

Past Tense Simple

Past Simple: Form

Affirmative

S + V (2nd form)

+V+ed (regular
verbs)

I	
You	
He/She/It	
We	asked
You	sang
They	

Past Simple: Form

Questions

Did+S+V (1st form)

Did	I You He/She/It We You They	ask? sing?
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Past Simple: Form

Negative

S + did + not + V (1st form)

did + not = didn't

I		
You		
He/She/It	did not	ask
We	(didn't)	sing
You		
They		

Spelling

1. Verbs that end in **-e** add only **-d**:

e.g. like-liked

2. Verbs that end in **consonant+y** **-ied**:



e.g. carry-carried

try - tried

but play - played

3. **Short verbs** that end in **short vowel + consonant**, double the **consonant** before receiving **-ed**

e.g. stop - stopped

4. Verbs that end in **-l** or **-r** double the final consonant before receiving **-ed**:

e.g. travel-travelled

prefer - preferred

Past Simple is used for:

1. An action that took place at a specific time in the past.

Tom **met** his friend last week.

Indicators:

- a) yesterday (morning/afternoon/evening/night)
- b) last (evening/night/week/month/year)
- c) ...ago (e.g. 3 minutes/hours/days/weeks/years ago)
- d) in + past month (e.g. in July)
past season (e.g. in summer)
past year (e.g. in 2010)

Past Simple is used for:

2. A completed action in the past

Bob **wrote** his science report **yesterday**. (implication: he finished writing it).

Indicators: the same as above.

3. A sequence of actions in the past (in narratives)

Jack **climbed** and he **climbed** and he **climbed** till at last he **reached** the sky and there he found a broad long road and he **walked** and he **walked** and he **walked** until he **came** to a big house and on the doorstep he saw a big tall woman....

Indicators: the same as for the first situation or none.

Past Simple is used for:

4. Habitual, repeated actions in the past

She **often visited** her friends in London.

For this meaning of repeated action in the past you can also use *“used to + infinitive”* or *“would+infinitive”*:

This **used to** enrage my instructor. He **would** wander around the laboratory...

Indicators: the same as for Present Simple showing habitual, repeated actions

Past Tense Continuous (Progressive)

Past Continuous (Progressive): Form

Affirmative

S + was + V-ing
were

I He/she/it	was	asking
We You They	were	

Past Continuous (Progressive): Form

Interrogative
(Questions)

Was + S + V-ing?

Were

Was	I he/she/ it	asking
Were	we you they	

Past Continuous (Progressive): Form

Negative

S + was + not + V-ing
were

was + not = wasn't
were + not = weren't

I He/she/ it	was	not	asking
We You They	were		

Spelling of verbs ending in -ing

1. Short verbs that end in short vowel + consonant, double the consonant before receiving -ing:

e.g. stop – stopping

2. Final -y is kept, irrespective of whether it is preceded by a vowel or by a consonant:

e. g. play – playing

try – trying

3. Final -ie becomes -y before receiving the ending -ing:

e.g. lie – lying

die – dying

4. Final -e is dropped before the ending -ing:

e.g. have – having

Exc. agree–agreeing; be–being; see–seeing; dye–dyeing (a vopsi)

Past Continuous is used for:

1. An action in progress at a particular moment in the past:

At 2:00 p.m. yesterday Helen **was attending** a physics seminar.

2. An incomplete action in the past:

Bob **was writing** his science report yesterday (implication: he didn't finish writing it yesterday).

Past Continuous is used for:

3. An action in progress in the past (Past Continuous) interrupted by another, shorter action (Past Simple).

In this situation we can express the same thing in 4 ways with similar meaning:

- a) **While** I **was walking** in the park, I **met** Joan.
(PC) (PS)
- b) I **met** Joan **while** I **was walking** in the park.
(PS) (PC)
- c) **When** I **met** Joan, I **was walking** in the park.
(PS) (PC)
- d) I **was walking** in the park **when** I **met** Joan.
(PC) (PS)

Past Continuous is used for:

4. **Two actions in progress at the same time in the past. In this case, both verbs are in the past continuous.**

In this situation we can also express the same thing in 4 ways with similar meaning:

- a) **While** I **was studying** for the exam, my roommate **was seeping**.
(PC) (PC)
- b) My roommate **was sleeping** **while** I **was studying** for the exam.
(PC) (PC)
- c) **While** my roommate **was sleeping**, I **was studying** for the exam.
(PC) (PC)
- d) I **was studying** for the exam **while** my roommate **was sleeping**.
(PC) (PC)