

UNIT 1 - PAST TENSES

Past simple, past continuous, past perfect simple, past perfect continuous, used to, would

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PAST SIMPLE: FORM

- Affirmative: -ed or 2nd column
- Negative: didn't + infinitive
- Question: did + subject + infinitive?

PAST SIMPLE

- We use the **past simple** (-ed) to talk about:
 - A completed action in the past at a specific time
Barcelona **held** the Summer Olympics in 1992.

Yesterday we went on a trip to the mountain.

went

now

x

x

- A completed continuing action in the past for a longish period of time

I **lived** in Canada for five months when I was a student.

I lived in Canada for five months when I was a student.

lived

now

x

PAST SIMPLE

- We use the **past simple** (-ed) to talk about:
 - A past habit or regular action in the past (*used to* and *would* also possible)

When I was a kid, I **went** to bed at 8PM.

When I was a child I played / would play / used to play with my friends in the street.

	play	now
_____ X X X X X _____		X

- Consecutive actions in the past

I **caught** the first train in the morning to go to the airport, **checked** my luggage **in** and **went through** the security check.

- **Two or more actions** in the past. No adverbs are needed because the order is clear I went to the supermarket and then I went home (NOT I ~~had been~~ to the supermarket and then I went home).

went	went
_____ X _____	X

That day was not special to me. I woke up, got up, had breakfast and stayed all day at home.

woke up	got up	had	stayed	now
_____ X _____	X	X	X	X

PAST CONTINUOUS: FORM

- Affirmative: was/were + V-ing
- Negative: wasn't / weren't + V-ing
- Question: was/were + Subject + V-ing?

PAST CONTINUOUS

- We use the **past continuous** ('was / were' + -ing) to talk about:
 - An in-progress situation or activity in the past

This time yesterday, I **was attending** class at university.

Yeah, I remember that on those days I was taking German lessons.



- An activity in the past that was already in progress when another event occurred (the former with past continuous, the latter with past simple)

When/ While I **was going** to school, it **began** to rain.

I was having a shower when the telephone rang.

was having rang



PAST CONTINUOUS

- We use the **past continuous** ('was / were' + -ing) to talk about:
 - Past activities or events occurring at the same time

I **was calming** the child **down** while another teacher **was explaining** the lesson to the rest of the class.

I was staring at the sky while the wind was caressing my face.

was staring

was caressing

- Background events (in stories)

The sun **was shining** in the park. The officers **were eating** their sandwiches and a young girl **was playing** with a ball...

PAST PERFECT: FORM

- Affirmative: had + past participle (3rd column)
- Negative: hadn't + past participle (3rd column)
- Question: had + subject + past participle?

PAST PERFECT SIMPLE

- We use the **past perfect simple** ('had' + past participle):
 - To talk about an activity that happened before another activity or situation in the past

When I talked to his parents, Mike **had** already **missed** six classes.

- With time linkers such as: 'when, after, before, by the time, as soon as, until' (to emphasise the order of events)

By the time I got to the restaurant, my friend **had left**.

- With stative verbs, to talk about situations which continued for a period of time leading up to another point of time in the past

I saw the doctor on Friday. I'd **had** a terrible headache for a week.

I was about to check in when I heard all flights had been cancelled.

had been cancelled was

X

X

PAST PERFECT SIMPLE

NOTICE THE ORDER OF TENSES:

- **After + past perfect:**

After I had finished my homework, I went out.

1st action

2nd action

- **Past perfect, *before* + past simple:**

I had known him for 5 years **before** he became famous.

1st action

2nd action

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS: FORM

- Affirmative: had been + V-ing
- Negative: had been + V-ing
- Question: had + subject + been + V-ing?

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

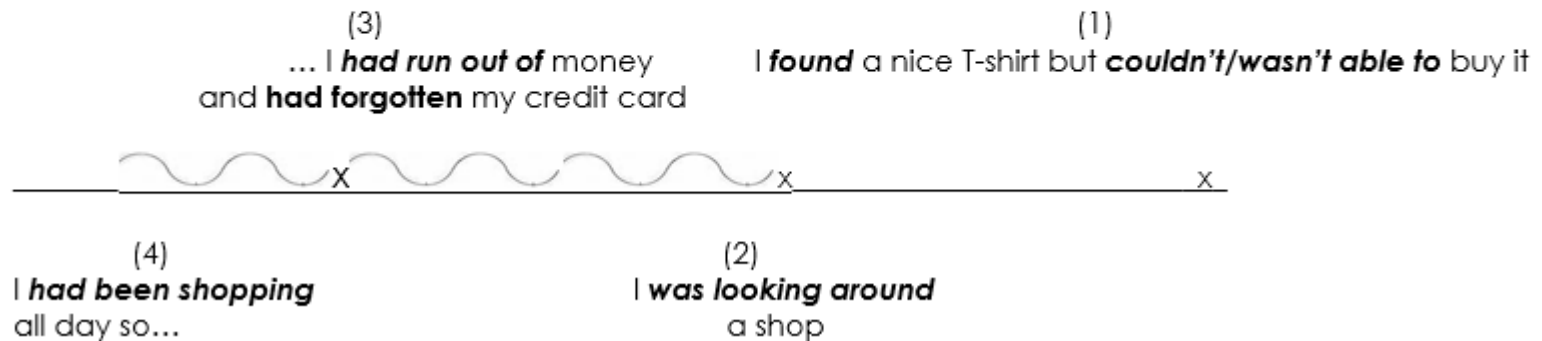
- We use the **past perfect continuous** ('had been' + -ing) to:
 - Describe and focus on the duration of an activity before and continuing up to a point of time in the past

It was three o'clock. I **had been waiting** for my friend for an hour and she still didn't show up.

When I got back to school I was exhausted. I'd **been travelling** for the three previous weeks.

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

- An action that happened before another action in the past and it lasts for some time: I had been shopping all day so I had run out of money. As I was looking around a shop, I found a nice t-shirt but couldn't/wasn't able to buy it because I had forgotten my credit card at home.



USED TO & WOULD: FORM

USED TO

- Affirmative: used to + V infinitive
- Negative: didn't use to + V infinitive
*didn't used to + V infinitive
- Question:
did + subject + use to + V infinitive?
*did + subject + used to + V infinitive?

'USED TO' AND 'WOULD'

- We use **'used to + infinitive'** to talk about:
 - **Habits** or regular actions in the past that have now changed (if in the present, 'usually' or 'normally').

When I was a kid, I **used to hate** English, but now I love it!

We **didn't use to live** in a big house; now we own a mansion!

Did you **use to go** to bed early when you were a kid?
- We use **'would + infinitive'** (rare to find in negative and question forms) to:
 - Talk about regular **actions** in the past. **Not used with stative verbs.**
 - To describe typical behaviour; can be accompanied by 'always, usually, never, often'.

My grandma **would always give** me some sweets after school.

Our teacher **would never let** us use a dictionary during the writing tasks!

EXERCISE PAST TENSES

The mystery began on the evening of Friday 3rd December 1926, at Styles, Agatha Christie's home in a small town in Berkshire. At the time, Christie was already an established writer with six published novels, and her most recent work, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, was selling well. Despite this, she was known to be in a depressed state because her mother had recently died.

On the evening when she disappeared, Christie got up from her chair in the living room, climbed the stairs and went into her daughter's bedroom. After she had kissed her sleeping daughter, she went downstairs again, and got into her car. She drove away from her house at around 9:45pm, and she didn't tell anyone where she was going. The next morning, her abandoned car was found several miles away. The car had driven off the road, but there was no sign of Agatha Christie.

Nowadays people buy so many clothes, but when I was little people used to make them all. My grandmother would cut up old clothes and make skirts and blouses from them. And she used to give us a homemade jumper every year that she knitted from wool she took from old jumpers.

EXERCISE PAST TENSES - KEY



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On the evening when she **disappeared**, Christie **got up** from her chair in the living room, **climbed** the stairs and **went** into her daughter's bedroom. After she **had kissed** her sleeping daughter, she **went** downstairs again, and **got into** her car. She **drove away** from her house at around 9:45pm, and she **didn't tell** anyone where she **was going**. The next morning, her abandoned car **was found** several miles away. The car **had driven off** the road, but there **was** no sign of Agatha Christie.

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