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Our tip: [www.e-grammar.org/pdf-books/](http://www.e-grammar.org/pdf-books/) All PDF exercises + grammar rules in one place.

# Past simple tense \_\_\_\_\_

## Form - regular verbs

Positive statement: *I watched, He watched*

Negative statement: *I did not watch (I didn't watch), He did not watch (He didn't watch)*

Question: *Did you watch?*

Negative question: *Did you not watch? (Didn't you watch?)*

It is formed by -ed ending. It is the same for all persons, singular and plural.

## Spelling

We add -d (not -ed) to the verbs that end with -e: *like - liked*

If the verb ends with a consonant and -y, we change -y into -i: *carry - carried, try - tried*.

But: *play - played*, because this verb ends with a vowel and -y.

If the verb has only one syllable and ends with a vowel and a consonant, we double the consonant to keep the same pronunciation: *stop - stopped*. The same rule applies to the verbs that end with -l: *travel - travelled*.

## Form - irregular verbs

All the irregular verbs have different forms: *go - went, buy - bought, cut - cut* etc.

The question and negative are made in the same way: *I went - Did you go? No, I did not go*.

## Notes

We do not use the auxiliary verb *did* with the verb *to be* and modal verbs.

*Were you a student? Was he in London? I was not at home. He was not happy.*

*Could you sing? Could he come? I could not swim. He could not stay.*

The auxiliary verb *did* is not used in questions beginning with *wh-* pronouns (*who, which*) in case that the pronoun is the subject of the question.

*Who met you? (who is the subject)*

*Which train arrived on time? (which train is the subject)*

But: *Who did you meet? Which train did you miss? (who and which train are the objects)*

The negative question normally shows a surprise.

*Didn't you know it?*

## Use

1. We use the past simple for activities or situations that were completed in the past at a definite time.

a) The time can be given in the sentence:

*I came home at 6 o'clock.*

*When he was a child, he didn't live in a house.*

b) The time is asked about:

*When did they get married?*

c) The time is not given in the sentence, but it is clear from a context that the action or situation finished in the past.

*He is 20 years old. He was born in Canada.*

*I've been to Iceland. (present perfect) - Did you enjoy it? (past simple)*

2. We use it for repeated actions in the past.

*We walked to school every day. - And did you ever go by bus?*

3. It is used in stories to describe events that follow each other.

*Charles entered the hall and looked around. He took off his coat and put it on a chair. He was at home.*

## Past simple: was, were

### Exercise 1. Complete the dialogues with affirmative, negative and question forms.

---

A: ..... you hungry after such a long walk?

B: To tell the truth, I ..... really hungry.

---

A: ..... your sister at school last week?

B: No, she ..... at school. She was ill.

---

A: ..... your parents at work yesterday?

B: Yes, my mum ..... at work. But my dad ..... at work. He felt sick.

---

A: ..... Peter your friend? And what about Bill?

B: Peter and Bill ..... my best friends from our street.

---

A: You watched some films on Saturday and Sunday. .... they interesting?

B: No, the films ..... interesting at all.

---

A: ..... I often ill when I was a little child?

B: Not really. You ..... much healthier than your brother.

---

A: ..... Susan and Marion good at sport at secondary school?

B: Well, Susan ..... quite good at athletics, but Marion ..... good at any sport.

---

A: Why ..... you at home yesterday night. Where were you?

B: I ..... at home because I was at Mike's birthday party till early in the morning.

---

A: What ..... your summer holiday in Spain like?

B: We ..... near Málaga for a week and we really liked it there.

---

# Past simple: regular and irregular verbs

## Exercise 2. Choose a verb to complete the sentences. \_\_\_\_\_

become, bind, bide, bite

Sam ..... a doctor when he was 26.

My kids ..... their nails as children.

---

breed, bring, burn, burst

We ..... some sweets to the party.

When she saw it, she ..... into tears.

---

cast, catch, cost, cut

The goalkeeper ..... the ball.

Our holiday in the Caribbean ..... a fortune.

---

deal, dig, do, drink

Who ..... your homework, Jill?

The wolf ..... thirstily from the river.

---

fall, fit, feel, fight

Little Jim ..... over when he started to run.

Maria ..... hard for her place in the team.

---

fly, forget, get, give

I'm sorry, I ..... to tell you about it.

He ..... a lot of presents for his birthday.

---

grind, grow, hang, hear

My sister and I ..... up in a village.

When the fox ..... the noise, it disappeared.

---

hit, hold, hurt, kneel

He ..... the man until police arrived.

---

I ..... by the bed and prayed.

lead, lean, leap, lend

The captain ..... his soldiers into battle.

I ..... him some money but he never gave it back.

---

let, light, make, mean

The full moon ..... the beach brightly.

It's OK. The incident ..... nothing to me.

---

pay, put, rend, ride

They ..... the bill and left the restaurant.

I never ..... a motorbike when I was young.

---

rise, run, sell, set

The robber ..... away from the bank.

I ..... everything I had except my mobile.

---

shake, shine, sing, sink

They said hello and ..... their hands.

Titanic ..... in April 1912.

---

slay, slide, sling, stand

Tears ..... down her cheeks.

The audience ..... up and applauded.

---

shrink, swim, take, tear

I ..... 800 metres to the pier.

The director ..... the contract apart.

---

throw, thrust, wake, wear

I ..... the kite in the air but it didn't fly.

He ..... a Scottish scarf in the winter.

---

# Past simple: questions

## Exercise 3. Choose the correct question.

---

Did your students their homework?  
 Did your students do their homework?  
Yes, they did. They always do.

Who went with you?  
 Who did go with you?  
Nobody. I went there alone.

Did you worked all day yesterday?  
 Did you work all day yesterday?  
Of course, I did. I was so tired!

Which jeans liked you best?  
 Which jeans did you like best?  
I don't know. They were awful.

Why was Tim and Greg so unhappy?  
 Why were Tim and Greg so unhappy?  
Because they had an argument.

Why didn't you answer the phone?  
 Why did not you answer the phone?  
The phone? I did not hear it.

Were they not at the hospital on Sunday?  
 Didn't they be at the hospital on Sunday?  
Not on Sunday. They went there on Saturday.

Had you a shower this morning?  
 Did you have a shower this morning?  
Sorry? I have a shower every morning.

# Past simple: negative

## Exercise 4. Complete the story. \_\_\_\_\_

### Blue Monday

I ..... (not have) a good day yesterday. I ..... (cannot) stay in bed late, because it was Monday and I had to go to school. Unfortunately, I ..... (not get) up on time and I ..... (not catch) the bus. I wanted to take a taxi, but I ..... (not be) lucky. There ..... (not be) any taxis in our street. I ..... (not want) to ask my dad to take me by car, because I thought it ..... (not be) a very good idea. I went to school on foot and as I ..... (not be) used to long walks, I was pretty tired. I ..... (not listen) to our English teacher and when we wrote a revision test I ..... (not pass) it. Believe me, my parents ..... (not be) very happy about it.



# Past simple tense

## Answer keys

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**Our tip:** [www.e-grammar.org/pdf-books/](http://www.e-grammar.org/pdf-books/) All PDF exercises + grammar rules in one place.

### Exercise 1

A: Were you hungry after such a long walk?

B: To tell the truth, I was really hungry.

A: Was your sister at school last week?

B: No, she was not (wasn't) at school. She was ill.

A: Were your parents at work yesterday?

B: Yes, my mum was at work. But my dad was not (wasn't) at work. He felt sick.

A: Was Peter your friend? And what about Bill?

B: Peter and Bill were my best friends from our street.

A: You watched some films on Saturday and Sunday. Were they interesting?

B: No, the films were not (weren't) interesting at all.

A: Was I often ill when I was a little child?

B: Not really. You were much healthier than your brother.

A: Were Susan and Marion good at sport at secondary school?

B: Well, Susan was quite good at athletics, but Marion was not (wasn't) good at any sport.

A: Why weren't you at home yesterday night. Where were you?

B: I was not (wasn't) at home because I was at Mike's birthday party till early in the morning.

A: What was your summer holiday in Spain like?

B: We were near Málaga for a week and we really liked it there.

### Exercise 2

Sam became a doctor when he was 26.

My kids bit their nails as children.

We brought some sweets to the party.

When she saw it, she burst into tears.

The goalkeeper caught the ball.

Our holiday in the Caribbean cost a fortune.

Who did your homework, Jill?

The wolf drank thirstily from the river.

Little Jim fell over when he started to run.  
Maria fought hard for her place in the team.

I'm sorry, I forgot to tell you about it.  
He got a lot of presents for his birthday.

My sister and I grew up in a village.  
When the fox heard the noise, it disappeared.

He held the man until police arrived.  
I knelt/kneeled by the bed and prayed.

The captain lead his soldiers into battle.  
I lent him some money but he never gave it back.

The full moon lit/lighted the beach brightly.  
It's OK. The incident meant nothing to me.

They paid the bill and left the restaurant.  
I never rode a motorbike when I was young.

The robber ran away from the bank.  
I sold everything I had except my mobile.

They said hello and shook their hands.  
Titanic sank in April 1912.

Tears slid down her cheeks.  
The audience stood up and applauded.

I swam 800 metres to the pier.  
The director tore the contract apart.

I threw the kite in the air but it didn't fly.  
He wore a Scottish scarf in the winter.

### Exercise 3

Did your students do their homework?

Who went with you?

Did you work all day yesterday?

Which jeans did you like best?

Why were Tim and Greg so unhappy?

Why didn't you answer the phone?

Were they not at the hospital on Sunday?

Did you have a shower this morning?

## Exercise 4

### Blue Monday

I did not (didn't) have a good day yesterday. I could not (couldn't) stay in bed late, because it was Monday and I had to go to school. Unfortunately, I did not (didn't) get up on time and I did not (didn't) catch the bus. I wanted to take a taxi, but I was not (wasn't) lucky. There were not (weren't) any taxis in our street. I did not (didn't) want to ask my dad to take me by car, because I thought it was not (wasn't) a very good idea.

I went to school on foot and as I was not (wasn't) used to long walks, I was pretty tired.

I did not (didn't) listen to our English teacher and when we wrote a revision test I did not (didn't) pass it.

Believe me, my parents were not (weren't) very happy about it.

## Form

Positive statement: *I was watching, You were watching*

Negative statement: *I was not watching (I wasn't watching), You were not watching (You weren't watching)*

Question: *Were you watching? Was he watching?*

Neg. question: *Were you not watching? (Weren't you watching?) Was he not watching? (Wasn't he watching?)*

The past continuous tense is formed with the past tense of the verb *to be* and the present participle (-ing form).

## Use

We use the continuous tense for actions or situations in the past that were not completed.

*From 10 to 12 I was washing my car. I was in the garage.*

(I did not finish my work. It was in progress. I started before 10 and finished after 12.)

*The sun was setting. The beach was changing its colours.*

(The sun was still in the sky when I was watching it.)

Compare this sentence with the past simple, which is used for completed activities:

*From 10 to 12 I washed my car.*

(I finished my work. I started at 10 and finished at 12.)

*Finally, the sun set. It was dark and we did not see the beach anymore.*

(The sun completely disappeared.)

We use it for continuous, uninterrupted activities. If the action is interrupted (something is done in more intervals or we did more things one after another), we must use the past simple.

*Tom was watching TV on Sunday.*

*Tom watched TV in the morning and in the evening.*

*Yesterday I was working in the garden.*

*Yesterday I worked in the garden and on my house.*

The past continuous tense is typically used:

1. Combined with the past simple tense to describe the idea that the action in the past continuous started before the action in the past simple and continued after it.

*When she saw me, I was looking at the trees.*

(These two activities happened at the same time. I was looking at the trees for some time and she saw me in the middle of it.)

Compare with the past simple:

*When she saw me, I looked at the trees.*

(These two activities happened one after another. First she saw me and then I looked at the trees.)

2. With a point in time to express an action that started before that time and continued after it.

*At 8 o'clock Jane was having a bath.*

(At 8 o'clock she was in the middle of the activity. She did not finish it.)

Compare with the simple tense:

*At 8 o'clock Jane had a bath.*

(She started the activity at 8 o'clock and finished it.)

3. To describe a situation, while the past simple is used to tell a story.

*The sun was shining. Jack and Jill were lying on the beach. Jack was reading a book and Jill was sleeping. All of a sudden, Jack raised his head. Jill woke up. Something happened.*

4. For incomplete activities in contrast with the past simple, which is used for completed activities.

*I was reading a book yesterday. And today I am going to continue.*

*I read the book yesterday. I can lend it to you now.*

5. The past continuous can be used instead of the simple to show a more casual action:

*I was talking to my neighbour yesterday. We had a nice chat.*

(I did not do it on purpose. We just met in the street.)

*I talked to my neighbour yesterday. And he promised to help me.*

(I did it on purpose. I needed to ask him for help.)

# Past continuous: affirmative

**Exercise 1. What were the Thompsons doing on Sunday at 7 o'clock? \_\_\_\_\_**

Mr. Thompson ..... (cook) dinner in the kitchen.

Mrs. Thompson ..... (clean) their car in front of their house.

Jack and Eve ..... (sit) in the hall near the fireplace.

Jack, their 11 years old son, ..... (read) Shakespeare's sonnets.

Eve, at the age of 16, ..... (play) with Barbies.

Their grandma and grandpa ..... (have) a good time.

Their grandma ..... (exercise) in the gym.

Their grandpa ..... (iron) shirts and socks in the living room.

They also had two pets. And do you know what they ..... (do)?

Spot, the puppy, ..... (catch) mice in the garden.

And Kitty, the little cute kitten, ..... (fight) with neighbour's dog.

## Past continuous: questions

**Exercise 2. Julie saw Tim and Matt at the swimming pool. Make questions to complete the dialogue.** \_\_\_\_\_

Sue: ..... when you saw them? (what | Tim and Matt | do)

Julie: Tim was swimming in the pool, but I didn't see Matt first.

Sue: ..... in the pool, too? (you | swim)

Julie: No, I wasn't. I was just looking. But then I saw Matt, too.

Sue: ..... ? (what | he | do)

Julie: He was diving in the pool.

Sue: Diving, you say. .... to dive? (he | not | just | try) He can't dive.

Julie: You're right. He was just trying to do it. And all his friends were watching it.

Sue: ..... ? (they | laugh)

Julie: Of course, they were. Matt was pretty funny. He splashed the water all over the place.

Sue: ..... faces when he came up to the surface of the pool? (Matt | make)

Julie: Yes, he was. He was grinning and making faces at me.

Sue: At you? Vow! And what about Tim? ..... Matt, too? (he | watch)

Julie: Not really. He was looking at me instead.

Sue: Oh, no! You're kidding. .... your new swimsuit? (you | wear)

Julie: Yes, I was. Why?

Sue: Now I know why Tim and Matt were watching you, Julie.

# Past continuous: negative

**Exercise 3. Complete the dialogues with negative forms.** \_\_\_\_\_

A: Were you talking to Bob during dinner?

B: I ..... to anybody. I was alone.

---

A: Were you watching a football match when I phoned you?

B: I ..... TV. I was listening to music.

---

A: Was I wearing the blue tie at the party?

B: You ..... any tie as far as I can remember.

---

A: Guess what I was doing between 5 and 6 o'clock.

B: You ..... anything, your sister told me.

---

A: When I met them, Sam was buying some meat and Jill was buying drinks.

B: I don't understand why they ..... food together.

---

A: I wasn't waiting for them when they arrived.

B: Why ..... for them? What happened?

---

A: Eve was waving at me when we got out of the car.

B: It's not true! She ..... at you.

---

A: You weren't looking very happy at the beginning of the English lesson.

B: And why ..... happy? I didn't want to write the test!

---



# Past continuous tense

## Answer keys

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### Exercise 1

Mr. Thompson was cooking dinner in the kitchen.  
 Mrs. Thompson was cleaning their car in front of their house.  
 Jack and Eve were sitting in the hall near the fireplace.  
 Jack, their 11 years old son, was reading Shakespeare's sonnets.  
 Eve, at the age of 16, was playing with Barbies.  
 Their grandma and grandpa were having a good time.  
 Their grandma was exercising in the gym.  
 Their grandpa was ironing shirts and socks in the living room.  
 They also had two pets. And do you know what they were doing?  
 Spot, the puppy, was catching mice in the garden.  
 And Kitty, the little cute kitten, was fighting with neighbour's dog.

### Exercise 2

Sue: What were Tim and Matt doing when you saw them?  
 Julie: Tim was swimming in the pool, but I didn't see Matt first.  
 Sue: Were you swimming in the pool, too?  
 Julie: No, I wasn't. I was just looking. But then I saw Matt, too.  
 Sue: What was he doing?  
 Julie: He was diving in the pool.  
 Sue: Diving, you say. Wasn't he (Was he not) just trying to dive? He can't dive.  
 Julie: You're right. He was just trying to do it. And all his friends were watching it.  
 Sue: Were they laughing?  
 Julie: Of course, they were. Matt was pretty funny. He splashed the water all over the place.  
 Sue: Was Matt making faces when he came up to the surface of the pool?  
 Julie: Yes, he was. He was grinning and making faces at me.  
 Sue: At you? Vow! And what about Tim? Was he watching Matt, too?

Julie: Not really. He was looking at me instead.

Sue: Oh, no! You're kidding. Were you wearing your new swimsuit?

Julie: Yes, I was. Why?

Sue: Now I know why Tim and Matt were watching you, Julie.

### Exercise 3

A: Were you talking to Bob during dinner?

B: I wasn't (was not) talking to anybody. I was alone.

A: Were you watching a football match when I phoned you?

B: I wasn't (was not) watching TV. I was listening to music.

A: Was I wearing the blue tie at the party?

B: You weren't (were not) wearing any tie as far as I can remember.

A: Guess what I was doing between 5 and 6 o'clock.

B: You weren't (were not) doing anything, your sister told me.

A: When I met them, Sam was buying some meat and Jill was buying drinks.

B: I don't understand why they weren't (were not) buying food together.

A: I wasn't waiting for them when they arrived.

B: Why weren't you (were you not) waiting for them? What happened?

A: Eve was waving at me when we got out of the car.

B: It's not true! She wasn't (was not) waving at you.

A: You weren't looking very happy at the beginning of the English lesson.

B: And why wasn't I (was I not) looking happy? I didn't want to write the test!

## Past simple vs continuous: mixed forms

### Exercise 1. Complete the story. \_\_\_\_\_

Every day James Lullaby travels to London. Yesterday he ..... (drive) his car, when he ..... (see) a dog in the middle of the road. The dog ..... (watch) the car. James ..... (stop) and ..... (get) out of his car. As he ..... (get) out, the dog ..... (run) away. James ..... (go) back to his car. While he ..... (get) in it, the dog ..... (appear) again and ..... (sit) down in the middle of the road. James ..... (start) the engine, but the dog ..... (not move). James ..... (jump) out of the car and ..... (shout) at the dog. The dog ..... (bark) at him and ..... (begin) to run. James ..... (follow) the dog. Suddenly, he ..... (see) two girls lying on the grass. They ..... (bleed).

### Exercise 2. Make negative sentences. \_\_\_\_\_

Example: *James heard a dog on the road. - He didn't hear a dog on the road.*

James was riding a motorbike. ....

James ran over the dog. ....

James threw a stone at the dog. ....

The dog was barking at James all the time. ....

The dog bit James. ....

The girls were sitting on the grass. ....

### Exercise 3. Make the policeman's questions. \_\_\_\_\_

Policeman: ..... ?  
(what/do/yesterday at 8 o'clock)

James: I was driving to work.

Policeman: ..... ?  
(what time/meet/the dog)

James: I saw him at about 8.30.

Policeman: .....when you saw the dog?  
(drive/fast)

James: No, I wasn't.

Policeman: ..... ?  
(what/the dog/do)

James: He ran away.

Policeman: ..... ?  
(how/find/the two girls)

James: I followed the dog, when he came back.

Policeman: ..... ?  
(see/anyone else)

James: No, I didn't.

Policeman: ..... ?  
(call/an ambulance)

James: No, I didn't. I drove the girls to the hospital.

# Past simple vs continuous

## Answer keys

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### Exercise 1

Every day James Lullaby travels to London. Yesterday he *was driving* his car, when he *saw* a dog in the middle of the road. The dog *was watching* the car. James *stopped* and *got* out of his car. As he *was getting* out, the dog *ran* away. James *went* back to his car. While he *was getting* in it, the dog *appeared* again and *sat* down in the middle of the road. James *started* the engine, but the dog *did not (didn't) move*. James *jumped* out of the car and *shouted* at the dog. The dog *barked* at him and began to run. James *followed* the dog. Suddenly, he *saw* two girls lying on the grass. They *were bleeding*.

### Exercise 2

James *was not (wasn't) riding* a motorbike.

James *did not (didn't) run* over the dog.

James *did not (didn't) throw* a stone at the dog.

The dog *was not (wasn't) barking* at James all the time.

The dog *did not (didn't) bite* James.

The girls *were not (weren't) sitting* on the grass.

### Exercise 3

What were you doing yesterday at 8 o'clock?

What time did you meet the dog?

Were you driving fast when you saw the dog?

What did the dog do?

How did you find the two girls?

Did you see anyone else?

Did you call an ambulance?