thing interrupts that action:

	I **was watching** TV	**when**	Jim ***knocked*** the door.

As you can see in the example, something interrupts another something, and a helpful word that always goes with this kind of sentence is the *"WHEN" (cuando)*: a person was doing something "*WHEN*" another thing broke that action.

Another way of talking about this situation is using the connector *"WHILE" (mientras):*

While	I **was watching** TV	,	Jim ***knocked*** the door

A thing was happening, and then something interrupted the action that WAS happening.

Two tools to say the same thing:

'when' + short action (past simple tense)
'while' + long action (past continuous tense)

I **was watching** TV when Jim ***knocked*** the door.

	I **was watching** TV	**when**	Jim ***knocked*** the door.
When	Jim ***knocked*** the door	,	I **was watching** TV
	Jim ***knocked*** the door	**while**	I **was watching** TV
While	I **was watching** TV	,	Jim ***knocked*** the door

LIVEWORKSHEETS