



TENSES

Revision




Tense

- Grammatical expression of the location of events in time
- Anchors an event to the speaker's experience of the world by relating the event time to a point of reference
- The universal, unmarked reference point – the moment of speaking – speech time



English tenses

- ▶ Two tenses: the present and the past, the past being the marked form, both morphologically and semantically
- 



Tenses

➤ Past time now future time

➤ speech
➤ time

➤ the present
➤ moment




The present tense

- ▶ The basic meaning of the present tense – to locate a situation holding at the present moment: this may be an instantaneous event (*I promise to come*), a state which holds over time (*Jupiter is the largest planet*), or a habitual occurrence (*He works in an office*)
- ▶ Secondary meanings of the present include reference to past and future events, 'historic present' (*This man comes up to me and...*) and the quotative (*and she says 'I don't believe it'*)




The past tense

- Refers to a definite event or state that is prior to utterance time;
 - Its secondary uses refer to a present event or state as hypothetical (If I were you)
- 




Future

- English has no verbal inflection to mark a future tense; instead, English makes use of a number of forms to refer to future events



Past events and present time connected: Present Perfect and Past perfect

- ▶ While tense situates an event or state in present or past time, aspect is concerned with such notions as duration and completion or incompleton of the process expressed by the verb
- ▶ English has two aspects, the Perfect and the Progressive
- ▶ The Present Perfect views a state or event as occurring at some indefinite time within a time-frame that leads up to speech time
- ▶ The event is viewed as psychologically relvant to the present; by contrast, an event encoded in the Past tense is viewed as disconnected from the present
- ▶ Implications of recency, completion and result are all manifestations of current relevance
- ▶ The Past Perfect refers to events previous to those expressed by a past tense or by a Present Perfect




Situation types and the progressive aspect

- ▶ Important aspectual contrasts include perfectivity (viewing the event as a whole) vs imperfectivity (viewing the event as incomplete)
- ▶ The only grammaticalised aspectual contrasts in English are the Progressive vs non-progressive and the Perfect vs non-perfect
- ▶ Progressiveness focuses on the continuousness of the internal part of the event. Another type, that of past habituality, is expressed by the lexical auxiliary used to+inf
- ▶ Situations can be classed as states (*It's hot*), as punctual occurrences (*the cable snapped*), as durative occurrences without an end-point: *we walked along* (activities) and as durative with an end-point: *we walked home* (accomplishments)



Present

- Present simple
 - Present continuous
- 



Present simple

- **FORM**
- He works
- Question:
- Does he work?
- Negative:
- He does not (doesn't) work



Present Simple

- **Functions:**

- To talk about things in general:

- Nurses look after patients in hospitals

- To say how often we do things:

- I get up at 7 o'clock every morning

- In summer John plays tennis once a week.



Present simple:

- ▶ Verbs not normally used in continuous tenses: like, love, hate, want, need, prefer, realise, suppose, mean, understand, believe, remember, belong, contain, consist, depend, seem
- ▶ *Do you understand what I mean?*



Present continuous

- **FORM**

- Present of the verb to be + -ing

- He is reading

- Question

- Is he reading?

- Negative

- He is not reading




Present continuous:

➤ **FUNCTIONS**

- Action happening at the time of speaking:
- *Let's go now. It isn't raining any more.*
- Action happening in a period around the time of speaking:
- *Is Susan working this week?*
- *Is your English getting better?*



Past

- Past simple
 - Past continuous
- 



Past simple

- **FORMS**
- **I went out yesterday.**
- **Question:**
- **Did you go out yesterday?**
- **Negative:**
- **I did not (didn't) go out yesterday.**



Past simple

- **FUNCTIONS**

- Action completed in the past:

- *Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music*



Past continuous

- Was/were + ing
- *She was reading*
- Question
- *Was she reading?*
- Negative
- *She was not (wasn't) reading.*



Past continuous

- **FUNCTIONS**

- Limited duration

- This time last year I was living in Brazil

- Action which was interrupted by another action in the past

- I was watching TV when the phone rang.



Present perfect

- **FORM**
- **Have + -ed**
- *I have finished.*
- **Question:**
- *Have you finished?*
- **Negative**
- *I have not (haven't) finished.*



Present perfect

- **FUNCTION**
- **Action in the past has a result now:**
 - *I've lost my key.*
- **Action started in the past and continued until now:**
 - *I have lived here for 15 years.*



Present perfect

- Just, already:
- I have just arrived. He's already gone.
- Yet (questions, negatives)
- Has it stopped raining yet?
- I haven't posted it yet.



Present perfect

- ▶ Today; This morning/afternoon/evening (year, month, week)
- ▶ *I've seen him today*
- ▶ *Have you been there this year?*



Present perfect continuous

- **FORM**
- **Have + been + -ing**
- *He has been waiting*
- **Question**
- *Has he been waiting?*
- **Negative**
- *He has not (hasn't) been waiting*



Present perfect continuous

- Activity that has recently stopped or just stopped
- *It has been raining. (The ground is wet)*
- Activity is still happening
- *It has been raining for two hours.*



Present perfect continuous vs. Present perfect simple

- Present perfect continuous: focus on activity
- *My hands are very dirty. I've been repairing the car.*
- Present perfect simple: focus on result.
- *My car is o.k. now. I've repaired it.*



Past perfect

- **FORM:**
- **HAD + -ED (Past participle)**
- ***I didn't know who she was. I had never seen her before.***





Past perfect

- **FUNCTION**
- **Action which happened before another action in the past**
- ***When Sarah arrived, Paul wasn't there. He had gone home.***



EXERCISE

- Use the past tense forms to complete the sentences
 - Accuse, acquit, arrest, award, confess, charge, drop, engage, fine, grant, imprison, plead, release, seize, serve
- 




Exercise: Accuse, acquit, arrest, award, confess, charge, drop, engage, fine, grant, imprison, plead, release, seize, serve

- 1. After six hours of questioning the accused man _____.
- 2. The government _____ an amnesty to all political prisoners.
- 3. Her boss _____ her of stealing \$250.
- 4. The secret police _____ him for six months in a high security jail.


Accuse, acquit, arrest, award, confess, charge,
drop, engage, fine, grant, imprison, plead,
release, seize, serve

- 5. We ___ the best commercial lawyer we could find to represent us but we still lost the case.
- 6. The prisoner ___ guilty to all charges.
- 7. On 12 August they ___ with murder.
- 8. The policeman stopped the car and ___ the driver.



Accuse, acquit, arrest, award, confess,
charge, drop, engage, fine, grant,
imprison, plead, release, seize, serve

- 9. The president ___ the opposition leader from prison.
- 10. The court ___ him \$2,500 for obtaining money by false pretences.
- 11. After consideration, the palintiff ____ the case against his neighbour.
- 12. The customs ____ the shipment of books.




Accuse, acquit, arrest, award,
confess, charge, drop, engage, fine,
grant, imprison, plead, release, seize,
serve

- ▶ 13. He ____ six months in a local prison.
- ▶ 14. The court ____ the plaintiff \$75 in damage plus costs.
- ▶ 15. Two of the men were sent to prison, but the judge ____ the third.




Key

- 1. confessed 2 granted, 3 accused, 4. imprisoned, 5 engaged, 6 pleaded, 7 charged, 8 arrested, 9 released, 10 fined, 11 dropped, 12 seized, 13 served, 14. awarded, 15 acquitted



Advise, appeal, commit, disclaim, disclose, embezzle, establish, follow, impose, legislate, manipulate, offer, preclude, prevent, value

- 1. He ___ all knowledge of the robbery until \$250,000 in cash was found in his house.
- 2- He is ___ us \$100,000 for the house, which is \$10,000 less than we wanted.
- 3. He says he's innocent and he's going to ___ to the supreme court against the decision.
- 4. He was sent to prison for six months for ___ his clients' money.



Advise, appeal, commit, disclaim, disclose,
embezzle, establish, follow, impose, legislate,
manipulate, offer, preclude, prevent, value

- ▶ 5. I believe that they are ___ the accounts to make the company look more profitable.
- ▶ 6. In my opinion they'll ___ the business at about \$2m
- ▶ 7. Our solicitor has ___ to take the documents to the police.
- ▶ 8. Parliament has ___ against the sale of drugs.
- ▶ 9. The bank has no right to ___ details of my account to the tax office.



Advise, appeal, commit, disclaim, disclose,
embezzle, establish, follow, impose, legislate,
manipulate, offer, preclude, prevent, value

- 10. The business was___in 1881.
- 11.The court has___the precedent set in the 1972 case.
- 12. The magistrate___a fine of \$150.
- 13. The gang had___six robberies before they were caught.



Advise, appeal, commit, disclaim, disclose,
embezzle, establish, follow, impose, legislate,
manipulate, offer, preclude, prevent, value

- 14. They have changed the locks on the building to ___ the former managing director from going in.
- 15. This agreement does not ___ further agreements between these parties in the future.



Key


- ▶ . Disclaimed 2. offering 3. appeal 4. embezzling 5. manipulating 6. value 7. advised 8. legislated 9. disclose 10. established 11. followed 12. imposed 13. committed 14. prevent 15. preclude



Arrange, blackmail, convict, corroborate,
exonerate, find, forfeit, infringe,
overturn, prohibit, promise, recover, refrain,


sentence, sue

- 1. He was asked to give an undertaking to ___ from political activity.
- 2. My client intends to appeal and I am sure that a higher court will ___ this sentence.
- 3. I can ___ Mr Waterman's alibi. At the time of the theft I saw him in Brighton.
- 4. The judge ___ him to three years' imprisonment.




Arrange, blackmail, convict, corroborate,
exonerate, find, forfeit, infringe,
overturn, prohibit, promise, recover, refrain,
sentence, sue

- 5. After the accident he ___ the company for \$50,000 in damages.
- 6. She was ___ of manslaughter and sent to prison for eight years.
- 7. If you decide not to buy you will ___ your 25% deposit.
- 8. The court has ___ him guilty on all charges.



Arrange, blackmail, convict, corroborate,
exonerate, find, forfeit, infringe,
overturn, prohibit, promise, recover, refrain,
sentence, sue

- 9. We believe that this production____our
copyright as detailed below.
- 10. The company went out of business
and the original investment was
never_____.
- 11. We discovered that his secretary
was____him with certain details about his
private life.
- 12. You____to pay by August and it's now
September. What's your explanation?



Arrange, blackmail, convict, corroborate,
exonerate, find, forfeit, infringe,
overturn, prohibit, promise, recover, refrain,
sentence, sue

- 13. The law ___the sale of alcohol to minors.
- 14. All the files are___in alphabetical order, so it's very easy to find.
- 15. The judge____the driver from all responsibility for the accident.



Key

- ▶ 1. refrain 2. overturn 3. corroborate, 4. sentenced, 5. sued, 6. convicted 7. forfeit 8. found 9. infringes 10. recovered 11. blackmailing 12. promised 13. prohibits 14. arranged 15. exonerated