

Grammar Focus: Past Tenses

Briefly review the five key forms used to describe events and habits in the past:

Tense / Structure	Example	Use
Past Simple	<i>The patient arrived at the clinic.</i>	Completed past actions
Past Continuous	<i>She was waiting in the lobby when her symptoms worsened.</i>	Past actions long or interrupted by another
Past Perfect	<i>She had stopped taking her medication two weeks earlier.</i>	An action before another past action
Used to	<i>She used to eat a lot of salty food.</i>	Past habits or states (not true anymore)
Would (for habits)	<i>She would always ignore her follow-up appointments.</i>	Repeated past actions (not states)

Case Scenario:

Mr. Sanchez, a 62-year-old retired bus driver, (**arrived / was arriving**) at the outpatient clinic complaining of shortness of breath and fatigue.

While he (**waited / was waiting**) for the nurse, he suddenly (**had felt / felt**) dizzy and had to lie down. His blood pressure (**used to be / was**) 198/110 mmHg.

He (**has been diagnosed / had been diagnosed**) with hypertension five years earlier but (**stopped / had stopped**) taking his medication after his last check-up, as he (**thought / had thought**) he was doing better.

He (**used to take / would take**) morning walks and eat a low-sodium diet, but after moving in with his daughter, he (**used to skip / would often skip**) exercise and eat fast food with his grandchildren.

By the time the doctor (**examined / had examined**) him, his symptoms (**had worsened / were worsening**), and he was referred to the emergency department for further evaluation.