

SIMPLE PAST FORM (verb+ed or irregular form)

Affirmative: I worked **Negative:** I did not (didn't) work **Question / Short answers:** Did I work? Yes, I did. No, I didn't

USE: to talk about • **finished actions at a definite time in the past. The time is stated, known or implied.** He left at 7 o'clock yesterday.

- **actions that happened immediately one after the other in the past.** She **came** into the room and turned on the light.
- **actions of people who are no longer alive.** Stevenson **wrote** many books about his island.
- **habits or states in the past.** They **went** out a lot when they were younger.
 - **NOTE** • *Used to* + verb can replace the Simple Past for habits or repeated actions in the past that are no longer happening. When I was younger, I **went** to school by bike. or When I was younger, I **used to** go to school by bike.
 - We use **would/used to** for repeated actions or routines in the past. We don't use would with stative verbs. She **used to** have long hair. (NOT: She would have long hair.)

TIME EXPRESSIONS: yesterday, a week ago, a long time ago, when I was ..., last year / week / month, in 1990, When ...?

PAST CONTINUOUS FORM (was / were – ing)

Affirmative I was working You were writing **Negative** I was not (wasn't) working You were not (weren't) writing

Question / Short answers Was I working? Yes, I was / No, I wasn't Were you writing? Yes, you were / No, you weren't

USE: to talk about • **an action that was in progress around a particular time in the past.** At the time of the eruption some children were playing.

- **an action that was in progress when another action interrupted it.** As they were walking in the ruins, a rock fell off.
- **for two or more actions happening at the same time in the past.** I was digging in the garden while my mum was making lunch.
- **to describe the setting of a story.** Jason was sitting at his desk. Suddenly, ...

TIME EXPRESSIONS: when, while, as, all day / morning / week, etc.

- **REMEMBER** Some verbs are not used in continuous forms. He was seeming / seemed happy when I met him.

PAST SIMPLE vs PAST CONTINUOUS

Past Simple	Past continuous
Actions which happened at a stated time in the past. The earthquake happened at 4:30pm.	Actions in progress at a defined time in the past. He was watching TV at 8 in the evening.
Actions which happened one after the other in the past. They paid the bill and left the café.	Two or more actions which were happening at the same time in the past. Peter was sleeping while Ann was watching TV.

PAST PERFECT SIMPLE FORM (had + past participle)

Affirmative I had worked **Negative** I had not worked **Question / Short answers** Had you worked? Yes I had / No he hadn't

USE: to talk about • **an action that happened before another action or before a certain time in the past (the second action is in the Simple Past).** After he had finished his homework, he realised how tired he was.

- **an action that finished in the past and the result was visible then.** She was very happy because she had met an old friend of hers.

TIME EXPRESSIONS: by, by the time, before, after, for, since, already, just, never, till / until, etc.

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS (had been + verb-ing)

Affirmative I had been working **Negative** I hadn't been working **Question** Had I been working?

USE: to talk about • **an action which lasted for some time in the past and whose results was visible in the past.** They **had been walking** around the town all day and they were tired.

- To put emphasis on the **duration** of an action which started and finished in the, before **another action** or **stated time in the past.** I **had been looking** for my camera for half an hour, when I remembered I had loaned it to a friend.

TIME EXPRESSIONS: before, after, for, since, how long, till / until, etc.

A. Choose the correct item.

1. Before she got married, she **spent/was** spending every summer travelling
2. Maria wasn't home at 5 o'clock yesterday; she **did/ was doing** some shopping with her mum at the time.
3. She **read/was reading** a book while her friend **was trying/ tried** on some clothes in the dressing room.
4. We **were arriving/arrived** at the resort and **went/were going** straight to the pool.
5. It was a glorious day. The sun **shone/was shining** brightly and the children **played/were playing** happily by the pool.
6. While he **tried/was trying** to fix the dripping tap his brother was giving/gave him instructions.
7. Georgia **wasn't hearing/didn't hear** the phone ring because she was doing/did some work in the garden.
8. While she **tried /was trying** to lift her luggage, she **was pulling/pulled** a muscle in her back.
9. I **checked/was checking** in my bags in my bags and **was going/went** to the departure lounge.
10. The tribe **was settling/settled** in the area hundreds of years ago.
11. I couldn't call you at 8:00 because I **was having/had** dinner at the time.
12. She **was swapping/used to swap** clothes with her friends when she was a teenager.
13. Peter **grew up/ used to grow up** in a secluded village.
14. It took me a while but eventually I **used to /got used to** living next to such loud neighbors.
15. Liam **is used/used** to be sceptical about carpooling schemes, but now he's happy to participate in them.
16. Jane **is used to/used to** studying long hours.
17. When he was younger, John **was playing/played** basketball every afternoon.
18. When we were little, our grandparents **would tell/ were telling** us stories about Ellis island.

B. The verbs in brackets into the correct past tense.

1. Dean(already/board) the plane when he realized he(leave) his mobile at the airport.
2. Joe got a sunburn because he(lie) in the sun for hours.
3. The play.....(finish) by 5:00.
4. By the time he found a suitable flat to rent, he(look) for one for over three months.
5. The reporter(never/heard) of the Maori before he was asked to do a story on them.
6. The stray dog(live) in the streets for weeks before someone gave it a home.
7. Alice(buy) the tickets online three days earlier, so we(not/need) to queue at the bus terminal.
8. Mason (borrow) my camera because he (break) his on his last holiday.
9. James (not/ come) to Rome with us because he (be) there many times before.
10. A: (you/see) Fred at the airport?
B: No he (already/check in) by the time I (go) there.
11. A: The kidnappers finally (return) the child to his parents yesterday.
B: Thank goodness! They (hold) the poor boy for two weeks before they (release) him.
12. A: (you/do) anything interesting last night?
B: No, I just (watch) a DVD I (rent) the night before and then (go) to bed early.
13. A: The police (find) Elizabeth's car last night.
B: Oh? I (not/know) she (report) it stolen.
14. A: (Helen/help) you with the chores?
B: Sure. While I (clean) the windows she (vacuum) the carpets.
15. A: Have you ever been to Italy?
B: Yes. In fact, I (live) there as a child.