


Verbs- tenses

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- ▶ Using the correct tense is vital in academic writing. Today we will review the main tenses and the ways in which they differ from each other.

- ▶ **Tense**
- ▶ **A) Present simple**
- ▶ **B) Present continuous**
- ▶ **C) Present perfect**
- ▶ **D) Present perfect continuous**
action that continues for a long time
- ▶ **E) Past simple / Simple past**
- ▶ **F) Past continuous**
action that continued for a long time
- ▶ **G) Past perfect**
- ▶ **H) 'will' future**

Reason for use

General rule

Current situation

Recent unfinished event

Recent, with emphasis on

Finished, with time phrase

Finished, with emphasis on an

Refers to a previous past period

Prediction

TENSE

ACTIVE

Present Simple	I make a cake
Present Contin.	I 'm making a cake
Past Simple	I made a cake.
Past Continuous	I was making a cake.
Present Perfect	I have made a cake
Past Perfect	I had made a cake.
Future Simple	I will make a cake.
Future be going to	I 'm going to make a cake
Modal	I must make a cake.
Modal Perfect	I should have made a cake.

Simple or continuous?

▶ In general, the continuous is used to focus on the activity itself or to stress its temporary nature. Compare the following:

▶ **She has been writing** *that report for six days.*

(to show duration of temporary activity)

▶ **He is writing** *an article on probability theory.*

(to show temporary nature of activity)

She writes *stories for teenage girls.*

▶ *(to demonstrate her normal work)*

	Past	Present	Future
Simple	<p>I ate pizza yesterday.</p> <p>To indicate a past habit – or an action already completed.</p> <p>Can be used with or without adverbs of time.</p>	<p>I eat pizza everyday.</p> <p>To express habits or general truth.</p> <p>To indicate a future event on a designated date as part of a plan or arrangement.</p> <p>With 'mental action' verbs: like, love, want, need, believe, etc.</p>	<p>I will eat pizza tomorrow.</p> <p>To indicate an action, condition, or circumstance which hasn't taken place yet.</p>
Continuous	<p>I was eating pizza when you arrived.</p> <p>To indicate uncompleted action of the past (with or without time reference)</p> <p>To indicate persistent habits of the past (with <i>always</i>, <i>continuously</i>, <i>forever</i>, etc.)</p>	<p>I am eating pizza right now.</p> <p>To indicate action going on at the time of speaking.</p> <p>To indicate temporary action which may not be happening at the time of speaking.</p> <p>With a habitual action verb, especially to indicate a stubborn habit.</p>	<p>I will be eating pizza when you arrive.</p> <p>To indicate what will be going on at some time in the future.</p> <p>To indicate planned future events.</p>
Perfect	<p>I had eaten all of the pizza when you arrived.</p> <p>To indicate a completed action of the past that happened before another event took place.</p>	<p>I have eaten all of the pizza.</p> <p>To indicate past action which is not defined by a time of occurrence.</p> <p>To indicate an action which started in the past and has continued up until now.</p>	<p>I will have eaten all of the pizza by the time you arrive.</p> <p>To indicate an action that will be complete before another event takes place.</p>
Perfect Continuous	<p>I had been eating pizza for 2 hours when you arrived.</p> <p>To indicate an action in the past that began before a certain point in the past and continued up until that time.</p>	<p>I have been eating pizza for 2 hours.</p> <p>To indicate an action which started at some point in the past and may or may not be complete.</p>	<p>I will have been eating pizza for 2 hours when you arrive.</p> <p>To indicate an action that will have happened for some time and will not be complete yet at a certain point in the future.</p>

Verb tenses	1. Affirmative	2. Negative	3. Interrogative
Present simple	They have a car.	They don't have a car.	Do they have a car?
Present continuous	He's reading now.	He isn't reading now.	Is he reading now?
Past simple	They saw a movie.	They didn't see a movie.	Did they see a movie?
Past continuous	It was snowing.	It wasn't snowing.	Was it snowing?
Present perfect	We have been there.	We haven't been there.	Have we been there?
Present perfect continuous	You've been working hard.	You haven't been working hard.	Have you been working hard?
Past perfect	They had left for France.	They hadn't left for France.	Had they left for France?
Past perfect continuous	She had been waiting for him.	She hadn't been waiting for him.	Had she been waiting for him?
Future simple	It will snow this winter.	It won't snow this winter.	Will it snow this winter?
Future continuous	She will be traveling.	She won't be traveling.	Will she be traveling?
Future perfect	He will have arrived.	He won't have arrived.	Will he have arrived?
Future perfect continuous	You will have been working.	You won't have been working.	Will you have been working?
Conditional	I would fly there.	I wouldn't fly there.	Would you fly there?
Conditional continuous	They would be sleeping now.	They wouldn't be sleeping now.	Would they be sleeping now?
Conditional perfect	She would have been there.	She wouldn't have been there.	Would she have been there?
Future be going to	She's going to get married.	She isn't going to get married.	Is she going to get married?

- ▶ Complete the sentences with the present simple or present continuous form of the verbs in brackets.
- ▶ Don't take those books. They (not belong) to you.
- ▶ What time (the last train / leave)?
- ▶ I (never forget) my brother's birthday.
- ▶ (you / come) to my party on Saturday?
- ▶ Look! It (snow) again.
- ▶ My father (not work) at the weekend.
- ▶ Where (we / meet) Paul tomorrow?
- ▶ She's so boring. She (always talk) about her job.

- ▶ Don't take those books. They don't belong to you.
- ▶ What time does the last train leave
- ▶ I never forget my brother's birthday. ?
- ▶ Are you coming to my party on Saturday?
- ▶ Look! It's snowing again.
- ▶ My father doesn't work at the weekend.
- ▶ Where are we meeting Paul tomorrow?
- ▶ She's so boring. She's always talking about her job.

Choose the correct answer. Paste tense contrast

1. Did you finish your homework before you (had gone/went) to the cinema?
2. The singer was awful. We left after she (had finished/was finishing) her first song.
3. When I woke up the sun , (was shining/shone) but later it started to rain.
4. (were the students arguing/did the students argue) when the teacher walked in?
5. Luckily, the play (didn't start/hadn't start) by the time we arrived at the theatre.
6. I (didn't speak/hadn't spoken) to Mike at the party. He'd already left when I got there.
7. They didn't want to watch the film because they (saw/had seen) it before.
8. The accident happened while we (drove/were driving) to Scotland.

Correction. Paste tense contrast

1. Did you finish your homework before you went to the cinema?
2. The singer was awful. We left after she had finished her first song.
3. When I woke up the sun , was shining but later it started to rain.
4. were the students arguing when the teacher walked in?
5. Luckily, the play hadn't started by the time we arrived at the theatre.
6. I didn't speak to Mike at the party. He'd already left when I got there.
7. They didn't want to watch the film because they had seen it before.
8. The accident happened while we were driving to Scotland.

- ▶ Also note that certain verbs are rarely used in the continuous. They are **state** verbs such as prefer, own and believe.
- ▶ Another similar group is known as **performative** verbs (assume, deny, promise, refuse, suggest).