

# Simple Past vs. Past Continuous

## Simple Past

We use the **simple past** to talk about:

**Completed** actions, **habits** and **facts** in the past.



- I **went** to the cinema **yesterday**.
- I **always visited** my grandparents in my summer holidays **when I was little**.
- I **lived** near Liverpool for a couple of years.

## Past Continuous

The **past continuous** is used to express:

**Interrupted** actions, **specific time** as an **interruption** and **parallel** actions.



- I **was watching** TV when the phone rang.
- **Last night at 7pm**, I **was having** dinner.
- **While** she **was doing** her homework her brother **was playing** football.

## Worksheet

### Verb tenses

### Past Simple & Past Continuous

❖ Fill in the blanks with the past simple or the past continuous:



1. When I \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive) the teacher \_\_\_\_\_ (write) the summary.
2. He \_\_\_\_\_ (cross) the road when I \_\_\_\_\_ (see) him.
3. Why \_\_\_\_\_ (they / shout) at you when I \_\_\_\_\_ (wake up)?
4. They \_\_\_\_\_ (fix) the computer when I \_\_\_\_\_ (open) the door.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ (Mary / break) her leg while she \_\_\_\_\_ (skate)?
6. I \_\_\_\_\_ (sleep) when she \_\_\_\_\_ (knock) on the door.
7. When I \_\_\_\_\_ (see) Jim at the disco he \_\_\_\_\_ (not / talk) to the DJ.
8. I \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) a film on TV when the electricity \_\_\_\_\_ (go) out.
9. The Titanic \_\_\_\_\_ (not / cross) the Pacific Ocean when it \_\_\_\_\_ (strike) an iceberg.
10. Paul \_\_\_\_\_ (not / fall) while he \_\_\_\_\_ (run) away.
11. Carol \_\_\_\_\_ (fall) asleep while she \_\_\_\_\_ (read) a book.
12. While my father \_\_\_\_\_ (drive) home, he \_\_\_\_\_ (not / answer) his mobile phone.

# PAST SIMPLE & PAST CONTINUOUS

## A) CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION

- 1.-Anthony **called/was calling** while I **parked/was parking** the car.
- 2.-Miranda **drove/was driving** to work when she **saw/was seeing** the accident.
- 3.-Thomas **didn't watch/wasn't watching** the film when Sonia arrived home.
- 4.-Did he **lie/was he lying** on the sofa at 5,30 yesterday?
- 5.-When I **left/was leaving** the office, the phone **rang/was ringing**.
- 6.-It **snowed/was snowing** in the mountains when we got up yesterday.
- 7.-Barbara **was living/lived** in Paris when she was 15 years old.
- 8.-I **was writing/wrote** my blog on the Internet while you **slept/were sleeping**.
- 9.-While David **was recovering/recovered** in hospital, I decorated the flat.
- 10.-When I **was waking /woke** up, I realized that it **was getting /got** dark.



## B) COMPLETE THE SENTENCES USING PAST SIMPLE OR PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE

- 1.-Yesterday at 9,30 pm my parents ..... (sit) in the garden ..... (drink) some Coke.
- 2.- The chambermaid ..... (make) my bed in the hotel and ..... (clean) the bathroom & breakfast.
- 3.- Somebody ..... (knock) on the door while I ..... (read) the newspaper.
- 4.-My brother ..... (buy) a lot of books when he ..... (live) in Cambridge.
- 5.-William ..... (not meet) Sally at the airport last Sunday.
- 6.-Jerry ..... (have) dinner when the lights ..... (go) out.
- 7.-The girl ..... (feel) ill so she ..... (not go) to work.
- 8.-When I ..... (arrive) at the wedding, Miriam ..... (introduce) me to some friends.
- 9.-Sarah ..... (run) to catch the bus, when she ..... (fall) down and ..... (break) her ankle.
- 10.-Richard ..... (teach) at the university when he ..... (meet) his wife.

