● Past time: past simple, past continuous, past perfect simple, past perfect continuous, would, used to / be/get used to

Past simple

Form

statement: *I/you/he/she/it/we/they* ***played*** ...
negative: *I/you/he/she/it/we/they* ***didn't play*** ...
question: ***Did*** *I/you/he/she/it/we/they* ***play*** ...?

Note: Irregular verbs do not take 'ed' in the past simple. Learn the past simple form of irregular verbs. See page 194.

Use	Example
Single completed actions	*Tom and I* ***played*** *a game of chess and he* ***won***.
Habits in the past	***Did*** *you* ***collect*** *stamps when you were younger?*
Permanent situations in the past	*A famous footballer* ***lived*** *in our house before we bought it.*
General truths and facts about the past	*Crosswords* ***didn't become*** *popular until the 1930s.*
The main events in a story	*The referee* ***blew*** *the whistle and Simon* ***passed*** *the ball to James, who* ***ran*** *towards the goal.*

Watch out!

- We can also use *did* in past simple statements for emphasis.
  - ✓ *'Why didn't you win your match yesterday?' 'I* ***did win****. Who told you I didn't?'*
  - ✓ *We lost 5-0 but at least we* ***did get*** *into the final.*

Past continuous

Form

statement: *I/he/she/it* ***was playing*** ... *You/we/they* ***were playing*** ...
negative: *I/he/she/it* ***wasn't playing*** ... *You/we/they* ***weren't playing*** ...
question: ***Was*** *I/he/she/it* ***playing*** ...? ***Were*** *you/we/they* ***playing*** ...?

Use	Example
Actions happening at a particular moment in the past	*At five o'clock, I* ***was reading*** *my new book.*
Temporary situations in the past	*Greg* ***was living*** *in London at the time.*
Annoying past habits (usually with *always*)	*When we were young, my brother* ***was always borrowing*** *my toys.*
Actions in progress over a period of time	*Daniel* ***was playing*** *video games all morning yesterday.*
Two actions in progress at the same time	***Were*** *Ulla and her friends* ***playing*** *Monopoly while we* ***were playing*** *Draughts?*
Background information in a story	*The sun* ***was shining*** *and the birds* ***were singing****. Lisa opened the window and looked out.*

Watch out!

- When one action in the past interrupts another action in progress, we use the past simple and the past continuous together.
  - ✓ *I* ***was playing*** *on my computer when it suddenly* ***crashed***.
- We do **not** use the past continuous for regular or repeated actions in the past.
  - ✓ *When we were on holiday, we* ***played*** *volleyball every day.*
  - ✗ ~~*When we were on holiday, we* ***were playing*** *volleyball every day.*~~
- We do not usually use stative verbs in continuous tenses. See Unit 1, page 7.

Past perfect simple

Form *had* + past participle

Use	Example
Situations and states before the past	*We* ***'d lived*** *next to the gym for a couple of months before I decided to join.*
Completed actions before a moment in the past	*I* ***'d*** *already* ***bought*** *the computer game when I saw it was cheaper in another shop.*
Completed actions where the important thing is the result at a moment in the past	*We didn't feel like playing Scrabble because we* ***had*** *just* ***finished*** *a long game of Monopoly.*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Watch out!

- There is often little or no difference in meaning between the past perfect simple and the past simple.
  - ✓ *We **'d lived** next to the gym for a couple of months before I decided to join.*
  - ✓ *We **lived** next to the gym for a couple of months before I decided to join.*
- After we have used the past perfect simple once, we often then use the past simple instead of continuing to use the past perfect. *I **had** already **had** one flying lesson, which **was** great fun, and I **knew** immediately that I **wanted** to get my pilot's licence.*
- Phrases such as *It was the first/second/etc time …* are followed by the past perfect simple.
  - ✓ *It was the second time **I'd been** on a plane.*

Past perfect continuous

Form

statement: *I/you/he/she/it/we/they **had been playing** …*
negative: *I/you/he/she/it/we/they **hadn't been playing** …*
question: ***Had** I/you/he/she/it/we/they **been playing** …?*

Use	Example
Actions continuing up to a moment in the past	*When you saw us, we **had been running** for six miles – and we still had a mile to go!*
Actions stopping just before a moment in the past	*Sarah looked tired because she **had been exercising** all morning.*

would

Form *would* + bare infinitive

Use	Example
Past habits, particularly for the distant past	*When I was very young, my grandfather **would** take me to the park to play.*

Watch out!

- We don't often use *would* in questions or negative statements with this meaning. In negative statements, we can use *would never*.
  - ✓ *We **would never** play games together as a family when I was growing up.*

used to

Form *used to* + bare infinitive

statement: *I/you/he/she/it/we/they **used to** train three times a week.*
negative: *I/you/he/she/it/we/they **didn't use to** be good at football.*
*I/you/he/she/it/we/they **never used to** be so good at football.*
*I/you/he/she/it/we/they **used not to** be good at football.*
question: ***Did** I/you/he/she/it/we/they **use to** play hockey here?*

Use	Example
Past habits and states, particularly for the distant past	*My mother **used to** play a lot of squash before I was born.*

Watch out!

- To talk about a past state, we can use *used to*, but **not** *would*.
  - ✓ *We **used to** have a house that was right next to the park.*
  - ✗ ~~*We **would** have a house that was right next to the park.*~~

be/get used to

Form *be/get used to* + *-ing* form / noun

Use	Example
A situation that is familiar or no longer strange	*I didn't like being the goalkeeper at first but now I'**m used to** it.*

Watch out!

- When we want to talk about the process of becoming familiar with something, we use *get used to*.
  - ✓ *I'**m** gradually **getting used to** being in a new team.*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

A Circle the correct word or phrase.

1 I **saw / was seeing** Maria for the first time at Ray's birthday party.
2 Richard **watched / was watching** TV when the phone rang.
3 When we were on holiday, we **went / were going** to the café almost every day.
4 Denise **practised / was practising** the song every day until she could sing it perfectly.
5 The phone was engaged when I called. Who **did you talk / were you talking** to?
6 Mr Connors **owned / was owning** two houses and a villa in the south of France.
7 I **did / was doing** my homework as soon as I got home from school.
8 A car came round the corner and I **jumped / was jumping** out of the way.
9 When my dad met my mum, he **worked / was working** as a bus driver.
10 I **got / was getting** up at six o'clock every morning last week!
11 My cousin and I **played / were playing** on the computer when there was a power cut.
12 No, that's not right. I **did pass / was passing** the test. I got a B.

B Complete using the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1 Where ..... (**you / go**) when I saw you on the bus last night?
2 ..... (**you / enjoy**) the film?
3 When we shared a room, Zoë ..... (**always / take**) my things. It was so annoying!
4 When I went to get the tickets, I realised I ..... (**not / have**) any money.
5 When I was young, we ..... (**go**) to France every year on holiday.
6 Elvis ..... (**become**) famous for the song *Blue Suede Shoes*.
7 When you rang last night, I ..... (**work**) in the garden so I didn't hear the phone.
8 I ..... (**hear**) from Davina last night. She says hello.
9 The old man ..... (**appear**) to be very tired and he slowly sat down.
10 We ..... (**throw**) a surprise party for my brother last Saturday.

C Circle the correct word or phrase.

Dear Lisa,
Thanks for your letter. I (**1**) **just left / had just left** for school when I saw the postman and he (**2**) **gave / had given** it to me. It was really funny! I (**3**) **read / had read** it during maths and it (**4**) **made / had made** me laugh. I almost (**5**) **got / had got** in trouble!
Anyway, I'm excited because I (**6**) **had / had had** my first judo lesson yesterday. I (**7**) **was / had been** late for the lesson because when I (**8**) **got / had got** there, I suddenly realised I (**9**) **left / had left** my judo suit at home! So I (**10**) **went / had gone** all the way home and when I (**11**) **got / had got** back, the lesson (**12**) **already began / had already begun**. The instructor was really nice, though, and I (**13**) **learned / had learned** how to do some basic throws. Can't wait till next time!
What about you and your taekwondo? The last time I (**14**) **spoke / had spoken** to you, you (**15**) **talked / had talked** about giving it up. What (**16**) **did you decide / had you decided**? I think that's all for now. My mum and I are going shopping shortly, so I'd better post this.
Speak to you soon.
Love,
Charlotte

LIVEWORKSHEETS

D Complete using the past perfect simple or past perfect continuous of the verbs in the box. You may need to use a negative form.

eat • stay • wait • know • write • see • listen • get • have • run

1 By the time he died, Beethoven ..... nine symphonies.
2 We chose the Hotel Rio because we ..... there before.
3 We ..... for over an hour when the train finally arrived.
4 I was completely out of breath because I ..... .
5 I ..... the film before, so I knew how it ended.
6 When he got married, I ..... Chris for about two years.
7 Johnson ..... ready for the race for six months and finally the big moment came.
8 Vivian ..... computer lessons for very long so she wasn't sure how to use the Internet.
9 Holly ..... oysters before, so she wasn't sure what to do with them.
10 I ..... to my new CD for a few minutes when the CD player started making a funny noise.

E Choose the correct answer.

1 My brother and I ..... swimming almost every day last summer.
A went
B had been going
C were going
D had gone

2 We ..... when someone knocked at the door.
A talked
B had talked
C were talking
D were talked

3 When the robbery happened, the security guard ..... !
A slept
B was sleeping
C had slept
D was slept

4 Jack ..... chess before so I showed him what to do.
A hadn't been playing
B didn't play
C wasn't playing
D hadn't played

5 I wasn't sure how Belinda would react because I ..... her long.
A didn't know
B wasn't knowing
C hadn't been knowing
D hadn't known

6 Ian ..... at the factory long when he was made a manager.
A hadn't been working
B wasn't working
C didn't work
D wasn't worked

7 I wanted to say goodbye to Jerry, but he ..... .
A was already left
B already left
C had already been leaving
D had already left

8 When we got to the airport, I realised I ..... my passport at home!
A was left
B had left
C left
D had been leaving

LIVEWORKSHEETS

F Circle the incorrect words or phrases and rewrite them correctly.

1 I had paint on my shoes because I'd painted my bedroom all morning.
.....

2 I missed the start of the film because I buy popcorn.
.....

3 It was obvious that Bill has worked because he was very tired when I saw him.
.....

4 We had been tidying the garden for hours and I was needing a rest.
.....

5 When the bus was arriving, we missed it because we were talking.
.....

6 During the Christmas holiday, I was eating too much and watching too much TV!
.....

7 Julian was learning all about computer games by the time he was six.
.....

8 My grandfather was owning a hotel by the beach until he sold it last year.
.....

G Circle the correct word or phrase.

1 When she was a girl, my mum **would / used to** live in a village.
2 I really can't **be / get** used to having a new baby brother.
3 People **would / are used to** die of diseases in the past that we can cure today.
4 There **would / used to** be a cinema on this corner, but they knocked it down.
5 It was strange at first, but I'm used to **play / playing** the bagpipes now.
6 Didn't you **use to / be used to** have blonde hair?
7 Christopher was **being / getting** used to the idea of joining the army.
8 People never **would / used to** be so worried about crime in this area.

H Complete each second sentence using the word given, so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence. Write between two and five words in each gap.

1 People walked more fifty years ago than they do now. **would**
Fifty years ago, ... than they do now.

2 My parents wouldn't let me stay out late when I was young. **used**
My parents ..... let me stay out late when I was young.

3 Did you know that Carol played basketball for her country? **to**
Did you know that Carol ..... basketball for her country?

4 Sending messages around the world instantly is no longer unusual. **got**
We ..... messages around the world instantly.

5 When he was a teacher, my dad often used to get home quite late. **would**
When he was a teacher, my dad ..... quite late.

6 Do you think you could learn to live without your mobile phone? **used**
Do you think you could ..... without your mobile phone?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

7 In the past, people wouldn't go as far away on holiday as they do today. **use**
In the past, people ..... as far away on holiday as they do today.

8 This town has a lot more cinemas than it had in the past. **used**
This town ..... so many cinemas.

I Find the extra word in each line.

Childhood

1 ..... Childhood would used to be quite different from what it is today. Young
2 ..... people didn't use not to have so much leisure time. Today's children may
3 ..... complain about their schoolwork, but our great-grandparents would to go
4 ..... out to work at a very young age. They had often been left school by
5 ..... the time they were fourteen and were found a job. This meant that they
6 ..... have had little free time for hobbies or leisure activities, especially when
7 ..... they had been working hard all day. Of course, they got themselves used
8 ..... to working long hours eventually, but it would meant that they had to
9 ..... grow up very quickly. Today, we are got used to having some free time to
10 ..... do things we enjoy, a luxury people in the past rarely were had.

J Write one word in each gap.

The night before

Jane lay awake. She had (**1**) ..... preparing for the next day (**2**) ..... a long time and now she couldn't sleep. Her team (**3**) ..... playing the local champions at water polo in the final and Jane was the captain. She (**4**) ..... feeling the pressure.

She turned over and remembered how she (**5**) ..... learned to swim. Her father had taught her. They (**6**) ..... go to the local pool every day after school and her father (**7**) ..... to show her what to do. She hadn't liked the water at first, but she soon (**8**) ..... used to it. She learned quickly and joined the water polo team. She had (**9**) ..... their youngest member!

She quickly got used to scoring goals and (**10**) ..... under pressure, but tomorrow was different. It was the biggest match of her life. She closed her eyes again and tried to get to sleep. 'I (**11**) ..... used to have problems sleeping,' she thought to herself. 'But then again, I didn't (**12**) ..... to be the captain of the team.' She watched the clock change slowly and knew that it was going to be a long night.

LIVEWORKSHEETS