

Past Continuous and Past Simple

Exercises

Corso di Laurea in Economia e Gestione Aziendale
Corso di Laurea in Economia e Finanza
Esercitazioni di Lingua Inglese
a.a. 2019/2020

Enrica Moi
moi.enrica@gmail.com

Past Continuous

- **AFFIRMATIVE FORM:**
- **SUBJECT + WAS/WERE + V + -ING**
- This time last year I was living in Brazil.

- **NEGATIVE FORM:**
- **SUBJECT + WAS/WERE + NOT + V + -ING**
- I waved to Helen, but she wasn't looking.

- **INTERROGATIVE FORM:**
- **WAS/WERE + SUBJECT + VERB + -ING**
- What were you doing at 10 o'clock last night?

Past continuous - exercises

Rewrite the sentences using the past continuous.

1. Patrick played rugby yesterday afternoon.
2. Where did you wait for me?
3. Alice didn't study yesterday evening.
4. How long did Katy watch TV?
5. The students did some research for their film project.
6. Chrissie travelled all day.
7. We watched a film in the evening.
8. I thought about you.
9. Did Joe sleep all the time?
10. They didn't play tennis in the morning.

Past continuous - exercises

Answer key:

1. Patrick **was playing** rugby yesterday afternoon.
2. Where **were you waiting** for me?
3. Alice **wasn't studying** yesterday evening.
4. How long **was Katy watching** TV?
5. The students **were doing** some research for their film project.
6. Chrissie **was travelling** all day.
7. We **were watching** a film in the evening.
8. I **was thinking** about you.
9. **Was Joe sleeping** all the time?
10. They **weren't playing** tennis in the morning.

Past simple

vs

Past continuous

Past simple or Past continuous?

- Complete the sentences by writing one verb in brackets in the past simple and one in the past continuous.

- 1 We (*watch*) a film when the electricity (*go*) off.
- 2 They (*have*) lunch when their friends (*arrive*).
- 3 The music suddenly (*stop*) when we (*dance*).
- 4 Millie (*lose*) her credit card when she (*shop*).
- 5 The wind (*blow*) and ship (*cannot*) reach the port.
- 6 We (*have*) breakfast when we (*hear*) the news on the radio.
- 7 Tanya (*see*) us when she (*wait*) at the bus stop.
- 8 Tom (*look*) for his sunglasses when he (*find*) his wallet.
- 9 It (*snow*) and the car suddenly (*stop*).

Past simple or Past continuous?

- Answer key:

- 1 WERE WATCHING - WENT
- 2 WERE HAVING - ARRIVED
- 3 STOPPED – WERE DANCING
- 4 LOST – WAS SHOPPING
- 5 WAS BLOWING – COULDN'T
- 6 WERE HAVING - HEARD
- 7 SAW – WAS WAITING
- 8 WAS LOOKING - FOUND
- 9 WAS SNOWING - STOPPED

Past simple or Past continuous?

Put the verb into the correct form, past continuous or past simple.

1



I saw (see) Sue in town yesterday, but she (not / see) me. She (look) the other way.

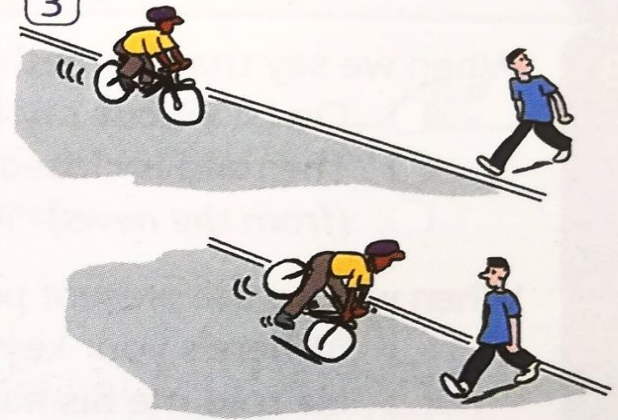
2

← Gates 1-10



I (meet) Tom and Jane at the airport a few weeks ago. They (go) to Paris and I (go) to Rome. We (have) a chat while we (wait) for our flights.

3



I (cycle) home yesterday when a man (step) out into the road in front of me. I (go) quite fast, but luckily I (manage) to stop in time and (not / hit) him.

Past simple or Past continuous?

Answer key:

1. Didn't see / was looking
2. Met / were going / was going / had / were waiting *or* waited
3. Was cycling / stepped / was going / managed / didn't hit

Past simple or Past continuous?

- **Put the verb into the correct form, past continuous or past simple.**

1. Jenny _____ (wait) for me when I _____ (arrive).
2. 'What _____ (you/do) at this time yesterday?' 'I _____ (be) asleep.'
3. '_____ (you/go) out last night?' 'No, I was too tired.'
4. How fast _____ (you/drive) when the accident _____ (happen)?
5. Sam _____ (take) a picture of me while I _____ (not look).
6. We were in a very difficult position. We _____ (not know) what to do.
7. I haven't seen Alan for ages. When I last _____ (see) him, he _____ (try) to find a job.
8. I _____ (walk) along the street when suddenly I _____ (hear) footsteps behind me. Somebody _____ (follow) me. I was scared and I _____ (start) to run.
9. When I was young, I _____ (want) to be a pilot.
10. Last night I _____ (drop) a plate when I _____ (do) the washing-up. Fortunately it _____ (not break).

Past simple or Past continuous?

Answer key:

1. Jenny **was waiting** for me when I **arrived**.
2. 'What **were you doing** at this time yesterday?' 'I **was** asleep.'
3. '**Did you go** out last night?' 'No, I was too tired.'
4. How fast **were you driving** when the accident **happened**?
5. Sam **took** a picture of me while I **wasn't looking**.
6. We were in a very difficult position. We **didn't know** what to do.
7. I haven't seen Alan for ages. When I last **saw** him, he **was trying** to find a job.
8. I **was walking** along the street when suddenly I **heard** footsteps behind me. Somebody **was following** me. I was scared and I **started** to run.
9. When I was young, I **wanted** to be a pilot.
10. Last night I **dropped** a plate when I **was doing** the washing-up. Fortunately it **didn't break**.

Past simple or Past continuous?

7 COMPLETE the police interrogation using the past simple or the past continuous of the verbs from the box.

watch • meet • go • do • rain • happen
walk (X2) • be • cross • look • see • imagine

Police officer: OK Fred, tell me. What
(1) (you) two days ago at 10 p.m.?

Criminal: Let me see. Two days ago at 10 p.m.

I **(2)** (probably) television, officer.

I certainly **(3)** (not) out.

Police officer: Which programme did you see?

Criminal: Oh no, that is not true, now I remember.

I **(4)** along the canal with my dog
Snoopy.

Police officer: And tell me. Can you prove it?

(5) (you) another walker?

Criminal: It **(6)** heavily, officer,
and it was difficult to see in the dark.

Police officer: So **(7)** (you / not)
in the area near the bank where the robbery

(8) last night?

Criminal: Certainly not, officer! I definitely

(9) (not) near the bank.

Police officer: So what about the witness? She

(10) you outside the bank while

she **(11)** the road around 10 p.m.

Criminal: It's surely a mistake. Maybe she

(12) at another man or she

(13) the whole story.

Police officer: But Fred, the witness is your own wife!

Past simple or Past continuous?

Answer key:

- 1 *were you doing*
- 2 *was probably watching*
- 3 *didn't go*
- 4 *was walking*
- 5 *Did you meet*
- 6 *was raining*
- 7 *you weren't walking*
- 8 *happened*
- 9 *wasn't walking*
- 10 *saw*
- 11 *was crossing*
- 12 *was looking*
- 13 *imagined*

Past simple or Past continuous?

- Lorna Bright is a long-distance walker. Look at this part of her diary describing a morning's walk along the coast. Write the missing words. Use one word only in each space.

It was a fine day *when* I started out on the last part of my walk around the coast of Britain. The sun was (1)....., and a light wind (2)..... blowing from the southwest. I was pleased that it (3)..... raining. I knew by now that I (4).....like rain. In fact I (5)..... it. I (6)..... ... along the cliff top and then down into the lovely little fishing village of Wellburn, past a cafe where people (7)..... having morning coffee. Three miles past Wellburn I (8)..... down for five minutes and (9)..... a drink.

Now it (10)..... getting warmer, so I (11)..... off one of my sweaters. I (12)..... stop for long because I (13)..... to reach Seabury by lunch-time. (14)..... I finally got there, it (15)..... just after half past twelve.

Past simple or Past continuous?

Answer key:

It was a fine day **when** I started out on the last part of my walk around the coast of Britain. The sun was (1) **shining**, and a light wind (2) **was** blowing from the southwest. I was pleased that it (3) **wasn't** raining. I knew by now that I (4) **didn't** like rain. In fact I (5) **hated / detested** it. I (6) **walked / went** along the cliff top and then down into the lovely little fishing village of Wellburn, past a cafe where people (7) **were** having morning coffee. Three miles past Wellburn I (8) **sat** down for five minutes and (9) **had** a drink.

Now it (10) **was** getting warmer, so I (11) **took** off one of my sweaters. I (12) **didn't** stop for long because I (13) **wanted / hoped / had / intended** to reach Seabury by lunch-time. (14) **When** I finally got there, it (15) **was** just after half past twelve.