

3C Past continuous

We use the past continuous to describe actions in progress at a particular time in the past.

I was sleeping at 7:00 this morning.

I was working at my desk when the telephone rang.

We form the past continuous with the simple past of the verb *be* + the *-ing* form of the main verb.

3.10	I / he / she / it	you / we / they
+	I was watching TV at 6:00 last night.	We were walking home when it started to rain.
-	It wasn't raining when I got to work.	The players weren't playing very well.
?	Was she working at this office when you met her?	Were you living here at the beginning of the year?
Y/N	Yes, she was . / No, she wasn't .	Yes, we were . / No, we weren't .

Past continuous and simple past

We use the simple past to describe completed actions in the past, for example a series of actions.

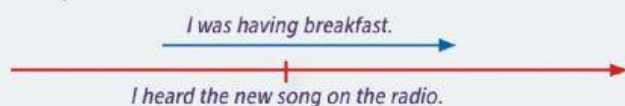
Yesterday, I woke up, I had breakfast, and then I took a shower.



We use the past continuous with the simple past to describe an action that was in progress when a completed action happened.

The action in progress can continue.

I was having breakfast when I heard the new song on the radio. = I continued having breakfast.



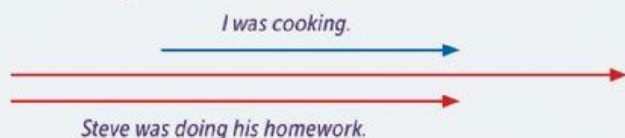
Or the action in progress may stop.

I was sleeping when the telephone rang. = I stopped sleeping.



We can also use two past continuous verbs together to show that two actions were happening at the same time.

I was cooking while Steve was doing his homework.



Look! We often use **when** and **while** in sentences with the past continuous.

I broke my leg while I was playing soccer.

I was playing soccer when I broke my leg.

While I was playing soccer, I broke my leg.

1 Complete the conversations with the past continuous form of the verbs in parentheses.

1 A _____ (you / watch) TV just now?

B No, I wasn't. It was the radio.

2 A Why didn't you see Paula and Mark?

B They _____ (walk) the dog.

3 A Why was the boss angry with Nigel?

B He _____ (not work) fast enough.

4 A Why didn't you play tennis yesterday?

B It _____ (rain) all day.

5 A Did you ask Thomas to come to the party?

B Yes, I talked to him while we _____ (have) lunch.

2 Change one verb in each sentence to the past continuous.

1 We had dinner outside while we stayed in Rome.

2 When Lisa crossed the street, she dropped her phone and it broke.

3 We had dinner outside when it started to rain.

4 I didn't listen when the teacher told us about the exam next week.

5 While we sat in the taxi, we checked the address of the hotel.

3 Choose the correct form of the verbs to complete the text about a movie of Alastair Humphreys' new adventure.

Into The Empty Quarter

In September 2012, Alastair Humphreys ¹trained / *was training* for an expedition to the South Pole. Unfortunately, he ²found out / *was finding out* that the trip couldn't take place because there wasn't enough money. So he ³had to / *was having to* find a new adventure quickly. One day, he ⁴looked / *was looking* through his adventure books when he ⁵found / *was finding* the answer—a book named *Arabian Sands* about Wilfred Thesiger's trip across the Arabian desert in the 1940s. Alastair immediately ⁶contacted / *was contacting* another explorer, Leon McCarron, and they started planning how to walk more than 1,600 kilometers across the desert. They ⁷began / *were beginning* the trip in November 2012, and were home before the end of the year. But this time they ⁸filmed / *were filming* all their adventures, too. *Into The Empty Quarter* is their story.

