

Grammar

Past simple, past continuous, used to

Past simple

Form

statement

I/you/he/she/it/we/they
played ...

negative

I/you/he/she/it/we/they
did not (didn't) play ...

question

Did I/you/he/she/it/we/they
play ...?

Use

Example

Completed actions

I **saw** the new James Bond film yesterday.

Repeated actions in the past

I **went** to the theatre four times last month.

General truths about the past

Fifty years ago, people **didn't spend** as much on entertainment as they do today.

Main events in a story

Josh **pushed** the door open and **looked** inside the room.

Helpful hints

The past simple is often used with the following words and phrases:

- yesterday
- last week/summer/year/etc
- in January/2001/etc
- an hour/a week/a year ago



Some verbs have irregular past simple forms. See page 182.

Past continuous

Form

statement

I/he/she/it **was playing** ...
You/we/they **were playing** ...

negative

I/he/she/it **was not (wasn't) playing** ...
You/we/they **were not (weren't) playing** ...

question

Was I/he/she/it **playing**?
Were you/we/they **playing**?

Use

Example

Actions happening at a moment in the past

At nine o'clock last night, I **was watching** TV.

Two actions in progress at the same time

I **was reading** a book while you **were doing** the washing-up.

Background information in a story

It **was raining** so Wendy decided to go to the cinema.

Helpful hints

The past continuous is often used with the following words and phrases:

- at that moment
- at one/two/etc o'clock
- while



- When one action in the past happens in the middle of another, we use the past simple and the past continuous together.
✓ The phone **rang** while I **was watching** a DVD.
- We do not use the past continuous for regular or repeated actions in the past.
✗ Last year, I **was going** to the cinema every weekend.

used to

Form

used to + bare infinitive

statement

I/you/he/she/it/we/they
used to ...

negative

I/you/he/she/it/we/they **never used to** ...
I/you/he/she/it/we/they **didn't use to** ...

question

Did I/you/he/she/it/we/they
use to ...?

Use

Example

Distant past habits and states

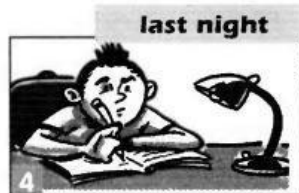
When I was four, I **used to** eat ice cream every day.

- A** Complete using the correct past simple form of the verbs in the box. You may have to use some negative forms.

come • give • go • have • know • make • send • take

- I got to the post office just before it closed and the letter.
- We invited Stephanie to the party, but she
- Jack lost his job because he too many mistakes.
- Everyone that it was Bill's fault, but nobody said anything.
- Karen the keys from the kitchen table and ran out the door.
- I was bored, so Mum me some money to go shopping.
- Do you remember the time we to India on holiday?
- It started raining, but luckily I an umbrella in my bag.

- B** Look at the pictures and complete the sentences. Use the correct form of the past simple.



- I don't want to go and see the film because I saw it last week
- I don't need a football because
- I know a lot about Paris because
- I don't need to worry about my homework because
- I haven't got a PlayStation any more because
- Mum is angry with me because

- C** Complete using the correct past continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

- Ted (**play**) his guitar at half past seven.
- At midnight, I (**sleep**), but Jane (**listen**) to music.
- Luke (**stand**) outside the bank when suddenly two robbers ran past him.
- I know Doug (**work**) late at the office because I saw him when I (**leave**).
- you (**have**) a shower when the earthquake happened?
- Penny (**run**) to catch the bus when she slipped and fell.
- When you saw Eugene he (**go**) home?
- At midnight? Erm ... we (**watch**) a DVD, I think.

D Circle the correct word or phrase.

- 1 When we were in Canada, we **went** / **were going** skiing almost every day.
- 2 About four years ago, I **decided** / **was deciding** to become a chef.
- 3 Georgia **had** / **was having** a shower when someone knocked at the door.
- 4 Holly and I ran from the house to the taxi because it **rained** / **was raining** heavily.
- 5 Two men **argued** / **were arguing** outside, so I went to see what was happening.
- 6 Daniel **called** / **was calling** you at one o'clock yesterday, but you were here with me.
- 7 We **ate** / **were eating** breakfast when a letter came through the letter box.
- 8 As I walked past the window, I saw that Paula **made** / **was making** a cake.
- 9 I **dreamt** / **was dreaming** about my favourite band when the alarm clock went off.
- 10 While I **practised** / **was practising** the trumpet late last night, a neighbour came to complain.

E Complete using the correct past simple or past continuous form of the verbs in the box.

answer • be • continue • get • go • have • open • practise • put
ring • say • shine • sing • wake

Amber's Big Match

One morning, Amber (1) up early. The sun (2) and the birds (3) Amber (4) very excited because it was the day of the big tennis match.

Amber (5) downstairs and into the kitchen, where her father (6) breakfast.

'Morning, Amber. Today's the day!' he (7) Amber smiled nervously. 'Don't worry!' he (8) 'You'll be fine.'

Amber (9) some toast into the toaster and (10) the fridge. Just as she (11) the butter out, the phone (12) Her father (13) it. After a few minutes, he put the phone down.

'Bad news, I'm afraid. The other player (14) yesterday when she had an accident. The match is off.'

Amber ate her toast slowly. She was surprised she didn't feel disappointed.

F Complete using the correct form of *used to*. You may have to use some negative forms.

- 1 When I was younger, I eat pizza almost every day!
- 2 there be a supermarket on the corner?
- 3 Bradley is a teacher, but he want to be a train driver.
- 4 I like eating cabbage, but now I love it!
- 5 Rick have blond hair when he was a little boy?
- 6 I know Lily cook much, but now I think she makes dinner every day.