UNIT 1
Tenses

Past Forms

Past Simple

We use the past simple:

a) for an action which happened at a definite time in the past. The time is stated, already known or implied.



*They **went** camping by the lake last month. (When did they go camping? Last month. The time is stated.)*

b) for actions which happened immediately one after the other in the past.





*First she **paid** the driver, then she **got out** of the taxi.*

c) for past habits or states which are now finished. In such cases we can also use the expression *used to*.



*Kitchens **were**/**used to be** very different a hundred years ago.*

The past simple is used with the following time expressions: *yesterday, then, when, How long ago ...?, last night/week/month/year/Tuesday,* etc., *three days/weeks,* etc. *ago, in 1997,* etc.

Past Continuous

We use the past continuous:

a) for an action which was in progress at a stated time in the past. We do not mention when the action started or finished.

*At seven o'clock yesterday evening they **were having** dinner. (We do not know when they started or finished their dinner.)*



b) for an action which was in progress when another action interrupted it. We use the past continuous for the action in progress (longer action) and the past simple for the action which interrupted it (shorter action).

*He **was walking** down the street when he **ran into** an old friend.*



c) for two or more simultaneous past actions.

*She **was talking** on her mobile phone while she **was driving** to work.*



d) to describe the atmosphere, setting, etc. in the introduction to a story before we describe the main events.

*One beautiful autumn afternoon, Ben **was strolling** down a quiet country lane. The birds **were singing** and the leaves **were rustling** in the breeze.*



The past continuous is used with the following time expressions: *while, when, as, all morning/evening/day/night,* etc.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

UNIT 1
Tenses

11

A ***Brian and Ruth went on a day trip yesterday.*** **Look at the notes below and say what they did, using the linking words from the list.**

first, then, next, after that, later, finally

S1: *First, they travelled to Brighton by train.*

9:15 - 10:30:	travel to Brighton by train
10:30 - 11:30:	look around shops
11:30 - 12:30:	walk on beach
12:30 - 2:00:	eat lunch at seaside restaurant
2:00 - 4:30:	visit funfair
4:30 - 5:30:	have afternoon tea

B **Now, in pairs, ask and answer questions about what Brian and Ruth were doing at the times in the list below, as in the example.**

SA: *What were Brian and Ruth doing at half past nine in the morning?*
SB: *They were travelling to Brighton by train.*

9:30 am	11:45 am	2:30 pm
11:00 am	1:15 pm	5:00 pm

12

Put the verbs in brackets into the *past simple* or the *past continuous*.

A The sun **1)** ...*was shining*... (shine) and the birds **2)** ..... (sing) as Mike **3)** ..... (drive) down the country lane. He **4)** ..... (smile), because he **5)** ..... (look forward) to the journey ahead. Mike **6)** ..... (enjoy) driving, especially when he **7)** ..... (go) somewhere new. Then, suddenly, the engine **8)** ..... (begin) to make a strange noise and the car **9)** ..... (stop) dead in the middle of the road. Mike **10)** ..... (try) to start it, but nothing **11)** ..... (happen). He **12)** ..... (sigh), then **13)** ..... (get out) of the car. As he **14)** ..... (push) the car to the side of the road, Mike **15)** ..... (start) to wish he had stayed at home.

B John **1)** ..... (enter) his flat and **2)** ..... (close) the door. He **3)** ..... (hang up) his coat when he **4)** ..... (hear) a strange noise. A tap **5)** ..... (run) in the kitchen. He **6)** ..... (walk) into the kitchen and **7)** ..... (turn) it off. Then, he **8)** ..... (freeze). Someone **9)** ..... (stand) behind him. He **10)** ..... (take) a deep breath and **11)** ..... (turn) around. His flatmate, Steve, **12)** ..... (lean) in the doorway. 'You **13)** ..... (give) me a fright!' John exclaimed. Steve **14)** ..... (laugh) at him. John **15)** ....(start) to laugh, too. 'I **16)** ..... (think) you had gone to London today,' he said. 'No,' **17)** ..... (reply) Steve. 'Unfortunately, I **18)** ..... (miss) the train.'

13

Choose the correct answer.

1 'Were you expecting James and Paul to stay for dinner?'
'No, but I ...*A*... a lot of food, so it didn't matter.'
A had prepared **B** was preparing
C had been preparing

2 'Tony has been singing for years, hasn't he?'
'Yes. He ..... his first record when he was sixteen.'
A made **B** was making **C** had made

3 'There was a power cut last night.'
'I know. I ..... some paperwork when the lights went out.'
A had been doing **B** was doing
C had done

4 'Did you see Paul Simon in concert?'
'No. I was hoping to get tickets, but they ..... .'
A had sold out **B** sold out
C were selling out

5 'The restaurant was packed last night.'
'Yes. Luckily, I ..... a table in advance.'
A was booking **B** had booked
C had been booking

6 'Did you watch the film yesterday?'
'No. It ..... by the time we got home.'
A finished **B** was finishing
C had finished

7 'Did you stay up late last night?'
'No. I ..... all day, so I went to bed early.'
A had been working **B** worked
C was working

8 'Did you enjoy your holiday?'
'Yes. We ..... most of our time on the beach.'
A had spent **B** were spending **C** spent

9 'Kim looked tired this morning.'
'I know. She ..... all night long.'
A studied **B** had studied
C had been studying

10 'So what happened?'
'We ..... through the woods when we heard a gunshot.'
A had walked **B** walked **C** were walking

LIVEWORKSHEETS

UNIT 1
Tenses

Past Simple

The past simple is used for actions which happened in the past and are not related to the present.

We use the past simple:

- **for an action which happened at a definite time in the past. The time is stated, already known or implied.**



*Simon Cook **painted** his first picture in 1980. (When? In 1980. The time is stated.)*

- **for an action which began and finished in the past.**



*Mr Clark **taught** Maths for thirty years. (He is no longer a teacher. He has retired.)*

- **for an action which happened in the past and cannot be repeated.**

  *e.g. a) Mike **won** more than twenty medals when he was an athlete. (He is no longer an athlete. He cannot win another medal.)*
  *b) I once **spoke** to Frank Sinatra. (He is no longer alive. I won't speak to him again.)*

- **for an action which happened within a specific time period which is over at the moment of speaking.**

  *e.g. I **wrote** three letters this morning. (The time period is over. It is evening or night now.)*

Present Perfect

The present perfect is used for actions which happened in the past and are related to the present.

We use the present perfect:

- **for an action which happened at an unstated time in the past. The exact time is either unknown or unimportant, and therefore it is not mentioned or implied.**



*Simon Cook **has painted** a lot of pictures. (When? We do not know. The exact time is not mentioned or implied.)*

- **for an action which started in the past and continues up to the present.**



*Mrs Nelson **has taught** French for twenty years. (She started teaching French twenty years ago and she is still teaching French today.)*

- **for an action which happened in the past and may be repeated.**

  *e.g. a) Ben is an athlete. He **has won** more than ten medals. (He is still an athlete. He may win some more medals.)*
  *b) I'**ve spoken** to Celine Dion. (She is still alive. I may speak to her again.)*

- **for an action which happened within a specific time period which is not over at the moment of speaking.**

  *e.g. I'**ve written** two letters this morning. (The time period*

Note: We use the past simple to talk about actions which were performed by people who are no longer alive, even if the time is not stated. *e.g. Charles Dickens **wrote** 'Oliver Twist.'*

16 **Put the verbs in brackets into the *past simple* or the *present perfect*.**

A
A: I **1)** ...*'ve seen*... (see) this film before.
B: Me too, but I love this actor. He **2)** ..... (play) a lot of good roles.
A: Tom Cruise? I **3)** ..... (meet) him, you know.
B: Really? When?
A: When I **4)** ..... (be) in Los Angeles on holiday.

B
A: Who is that man?
B: He's an artist. He **1)** ..... (paint) a lot of beautiful pictures.
A: I think Van Gogh **2)** ..... (paint) the most beautiful pictures ever. But his life **3)** ..... (be) miserable.

C
A: I **1)** ..... (just/hear from) an old friend of mine.
B: Oh, really?
A: Yes. Jim **2)** ..... (write) to me. I **3)** ..... (get) the letter this morning.
B: That's nice. When **4)** ..... (you/first/meet) him?
A: He **5)** ..... (live) next door to me for three years, but he **6)** ..... (move) away last June and I **7)** ..... (not/see) him since.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Past Simple - Past Continuous - Past Perfect

◆ **The past simple is used for actions which happened immediately one after the other in the past.**



*When Jim came home, they **watched** a film on TV. (Jim came home and then they watched a film together.)*

◆ **The past continuous is used for a past action which was in progress when another action interrupted it.**



*When Jim came home, Mary **was watching** a film on TV. (She was still watching the film when Jim came home.)*

◆ **The past perfect is used for an action which happened before another past action or a specific time in the past.**



*When Jim came home, Mary **had already watched** the film on TV. (She watched the film first. Jim came home afterwards.)*

◆ **We can use the past simple, past continuous or past perfect without any difference in meaning with verbs such as *think, hope, mean, expect*, etc. for things we hoped or wished to do, but didn't.**

*e.g. I **expected/was expecting/had expected** him to call me, but he didn't.*

17 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense.

1 A: What ...*were you doing*... (you/do) at ten o'clock this morning?
B: I ..... (read) some important documents in my office.
2 A: Why are you so disappointed?
B: Because I ..... (hope) that I would pass the test, but I didn't.
3 A: Have you found your bag yet?
B: No, but I ..... (report) it stolen to the police yesterday.
4 A: Did you enjoy the play last night?
B: No, even though I ..... (read) good reviews of it before I bought the tickets.
5 A: Have you written your report yet?
B: I ..... (just/start) when you came in, actually.
6 A: Sorry I'm late.
B: Where have you been? I ..... (expect) you an hour ago.
7 A: We ..... (go) to an antique market yesterday.
B: ..... (you/buy) anything?
8 A: Were you surprised that the factory closed down?
B: Not really. In fact, I ..... (know) it was going to happen.
9 A: Julia did well in the test, didn't she?
B: Yes. She ..... (study) very hard for it.

18 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense.

A When Simon **1)** ...*arrived*... (arrive) at the cinema, dozens of people **2)** ..... (queue) outside. They **3)** ..... (wait) to see the same film as Simon. Simon, however, **4)** ..... (buy) a ticket in advance, so he **5)** ..... (walk) straight to the front of the queue and **6)** ..... (enter) the cinema. He **7)** ..... (feel) relieved that he didn't have to queue. He **8)** ..... (reach) his seat just as the lights **9)** ..... (go down) for the start of the film.

B Last weekend, Cathy **1)** ..... (hire) a car and **2)** ..... (drive) to the seaside. When she **3)** ..... (arrive) the wind **4)** ..... (blow) and the sky **5)** ..... (be) cloudy. She **6)** ..... (get out) of the car and **7)** ..... (take) a walk along the seafront. Then she **8)** ..... (decide) to go for fish and chips at a nearby restaurant that she **9)** ..... (see) earlier and liked the look of. By the time she **10)** ..... (leave) the restaurant, it **11)** ..... (already/grow) dark. As she **12)** ..... (walk) to her car it **13)** ..... (begin) to rain. However, Cathy **14)** ..... (not/mind) because she **15)** ..... (have) a wonderful day.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

UNIT 1
Tenses

19 Identify the tenses, then match them to the correct descriptions.

1 People **used to have/had** very simple lives in those days.
2 She **was talking** on the phone when her boss came in.
3 Sam was in hospital because he **had crashed** his car.
4 They **had been studying** hard all morning, so they were tired.
5 I **was cooking** lunch while he **was pouring** the drinks.
6 We **had been living** in the house for a year before we decorated the kitchen.
7 Princess Diana **did** a lot of work for charity.
8 At two o'clock this afternoon they **were having** lunch at work.
9 First, she **knocked** on the door. Then, she **went** inside.
10 We **had bought** the tickets before we went to the theatre.

a to talk about actions of people who are no longer alive
b action which happened before another past action or before a stated time in the past
c actions which happened immediately one after the other in the past
d to put emphasis on the duration of an action which started and finished in the past before another past action
e action which was in progress at a stated time in the past
f two or more simultaneous actions
g action in progress when another action interrupted it
h action which lasted for some time in the past and whose result was visible in the past
i past habit or state which is now finished
j action which finished in the past and whose result was visible in the past

20 Underline the correct tense.

1 Lynne ***was singing/had sung*** as she was cleaning the windows.
2 Mr Todd ***was teaching/had been teaching*** for thirty years when he retired.
3 I phoned Jack because I ***wanted/had wanted*** to ask him a question.
4 They ***had walked/had been walking*** for hours when they stopped for a rest.
5 The shop ***had been selling/had sold*** the table by the time I got there.
6 Joe was happy. He ***was winning/had won*** first prize in the competition.
7 It ***was raining/had rained*** while they were playing the football match.
8 Rob ***was opening/opened*** the box and looked inside.
9 Eve was delighted to hear that she ***was getting/had got*** the job.
10 People ***used to work/were working*** very long hours in those days.
11 I was running when I ***slipped/was slipping*** on the ice.
12 They ***were already buying/had already bought*** the tickets when they went to the concert.
13 Carol ***had broken/was breaking*** her arm, so she couldn't write for six weeks.
14 We ***had been staying/stayed*** in a hotel by the sea last summer.
15 Elvis Presley ***sang/had sung*** lots of hit songs.
16 I ***opened/was opening*** the door and stepped outside.
17 They ***had stood/were standing*** outside when the results were announced.
18 Alexander Graham Bell ***had invented/invented*** the telephone.
19 She broke the glass while she ***had washed/was washing*** it.

21 Choose the correct answer.

1 He went to bed ...*B*... he had brushed his teeth.
A before **B** after **C** while

2 I was watching television ..... the doorbell rang.
A when **B** as soon as **C** while

3 She ..... hadn't finished the washing-up when the guests arrived.
A yet **B** just **C** still

4 We had been walking for hours ..... we reached the campsite.
A since **B** for **C** before

5 John was repairing the car ..... Steve was tidying the garage.
A while **B** before **C** after

6 We went to Spain on holiday ..... .
A tomorrow **B** next year **C** last year

7 I fell asleep ..... I closed my eyes.
A just **B** as soon as **C** already

8 ..... did Jane and Ted get married?
A How long **B** How long ago **C** While

9 She hasn't seen Jim ..... she left school.
A for **B** just **C** since

10 He won't go home ..... he has finished his work.
A how long **B** until **C** yet

11 I have lived in Kent ..... ten years now.
A since **B** for **C** before

12 We haven't finished work ..... .
A yet **B** until **C** just

13 ..... did Tina meet Steve?
A How long **B** How long ago **C** While

LIVEWORKSHEETS

22 a) Fill in the gaps with an appropriate past form.



One fine morning, a man **1)** ...*was fishing*... (fish) in a river. The sun **2)** ..... (shine) and the man **3)** ..... (sit) on the river bank. Everything was very quiet and peaceful. The man **4)** ..... (wait) patiently for several hours when suddenly he **5)** ..... (feel) something pulling on the fishing line. He **6)** ..... (stand up) quickly and **7)** ..... (begin) to take in the line. He **8)** ..... (just/lift) the huge fish he had caught out of the water when there was a loud splash and it fell back into the river. At first, the man didn't know what **9)** ..... (happen). Then, he **10)** ..... (look) carefully at his fishing line. It **11)** ..... (snap). The poor man was so disappointed that he **12)** ..... (pack) away all his things and went home.

b) Which of the *past forms* in the text above are used to express:

1 emphasis on the duration of an action which started and finished in the past before another past action or a stated time in the past
2 action which happened at a definite time in the past-time stated, known or implied
3 actions which happened immediately one after the other in the past
4 to describe the atmosphere, the setting, etc. in the introduction to a story
5 action which happened before another past action

23 Complete the sentences using any appropriate past forms.

1 While Joanne ...*was washing*... her hair, Carl was cleaning the house.
2 I have no idea where I ..... my wallet.
3 He ..... his leg when he fell off his skateboard.
4 We ..... in the classroom for ten minutes before the teacher arrived.
5 She ..... to the theatre last night.
6 My tooth ..... for a week before I went to the dentist's.
7 She cried when she ..... her driving test.
8 What ..... when the alarm went off?
9 They got into the car and ..... away.
10 I could tell she ..... the competition because she couldn't stop smiling.
11 We ..... along the beach when we heard a cry for help.
12 Tom ..... the piano for years before he became famous.

24 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense.

A: Hello, Mark. You **1)** ...*took*... (take) a long time to answer the door.
B: Sorry. I **2)** ..... (not/hear) the bell. Come in, Tony.
A: **3)** What ..... (you/plan) to do today?
B: Well, I **4)** ..... (think) of going for a picnic in the country, but the weather is awful so I **5)** ..... (change) my mind.
A: Oh dear. Well, yesterday Mary **6)** ..... (tell) me that she **7)** ..... (buy) two tickets to see the Rocking Stars, but she couldn't go to the concert. So I **8)** ..... (buy) the tickets from her, because I **9)** ..... (think) you'd like to go.
B: Tony, that's brilliant! I **10)** ..... (mean) to buy tickets for that concert, but they **11)** ..... (sell out) by the time I **12)** ..... (go) to the booking office.
A: Well, it's lucky I **13)** ..... (see) Mary, then, isn't it?

25 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense.

1 A: Look at Steve! He is soaking wet.
B: I know. He ...*has been washing*... (wash) the car.
2 A: Why ..... (you/make) so much food?
B: Well, I ..... (expect) guests, but they phoned to say they couldn't come.
3 A: Julia performed well at the concert.
B: Yes. She ..... (practise) for months beforehand.
4 A: ..... (you/ever/go) to Spain?
B: Yes. I ..... (go) last year.
5 A: I like your new coat.
B: Thank you. I ..... (wear) my old coat for years, so I decided to buy a new one.
6 A: Do you know this town well?
B: Of course. I ..... (live) here for six years.

LIVEWORKSHEETS