

A thick black L-shaped frame surrounds the text. The top-left corner is a horizontal bar extending to the right, and the bottom-right corner is a vertical bar extending upwards. The rest of the frame is implied by the corners.

PAST TENSES

Past Simple. Past Continuous. Sentence
Patterns.

The Usage of USED TO/WOULD

Mind the Functions

PAST SIMPLE	PAST CONTINUOUS
1. Single completed action	1. Action going at a given past moment
2. Completed action occupied a period of time	2. Process in the focus of communication
3. Succession of single/durative actions	3. Action going at a given period of time
4. Recurrent action	4. Present-time context (single past action)
5. Permanent actions (general characteristic of a person)	5. Emotional Continuous (typical traits)
6. Actions at a given past moment (stative verbs, circumstances are important)	6. Action in the near future (planned)
7. Future actions (sequence of tenses), reported speech	7. Interrupted action
8. Unreal actions (Conjunctive mood)	8. Polite requests
9. Present-time context (to spend + time + Ving)	

Exercises

Explain the use of the Past Indefinite and Past Continuous.

1. He *sat down* and silently *took* one of the cigarettes from the desk.
2. We had some difficulty with Jerry, who *was enjoying* himself and *did not want* to come away.
3. In Port-au-Prince nobody *walked* at night.
4. The office *smelt* like a stage dressing-room.
5. He added after a pause, "I *saw* you talking to the captain just now."
6. He *did his best* to look after her; he *took* her out on long slow strolls; he *saw* that she *went* to bed early.
7. He *decided* that he would make sure that their promise *came true*.
8. I wonder what *happened* to him in India.
9. He *laughed* and *said* how nice the country looked. Branches and little dark delicate twigs *formed* a fretwork of black lace against a cold, silvery sky.
10. It *was getting* dark now, and the general *drove* more slowly, than ever.
11. I *was driving* along a country road when I *spotted* a telephone box.
12. I *looked* at my watch — it *read* five minutes to eleven.
13. I *looked* at my husband. He *was reading* a letter.

Exercises

Use Past Simple or Past Continuous in the following sentences

1. It (to be) suddenly clear to me that she (to act) a part and (to amuse) herself at our expense.
2. Mother said you (to join) the Bombardier Guards.
3. I (to know) that they (to go) out that night.
4. He (to have) interests elsewhere. He always (to ask) for special leave.
5. Then he (to notice) Jack. He (to stand) in front of the fire and (to talk) Italian to a man in glasses.
6. When I (to come) up to her she (to search) through a velvet bag which she always (to carry) for her spectacles which she always (to lose).

Sentence Patterns

Note the following **sentence patterns** in which we find the *Past Indefinite* and the *Past Continuous* used in different combinations with each other:

1) A **complex sentence** with a **clause** (часть сложного предложения) **of time** introduced by the conjunction **as**:

- The actions of the two clauses are **fully simultaneous**. In this case the **Past Indefinite** is commonly found in *both clauses* ([*principal clause*] – *главное предложение*, (*subordinate clause*) – *зависимое предложение*).

e.g. *I watched him as he drank his tea. Roy talked little as they drove home.*

- The actions of the principal and the subordinate clauses are **partially simultaneous**.

[Past Simple], *as (Past Continuous)	
shorter accomplished	background
action	

e.g. *As I was going inside, Mrs Drawbell intercepted me.*

One evening, just as I was leaving the office, Martin rang me up.

- The actions of the two clauses form a **succession**. In this case, naturally, only the **Past Indefinite** is found.

e.g. As the sun disappeared, a fresh breeze stirred the new curtains at the window.

As I turned back into the room a gust of wind crashed the door shut behind me.

- **NOTE:**

[Past Continuous], *as (Past Simple)	
terminative verb	completed action
(предельный)	

e.g. As I poured her out a glass of sherry, she was saying: "I always imagined you were older."

2. A **complex sentence** with a **clause of time** introduced by the conjunction **while**:

- The actions are **fully simultaneous**

[Past Simple] *while (Past Simple/Past Continuous)

e.g. *Martha said nothing but looked from one face to the other while they discussed plans. She sat still as a statue while he was playing the sonata.*

- The actions are **partially simultaneous**

[Past Simple], *while (Past Indefinite/Past Continuous)

 | |

shorter accomplished background

 action

e.g. *While I was reading, I heard a splash from the bath, and I realized that Martin must be there. While he stood there wondering what sort of pictures to hang on the walls he heard the telephone ring.*

Exercises

Use the Past Indefinite or the Past Continuous in the following sentences containing *as*-clauses and *while*-clauses:

1. They (to talk) little as they (to drive) home.
2. As they (to drink) coffee, Ted (to say): "Now tell me about yourself."
3. She (to sing) softly as she (to beat) the eggs.
4. As the sun (to disappear), a fresh breeze (to stir) the curtains at the window.
5. His steps (to slow) down as he (to mount) the stairs.
6. I (*to hear*) a telephone ringing as I (*to come*) up in the lift.
7. While he (to stand) irresolute, the door (to open) and his brother (to come) out.
8. He (to listen) gravely while I (to complain) about my reading.
9. While she (to wait) for the kettle to boil she (to sit) by the table.
10. He (not to say) a word while we (to eat).
11. Mrs Blair (to talk) about domestic affairs, while the general (to lecture) my father on some subject which I didn't understand.
12. We (to look) at the stamps while we (to wait) for Hudson to turn up.

USED TO

FORMATION		
Affirmative (+)	Negative (-)	Interrogative (?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Synthetic form</i> I used to be sentimental.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Analytical form</i> I didn't use to be sentimental.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Analytical form</i> Did you use to be sentimental?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>*Synthetic form (*very rare)</i> I usedn't to be sentimental.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>*Synthetic form (*very rare)</i> Used you to be sentimental?

NOTE!

Don't confuse *used to + infinitive* with *be/get used to + Ving* which means 'be/become accustomed to'

e.g. *I **used to live** alone* (= I lived alone at a time in the past)

*He **wasn't used to living** on his own* (= He wasn't accustomed to it)

Functions (present & past-time

context)

1. Action giving a **permanent characteristic** of the subject in the past which is **no longer true** at present.

e.g. *I **used to live** here as a girl. I don't exactly **hear** as I **used to**.*

2. **Past habits** which happened regularly in the past but **no longer happen** (or vice versa) or now **happen with more or less frequency**.

e.g. *They **used to get paid** every three months (Now they get paid weekly).*

3. **Past states** which have **changed**

e.g. *Lithuania **used to be** part of the Soviet Union (It isn't now).*

4. ***Recurrent** or **permanent action** in the past (*seldom)

e.g. *"She **used to give** me chocolate," murmured Imogen.*

5. *Instead of **Past Perfect** (*occasionally)

e.g. *He ordered dinner and sat down in the very corner, at the very table perhaps at which he and young Jolyon **used to sit** twenty-five years ago.*

WOULD (only past-time context)

FORMATION		
Affirmative (+)	Negative (-)	Interrogative (?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Analytical form</i> <p><i>She would often wake up screaming in the night.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Analytical form</i> <p><i>She wouldn't often wake up screaming in the night.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Analytical form</i> <p><i>Would she often wake up screaming in the night?</i></p>

- **Past habits** which happened regularly in the past but **no longer happen** (or vice versa) or now **happen with more or less frequency** + time expression / past context

e.g. He **would give her a lift** to work in the days before she passed her test.

- ***Recurrent action** in the past (*seldom)

e.g. He was usually active and interested, but sometimes he **would have** fits of depression.

- Typical of **literary style**

e.g. She seemed able to do nothing for an infinite time without feeling bored. Sometimes I **would go out and sit** with her for a little on the grass.

NOTE! We cannot use *would* for past states:

e.g. ~~France **would be** a monarchy but now it's a republic.~~

France **used to be** a monarchy but now it's a republic.

Exercises

Make up sentences using the correct form of used to.

1. I / not watch / much TV.
2. Your parents / tell / you stories?
3. My sister / write / poems.
4. She / not show / them to anyone.
5. Your sister / keep / a diary?

Choose the correct alternative.

1. I *used to/would* love the sound of the waves.
2. In 2001 we *moved/used to move* to Brighton.
3. Before I came here, I *used to/would drive* my car every day.
4. I *used to/would have* two dogs and a parrot.
5. My grandparents *would/used to look after* my little sister while my mum was at work.
6. Last year, my husband *would sell/sold* his house and moved to Princeton.