

## English Tense Overview

The English language has three main tenses: present, past, and future. Each of these tenses has four forms: simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive.

### Present Tense:

**Simple Present:** used to describe routine actions, facts, and general truths.

**Examples:** "I play soccer every Saturday."

"Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius."

**Present Progressive:** used to describe actions happening now or in the near future.

**Examples:** "I am playing soccer right now."

"She is studying for her exam."

**Present Perfect:** used to describe past actions that have a connection to the present.

**Examples:** "I have played soccer for 10 years."

"They have seen that movie three times."

**Present Perfect Progressive:** used to describe a past action that started in the past and continues until now.

**Examples:** "I have been playing soccer for 10 years."

"She has been studying for 3 hours."

### Past Tense:

**Simple Past:** used to describe a completed action in the past.

**Examples:** "I played soccer yesterday."

"She visited her grandparents last week."

**Past Progressive:** used to describe an ongoing action in the past.

**Examples:** "I was playing soccer when my friend called."

"She was studying when the power went out."

**Past Perfect:** used to describe an action completed before a specific time in the past.

**Examples:** "I had played soccer before I got injured."

"She **had finished** her homework before the class started."

**Past Perfect Progressive:** used to describe a past action that started in the past and continued until a specific time in the past.

**Examples:** "I **had been playing** soccer for two hours before I got tired."

"She **had been studying** for three days before she took a break."

## **Future Tense:**

**Simple Future:** used to describe a future action.

**Examples:** "I **will play** soccer tomorrow."

"She **will visit** her grandparents next week."

**Future Progressive:** used to describe a continuous action in the future.

**Examples:** "I **will be playing** soccer at 5 PM."

"She **will be studying** for her exam tomorrow."

**Future Perfect:** used to describe a future action that will be completed at a specific time.

**Examples:** "I **will have played** soccer for 10 years next month."

"She **will have finished** her degree in two years."

**Future Perfect Progressive:** used to describe a future action that will have continued up until a specific time.

**Examples:** "I **will have been playing** soccer for 10 years by the end of this year."

"She **will have been studying** for 3 years by the time she graduates."

In conclusion, the use of different tenses in English allows us to express actions and events in a precise manner, and it is important to choose the right tense to convey the intended meaning correctly.

Tense	Signal words	Use	Form	Examples affirmative	Examples negative	Examples interrogative
<b>Simple Present</b>	<p>every day</p> <p>sometimes</p> <p>always</p> <p>often</p> <p>usually</p> <p>seldom</p> <p>never</p> <p>first ... then</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>something happens repeatedly</li> <li>how often something happens</li> <li>one action follows another</li> <li>things in general</li> <li>with verbs like (<i>to love, to hate, to think, etc.</i>)</li> <li>future meaning: timetables, programmes</li> </ul>	<p>infinitive</p> <p>he/she/it: infinitive + s</p>	<p>I work.</p> <p>He works.</p> <p>I go.</p> <p>He goes.</p>	<p>I don't work.</p> <p>He doesn't work.</p> <p>I don't go.</p> <p>He doesn't go.</p>	<p>Do I work?</p> <p>Does he work?</p> <p>Do I go?</p> <p>Does he go?</p>
<b>Present Progressive</b>	<p>now</p> <p>at the moment</p> <p>Look!</p> <p>Listen!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>something is happening at the same time of speaking or around it</li> <li>future meaning: when you have already <b>decided and arranged</b> to do it (a fixed plan, date)</li> </ul>	<p>be (am/are/is) + infinitive + ing</p>	<p>I'm working.</p> <p>He's working.</p> <p>I'm going.</p> <p>He's going.</p>	<p>I'm not working.</p> <p>He isn't working.</p> <p>I'm not going.</p> <p>He isn't going.</p>	<p>Am I working?</p> <p>Is he working?</p> <p>Am I going?</p> <p>Is he going?</p>
<b>Simple Past</b>	<p>last ...</p> <p>... ago</p> <p>in 1990</p> <p>yesterday</p>	<p>action took place in the past, mostly connected with an expression of time (no connection to the present)</p>	<p>regular: infinitive + ed</p> <p>irregular: (2nd column of table of irregular verbs)</p>	<p>I worked.</p> <p>He worked.</p> <p>I went.</p> <p>He went.</p>	<p>I didn't work.</p> <p>He didn't work.</p> <p>I didn't go.</p> <p>He didn't go.</p>	<p>Did I work?</p> <p>Did he work?</p> <p>Did I go?</p> <p>Did he go?</p>

<p><b>Past Progressive</b></p>	<p>while</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an action happened in the middle of another action</li> <li>someone was doing sth. at a certain time (in the past) - you don't know whether it was finished or not</li> </ul>	<p>was/were + infinitive + ing</p>	<p>I was working. He was working. I was going. He was going.</p>	<p>I wasn't working. He wasn't working. I wasn't going. He wasn't going.</p>	<p>Was I working? Was he working? Was I going? Was he going?</p>
<p><b>Simple Present Perfect</b></p>	<p>just yet never ever already so far, up to now, since for recently</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>you say that sth. has happened or is finished in the past and it has a connection to the present</li> <li>action started in the past and continues up to the present</li> </ul>	<p>have/has + past participle*</p> <p>*(infinitive + ed) or (3rd column of table of irregular verbs)</p>	<p>I have worked. He has worked. I have gone. He has gone.</p>	<p>I haven't worked. He hasn't worked. I haven't gone. He hasn't gone.</p>	<p>Have I worked? Has he worked? Have I gone? Has he gone?</p>
<p><b>Present Perfect Progressive</b></p>	<p>all day the whole day how long since for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>action began in the past and has just stopped</li> <li>how long the action has been happening</li> </ul> <p><b>emphasis: length of time of an action</b></p>	<p>have/has + been + infinitive + ing</p>	<p>I have been working. He has been working. I have been going. He has been going.</p>	<p>I haven't been working. He hasn't been working. I haven't been going. He hasn't been going.</p>	<p>Have I been working? Has he been working? Have I been going? Has he been going?</p>

<p><b>Simple Past Perfect</b></p>	<p>already just never</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mostly when two actions in a story are related to each other: the action which had already happened is put into <i>Past Perfect</i>, the other action into <i>Simple Past</i></li> <li>the past of the <i>Present Perfect</i></li> </ul>	<p>had + past participle*</p> <p>*(infinitive + ed) or (3rd column of table of irregular verbs)</p>	<p>I had worked. He had worked. I had gone. He had gone.</p>	<p>I hadn't worked. He hadn't worked. I hadn't gone. He hadn't gone.</p>	<p>Had I worked? Had he worked? Had I gone? Had he gone?</p>
<p><b>Past Perfect Progressive</b></p>	<p>how long since for</p>	<p>how long something had been happening before something else happened</p>	<p>had + been + infinitive + ing</p>	<p>I had been working. He had been working. I had been going. He had been going.</p>	<p>I hadn't been working. He hadn't been working. I hadn't been going. He hadn't been going.</p>	<p>Had I been working? Had he been working? Had I been going? Had he been going?</p>
<p><b>will - future</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>predictions about the future (you think that sth will happen)</li> <li>you decide to do sth. spontaneously at the time of speaking</li> <li>main clause in type I of the Conditional sentences</li> </ul>	<p>will + infinitive</p>	<p>I'll work. He'll work. I'll go. He'll go.</p>	<p>I won't work. He won't work. I won't go. He won't go.</p>	<p>Will I work? Will he work? Will I go? Will he go?</p>
<p><b>going to - future</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when you have already decided to do sth. in the future</li> <li>what you think what will happen</li> </ul>	<p>be (am/are/is) + going to + infinitive</p>	<p>I'm going to work. He's going to work. I'm going to go. He's going to go.</p>	<p>I'm not going to work. He's not going to work. I'm not going to go. He's not going to go.</p>	<p>Am I going to work? Is he going to work? Am I going to go? Is he going to go?</p>

<b>Future Progressive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An action will be in progress at a certain time in the future. This action has begun before the certain time.</li> <li>Something happens because it normally happens.</li> </ul>	<b>will + be + infinitive + ing</b>	I'll <b>be working</b> . He'll <b>be working</b> . I'll <b>be going</b> . He'll <b>be going</b> .	I <b>won't be working</b> . He <b>won't be working</b> . I <b>won't be going</b> . He <b>won't be going</b> .	Will I <b>be working</b> ? Will he <b>be working</b> ? Will I <b>be going</b> ? Will he <b>be going</b> ?
<b>Future Perfect Simple</b>	sth. will already have happened before a certain time in the future	<b>will + have + past participle*</b> *( <b>infinitive + ed</b> ) or (3rd column of table of irregular verbs)	I'll <b>have worked</b> . He'll <b>have worked</b> . I'll <b>have gone</b> . He'll <b>have gone</b> .	I <b>won't have worked</b> . He <b>won't have worked</b> . I <b>won't have gone</b> . He <b>won't have gone</b> .	Will I <b>have worked</b> ? Will he <b>have worked</b> ? Will I <b>have gone</b> ? Will he <b>have gone</b> ?
<b>Future Perfect Progressive</b>	sth. will already have happened before a certain time in the future  <b>emphasis: length of time of an action</b>	<b>will + have + been + infinitive + ing</b>	I'll <b>have been working</b> . He'll <b>have been working</b> . I'll <b>have been going</b> . He'll <b>have been going</b> .	I <b>won't have been working</b> . He <b>won't have been working</b> . I <b>won't have been going</b> . He <b>won't have been going</b> .	Will I <b>have been working</b> ? Will he <b>have been working</b> ? Will I <b>have been going</b> ? Will he <b>have been going</b> ?

We sometimes use **Continuous** instead of **Progressive**. Some signal words can be found in more tenses. We did not list signal words in the future. Always remember what action is described.

Used colours:

blue → infinitive

dark green → auxiliary

orange → ending

grey → irregular verbs in the Simple Past

purple → past participle

light green → signal word

red → negation

**Exercise 1: Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in parentheses.**

1. Yesterday, I (go) \_\_\_\_\_ to the store and (buy) \_\_\_\_\_ some groceries.
2. By this time next week, I (finish) \_\_\_\_\_ all of my assignments.
3. I (watch) \_\_\_\_\_ a movie when you called me last night.
4. We (have) \_\_\_\_\_ a picnic tomorrow if the weather is good.
5. She (study) \_\_\_\_\_ for her exam all week.

**Exercise 2: Choose the correct tense for the following sentences.**

1. I \_\_\_\_\_ my homework right now. (am doing / do / did)
2. He \_\_\_\_\_ for his friends at the coffee shop. (waits / is waiting / waited)
3. They \_\_\_\_\_ to New York next week. (are flying / fly / will fly)
4. She \_\_\_\_\_ the guitar when she was a child. (played / plays / has played)
5. I \_\_\_\_\_ my keys this morning. (lost / lose / have lost)

**Exercise 3: Rewrite the following sentences in the past tense.**

1. I drink coffee every morning.
2. The train arrives at 7:30 pm.
3. She teaches math at the local high school.
4. They eat dinner together every night.
5. He writes poetry in his free time.

**Exercise 4: Fill in the blanks with the correct verb form in the present simple tense:**

- a. She \_\_\_ (read) a book every night.
- b. They \_\_\_ (not, like) spicy food.
- c. He \_\_\_ (play) basketball twice a week.
- d. The sun \_\_\_ (rise) in the east.
- e. I \_\_\_ (study) English at school.

**Exercise 5: Rewrite the sentences in the present continuous tense:**

- a. They eat breakfast at 7 am. -> They \_\_\_ breakfast at 7 am.
- b. She listens to music on her way to work. -> She \_\_\_ to music on her way to work.
- c. He reads a book every night. -> He \_\_\_ a book every night.
- d. The children play in the park after school. -> The children \_\_\_ in the park after school.
- e. I watch TV in the evening. -> I \_\_\_ TV in the evening.

**Exercise 6: Use the correct form of the past simple tense of the verbs in brackets:**

- a. I \_\_\_ (be) very tired yesterday.
- b. She \_\_\_ (go) to the gym this morning.
- c. They \_\_\_ (watch) a movie last night.
- d. He \_\_\_ (cook) dinner for his family yesterday.
- e. We \_\_\_ (not, have) any classes yesterday.

**Exercise 7: Rewrite the sentences in the present perfect tense:**

- a. I finished my homework 10 minutes ago. -> I \_\_\_ my homework 10 minutes ago.
- b. They saw that movie last week. -> They \_\_\_ that movie last week.
- c. He has been to Paris twice. -> He \_\_\_ to Paris twice.
- d. She has already eaten breakfast. -> She \_\_\_ breakfast already.
- e. We have never tried sushi before. -> We \_\_\_ sushi before.

**Exercise 8: Use the correct form of the future simple tense:**

- a. She \_\_\_ (call) you later.
- b. They \_\_\_ (not, arrive) until next week.
- c. I \_\_\_ (meet) my friends tomorrow.
- d. He \_\_\_ (buy) a new car next year.
- e. We \_\_\_ (visit) our grandparents next month

**Exercise 9: Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the past continuous tense of the verb in parentheses.**

1. While I \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) TV, my sister was studying for her exams.
2. The kids \_\_\_\_\_ (play) in the park when it started to rain.
3. I \_\_\_\_\_ (drive) to work when I saw the accident.
4. Sarah \_\_\_\_\_ (dance) at the club last night when she twisted her ankle.
5. They \_\_\_\_\_ (camp) in the mountains when a bear appeared.
6. She \_\_\_\_\_ (cook) dinner for her family when the power went out.
7. He \_\_\_\_\_ (read) a book in the library when he realized it was already dark outside.
8. I \_\_\_\_\_ (listen) to music when my best friend called me.

**Exercise 10: Complete the following sentences using the past perfect tense of the verb in parentheses.**

1. By the time I arrived at the party, everyone \_\_\_\_\_ (eat) all the pizza.
2. After I had taken a shower, I \_\_\_\_\_ (realize) that I forgot to bring my towel.
3. We couldn't go inside because someone \_\_\_\_\_ (lock) the door from the inside.
4. She was so tired because she \_\_\_\_\_ (work) all day long.
5. By the time the movie started, he \_\_\_\_\_ (already/see) it three times.
6. They were exhausted because they \_\_\_\_\_ (hike) for hours.
7. By the time the ambulance arrived, the injured man \_\_\_\_\_ (lose) a lot of blood.
8. When she arrived home, she discovered that someone \_\_\_\_\_ (break) into her apartment.



**Exercise 11: Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the past perfect continuous tense of the verb in parentheses.**

1. By the time I got to the office, my colleagues \_\_\_\_\_ (work) for three hours.
2. She was out of breath because she \_\_\_\_\_ (run) for an hour before she finally caught the bus.
3. The team was exhausted because they \_\_\_\_\_ (practice) for five hours straight.
4. By the time I woke up, my parents \_\_\_\_\_ (talk) on the phone for two hours.
5. The garden was beautiful because the flowers \_\_\_\_\_ (bloom) for weeks.
6. The streets were wet because it \_\_\_\_\_ (rain) all night.
7. The fire had spread to the whole building because it \_\_\_\_\_ (burn) for hours before anyone noticed.
8. They were both sweaty because they \_\_\_\_\_ (dance) for hours before they took a break.