

Level: B2: Upper Intermediate

Skill: Grammar

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## Past Simple & Past Continuous

### ★ Past Simple

**Use:** to talk about situations that occurred in the past and finished in the past.

*Example: Yesterday, I played tennis.*

**Structure:** Pronoun (I, you, she, he, it, we, they) + verb in the past.

**Auxiliaries:** **DID / DIDN'T**

✱ *Auxiliaries: palabras que ayudan a crear preguntas o oraciones en negativo.*

⚠ **YOU / WE / THEY / I / HE / SHE / IT**

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**VERB (IN THE PAST)**

Example: We **WATCHED** TV at 7.

We **didn't watch** TV at 7.

**Did you watch** TV at 7?

⚠ **TO BE** in the past:

- IS / AM ----- **WAS**
- ARE ----- **WERE**

✎ **Regular and irregular verbs in the past**

➡ **Regular verbs**, we add -D / ED  
Example: watch - watched

➡ **Irregular verbs**, they change their form  
Example: go - went

○ List of irregular verb in English [LINK](#)

### ★ Past Continuous

**Use:** to show that something continued for some time in the past.

*Example: Yesterday, I was playing tennis.*

**Structure:** Pronoun (I, you, she, he, it, we, they) + TO BE in the past form + verb -ing

**Auxiliaries:** **WAS / WASN'T**  
**WERE / WEREN'T**

⚠ **YOU / WE / THEY / I + WERE / WEREN'T + VERB -ing**

Example: We **were watching** TV at 7.

We **weren't watching** TV at 7.

**Were you watching** TV at 7?

⚠ **HE / SHE / IT / I + WAS / WASN'T + VERB -ing**

Example: She **was watching** TV at 7.

He **wasn't watching** TV at 7.

**Was she watching** TV at 7?

⊖ We do **NOT** normally use the past continuous with **STATIVE VERBS**.  
We use the past simple instead:

➡ Example: When I got home, I really **needed** (NOT ~~was needing~~) a shower

○ List of stative & dynamic verbs in English

[LINK](#)

🔍 We use the past simple to talk about events, states or habits at definite times in the past. The past continuous emphasises the action or event in progress around a time in the past.

🔍 The past continuous always use the verb TO BE in the past form and the verb with -ing

🔍 The past simple uses the verb in the past form (regular form or irregular form)

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## Past Simple & Past Continuous

Choose the correct option

1. When I **came** ~~was coming~~ to the party, my friends ~~were were~~ **being** there.
2. Kate **watched** ~~was watching~~ TV when she **heard** ~~was hearing~~ a noise.
3. That morning **woke up** ~~was waking up~~ and **cooked** ~~was cooking~~ breakfast.
4. While I **was waiting** ~~waited~~ the subway **arrived** ~~was arriving~~.
5. He **listened** ~~was listening~~ a podcast while he **ate** ~~was eating~~ lunch.

Write the correct tense.

1. While my mother ..... **(work)** in the garden, I ..... **(play)** FIFA.
2. I ..... **(break)** the vase when I ..... **(clean)** the table.
3. He ..... **(sweep)** the floor, when the postman ..... **(come)**
4. He ..... **(buy)** a ticket and ..... **(go)** to the cinema.
5. They ..... **(have)** supper when they ..... **(hear)** the news.

Complete the rest of the story about Nicholas White's lift experience. Use the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs in bracket.

When the voice came over the lift's intercom at 4p.m.  
on Sunday, White ..... (lie) on the floor, half asleep.  
He was extremely cold as he ..... (not wear) a  
jacket. When he heard the voice he ..... (jump) to his  
feet. Finally, he was free! Almost. First the guard .....  
(ask) him lots of security questions, "Where do you work?  
Which is your office?" The 'interview' lasted a very long time.  
Then, slowly, the door ..... (open). So, what  
..... he ..... (do) first? He took the lift up to  
the 43rd floor to get his jacket from his office. On his desk an  
angry note from a colleague ..... (wait) for him. It  
said, 'Why ..... you ..... (go) home? We had  
so much work to do!' Of course, she ..... (feel) very  
guilty when she found out the truth!

