

Writing

A past narrative

Reading

1 Imagine you are going to write about something that happened to you in the past. Which of these verb tenses would you use?

future with *will*
future with *going to*
present simple
present continuous
past simple
past continuous
past perfect

2 Read the blog entry. Which of the verb tenses from exercise 1 does the blogger use?

I was talking to some friends about ghosts last night. We were exchanging ghost stories when I suddenly remembered something that happened to me a long time ago.

I'd left home and was living in London at the time, sharing a flat with two friends. In those days I worked in an antique market and every day I would walk to work. The walk would take me through a park and then across a busy main road.

One day I was waiting to cross the road when a car drove past me. As it was passing, the driver looked at me as if he'd seen a ghost. I'll never forget the expression on his face. I thought he was going to crash the car but he didn't.

A few weeks later I went with one of my flatmates to play at a wedding. I used to play in a band and we often performed at parties and special events. While we were playing, I saw the man again. Apparently, he was the bride's uncle. Anyway, as soon as he saw me he left the room.

I eventually discovered that his son had died in a car crash and that I looked exactly like his son. The following year I saw some photos of him and it was true. I was a dead ringer for the man's son. It's a true story. It's also a creepy story.

3 Read the blog entry again and answer the questions.

- 1 Where was the blogger living at the time the events took place?
- 2 How did he use to get to work?
- 3 Where would the journey take him?
- 4 What's a *dead ringer*? (a) A person who looks the same as another person or (b) a dead person who comes back to life?
- 5 Which of these adjectives has a similar meaning to *creepy*? Funny, fun, or frightening.
- 6 What will the blogger never forget?

4 Complete the phrases with the time expressions. Read the blog entry again to check your answers.

a few weeks later a long time ago at the time
in those days last night one day the following year

- 1 I was talking to some friends _____.
- 2 The events of the story happened _____.
- 3 I'd left home and was living in London _____.
- 4 I worked in an antique market _____.
- 5 I was waiting to cross the road _____.
- 6 I went with one of my flatmates to play at a wedding _____.
- 7 I saw some photos of his son _____.

5 Complete the sentences in your own words.

- 1 These days _____.
- 2 When I was a child _____.
- 3 This time last year _____.
- 4 On Saturdays _____.
- 5 _____ yet.
- 6 As soon as I woke up this morning _____.

Language focus: narrative verb tenses

6 Complete the definitions to explain when we use each form.

past continuous past perfect past simple
present continuous present simple used to

We use ...

- 1 _____ for talking about things that are happening now and about temporary and changing situations.
- 2 _____ for completed actions in the past.
- 3 _____ for actions in progress in the past.
- 4 _____ for talking about habits and routines, and about things that are always true.
- 5 _____ to talk about habitual states or actions in the past.
- 6 _____ to talk about an event in the past that happened just before another event or a specific time in the past.

7 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb in brackets.

- 1 My brother's an actor. He _____ (*live*) in London.
- 2 At the moment, I _____ (*stay*) with him until I _____ (*find*) my own place.
- 3 Last year we _____ (*visit*) New York together.
- 4 After we _____ (*stay*) there for a week, we _____ (*go*) to Los Angeles.
- 5 When he was younger, my brother _____ (*dream*) of going to Hollywood.
- 6 My brother and I _____ (*be*) very close.

Preparing to write

8 Read the Writing task below. Before you start writing, answer these questions and use the answers to help you plan your writing.

- 1 Has anything strange ever happened to you such as a feeling of *déjà vu*?
- 2 If your answer to question 1 was *yes*, when and where did it happen? What were you doing when it happened? Do you still remember it clearly now?
- 3 If your answer to question 1 was *no*, think of a special day from your past that you still remember clearly. Why was the day special? What was happening in your life at the time?

Writing

Write a blog entry describing something that happened in your past. Either write about a strange or unusual event from your past or a special day that you still remember clearly.

Useful language

- The other day I remembered ...
- I remember it clearly / vividly / as if it were yesterday.
- It's one of the strangest / most important things that's ever happened to me.
- I'll never forget ...
- Apparently, ...
- Eventually ...

