



Past Tenses

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Past Simple



We use the past simple for:

- **actions completed in the past.**

f.e. John called Ann yesterday morning.

- **actions which happened at a specific time in the past.**

f.e. She went to the gym at 7 o'clock.

- **past habits.**

f.e. We often travelled to Paris when we were students.



- **past actions which happened one immediately after the other**

f.e. She woke up, put some clothes on and ran out of the house.

- **completed past actions not connected to the present with a stated or implied time reference.**

f.e. Henry James wrote many novels.

Time expressions:



- yesterday
- yesterday morning/evening
- last year/month/week/night
- two weeks ago/ a month ago
- the day before yesterday

Form:



A regular past form ends in – ed.

Some verbs have an irregular past form.

The past simple is the same in all persons. The only exception is the past tense of “be”.

Spelling



REGULAR VERBS Spelling rules

To form the affirmative past tense of most regular verbs:

- Add **-ed** to the base form of the verb (**wash-washed**).
- If the verb ends in **-e**, add **-d** (**live-lived**)
- If the verb ends in a consonant preceded by a vowel, double the final consonant (**stop-stopped**)
- If the verb ends in **-y** preceded by a consonant, omit the “y” and add **-ied** (**copy-copied**)

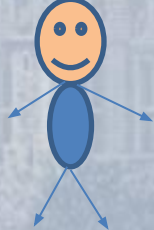


+  + **V**₂ / **V**_{ed}

He went to school yesterday. / He watched TV yesterday.

-  + **didn't** + **V**₁

He didn't go to school yesterday. / He didn't watch TV.

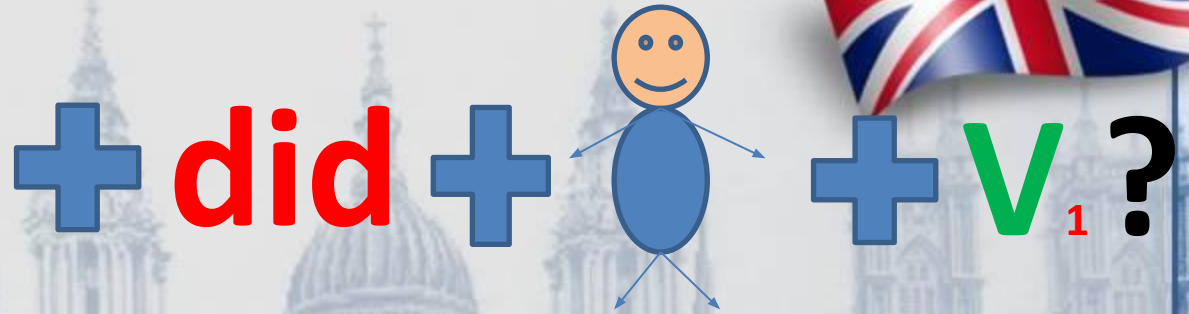
? **Did** +  + **V**₁ ?

Did he go to school yesterday? / Did he watch TV yesterday?



wh?

What
When
Where
Why



What **did** he **do** yesterday?

When **did** he **go** to school?

Where **did** he **go**?

who?

Who **+** **V**₂ / **V**_{ed} ?

Who went to school yesterday?

Past Continuous



We use the past continuous:

- for an action which was in progress at a stated time in the past. We do not know when the action started or finished.
f.e. At 7 o'clock yesterday morning, we were driving to the airport.
- for a past 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)
f.e. He was listening to music when the doorbell rang.



- **for two or more actions which were happening at the same time in the past.**

f.e. I was tidying up while Tom was ironing.

- **to give background information in a story.**

f. e. The wind was blowing and the dark clouds were gathering in the sky. Jack was standing....

Time expressions:



- while
- when
- as
- all day / night / morning
- at 5 o'clock yesterday

Form:



Past form of the verb to be (**was / were**) + main verb + **-ing**

to be

was

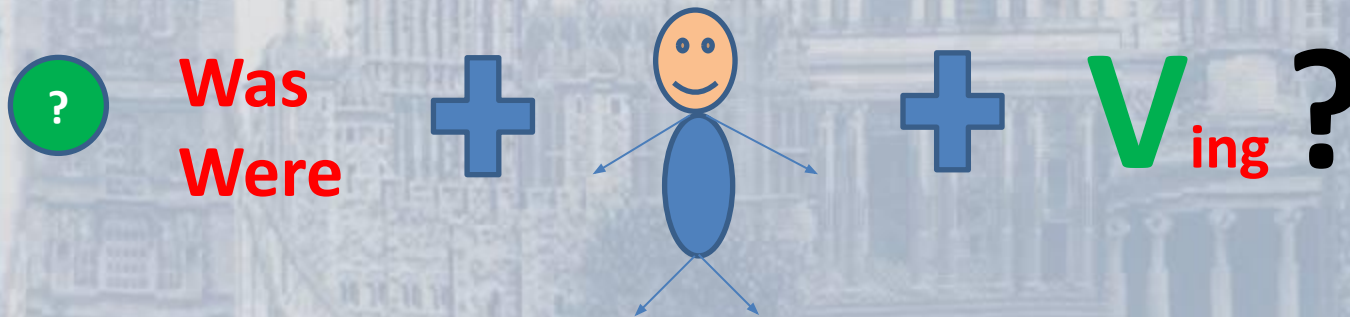
were



Mike was watching TV when his mother **came** home.



Mike wasn't watching TV when his mother **came** home.



Was Mike **watching** TV when his mother **came** home?

Past Perfect



The Past Perfect is used:

- for an action which happened before another past action or before a stated time in the past.

f.e. Tom **had tired up** all the rooms before the children returned from school.

- for an action which finished in the past and whose result was visible in the past.

f.e. He **had won** first prize, so he felt ecstatic.

NOTE: The past perfect is the past equivalent of the present perfect.

- a) He **had missed** his plane, so he was very upset.
- b) He has missed his plane, so he is very upset.



- **NOTE: We can use the past perfect or the past simple with *before* or *after* without any difference in meaning.**

f.e. She went out with her friends after she (had) returned from school.

She (had) returned from school before she went out with her friends.

Time expressions:



- before
- after
- already
- for
- since
- just
- till / until
- when
- by
- by the time
- never

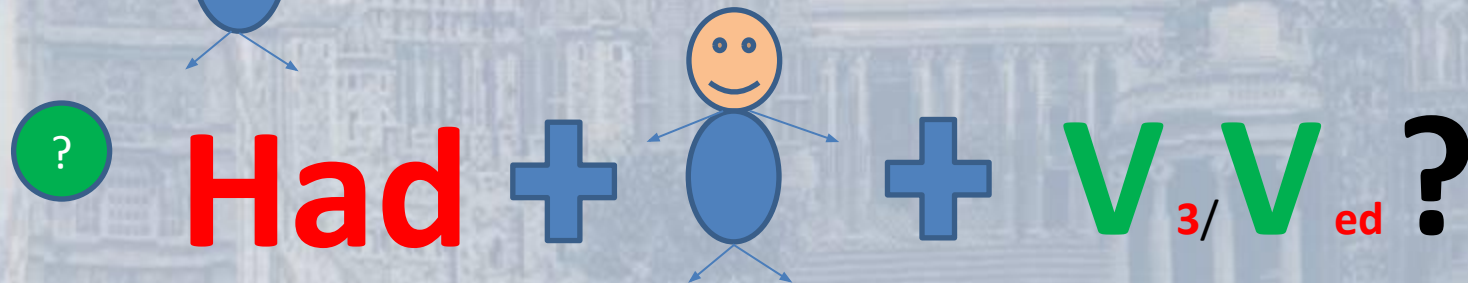
Form:



had + past participle of the main verb



She **had done** her homework before mother came home.



Past Perfect Continuous



The Past Perfect Continuous is used:

- to put 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, usually with since or for.

f.e. She had been waiting for days before he called her.

- for an action which lasted for some time in the past and whose result was visible in the past.

f.e. She had been working hard for hours, so she was very tired.



NOTE: The past perfect continuous is the past equivalent of the present perfect continuous.

- a) She had been resting for hours, so she felt very relaxed.
- b) She has been resting for hours, so she feels very relaxed.

Time expressions:

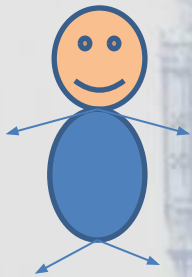


- for
- since
- how long
- before
- until

Form:



had + **been** + **main verb** + **-ing**.



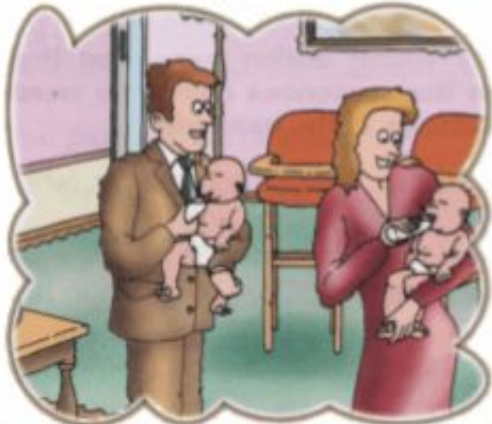
had been + **V** **ing** .

They **had been working** hard that day, so she was tired.



Past Simple - Past Continuous - Past Perfect

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



Last Monday, Lisa and her husband **fed** the children when he came home. (Her husband came home and then they fed the children together.)

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



Last Tuesday, Lisa **was feeding** the children when her husband came home. (She was still feeding the children when her husband came home.)

- ◆ The **past perfect** is used for an action which happened before another past action.



Last Friday, Lisa **had already fed** the children when her husband came home. (She fed the children first. Her husband came home afterwards.)

Exercises



- 1 A: Why was Tim so tired last night?
B: Oh, he ...*had been working*... (work) hard all day.
- 2 A: I (go) to the cinema last night.
B: Really? What
(you/see)?
- 3 A: Did you have enough to eat at the party?
B: Yes. Sarah (make)
a lot of food.
- 4 A: What (you/do) at eight
o'clock last night?
B: I (watch) television. Why?
- 5 A: Colin! Look at yourself! You are filthy!
B: I know. I (repair) my
motorbike.
- 6 A: I (do) something
really silly yesterday.
B: Really, what?
A: I (get) up and
(set off) for work as usual. I
(drive) for an hour before I
(realise) it was Sunday.
- 7 A: I (just/hear) some
incredible news!
B: What?
A: Jason and Emily (get)
married last week in Las Vegas. Isn't that amazing?

- A: What 1) ...*were you doing*... (do) when I 2)
..... (call) at eight, Burt?
- B: I 3) (work) in the garden
because the wind 4)
(blow down) the fence during the night.
- A: Oh, 5)
(you/manage) to fix it?
- B: Yes, I 6) (do) it eventually,
but it 7) (be) very hard
work. I 8) (ask) my neighbour
to help in the end. Why 9)
(you/call) me?
- A: I 10) (want) to tell you
about the factory. It 11)
(close down) yesterday.
- B: I know. The company 12)
(have) problems for a long time before they finally
13) (decide) to
close down the factory.
- A: I 14) (hope) they would change
their minds about it, though. It 15)
(be) a part of the town for years.
- B: Well, at least everyone who worked there 16)
..... (now/find) a new job.
That's good news.

Answers:



2 went, did you see
3 had made
4 were you doing,
was watching
5 have been
repairing

6 did, got, set off,
had been driving,
realised
7 have just heard,
got

2 called
3 was working
4 had blown down
5 did you manage
6 did
7 was
8 asked
9 did you call

10 wanted
11 closed down
12 had been having
13 decided
14 had been hoping/
was hoping
15 was/had been
16 has now found



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