

Tenses

Read the examples carefully & choose the correct phrase to complete the rules:

PRESENT SIMPLE (base form + s/es/ies for 3rd person sg)

PRESENT CONTINUOUS (am / is / are + Ving)

1. He usually (a) **gets up** early to go to work, but today (b) **he's sleeping in**.
 - (a) present simple used for: **routines / annoying habits**
 - (b) present continuous used for: **temporary break from routine / habitual actions**
2. I usually believe what he says, but **I'm not believing don't believe** him now.
 - In the case of **state / action** verbs we normally use the present simple, not the present continuous
3. She **is being** selfish.
 - Even though *be* is a state verb, we **can** use it in the present continuous **to say that nothing has changed / to express a change in behaviour**
4. It seldom **rains** here.
 - present simple used for: **annoying habits / repeated actions**
5. It's always **raining**! How I wish I lived somewhere else...
 - There are exceptions when we **can** use the present continuous with adverbs of frequency (*always...*), but only to stress that the action is **irritating / ordinary**.
6. I'm **smelling** your flowers.
 - We don't normally use the present continuous with verbs of perception (*hear, smell, touch, see...*) because they are usually state verbs. However, there are exceptions when we **can** use them in the present continuous, but they either change meaning or type (they are no longer states, they are actions – like in **example 6 / example 7**)
7. Your flowers **are smelling** **smell** lovely.
 - Smell is a verb of perception, so we normally use it in the present simple, because it expresses a **state / action**.

PAST SIMPLE (V2)

PAST CONTINUOUS (was / were + Ving)

1. I (a) **was waiting** for the bus when (b) **I saw** Mrs. Miller.
 - (a) we use the past continuous to express a **longer / shorter** past action, usually interrupted by a shorter one
 - (b) we use the past simple to express an action that started & ended in the **past / future in the past**
2. When I was younger, mum **was phoning phoned** me every day.
 - We use the past simple to express a past habit, never the **past / present** continuous
3. When I was younger, mum **used to phone** me every day.
 - We use the structure *used to* to express a **present / past** habit. It can be used both with action and state verbs
4. When I was younger, mum **would phone** me every day.
 - The structure *would + infinitive* is perfectly synonymous with *used to*. It also expresses a past habit, BUT it can **only** be used with **state / action** verbs

Tenses

Read the examples carefully & choose the correct phrase to complete the rules:

PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE (have / has + V3)

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS (have / has + been + Ving)

1. He **has** just **received** his results.
 - We normally use the present perfect simple to express a recent past action that happened at an unspecified time in the **past / present**
2. The dog **has attacked** **attacked** the intruder last night.
 - When the time is specified (*last night*) we **always** use the **present perfect / past simple**
3. I **have been writing** this long letter I need to send since morning.
 - We use the present perfect continuous to express an action that started in the past and which is **still / not** going on in the present.
4. **It's been ages since** you **last made** a cake.
 - you can use "it has been ages" (AmE) OR "it's ages" (BrE)
 - **Fixed / Flexible expression**: Present Perfect ... SINCE ... Past Simple!
5. This is the second time you **have lost** your keys.
 - **Fixed / Flexible expression**: This is the first / second / third / etc time + PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE!

PAST PERFECT SIMPLE (had + V3)

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS (had been + Ving)

1. We were not able to get a hotel room because we **had not booked** in advance.
 - We use the past perfect simple to express a past action that took place **before / after** another past action or before a certain moment in time
2. She **had moved** **moved** to London in 1982.
 - We usually use the past perfect in comparison with another **past / present** action or with a past moment in time. Otherwise, we use the past simple.
3. By the time the police came to arrest him, he **had been flying** towards a new destination for 5 hours.
 - We use the past perfect continuous when there is a mention of a period of **space / time**. The past perfect continuous is also used to express anteriority to a past action / moment in time. The only difference to the past perfect simple is the mention of the duration.