

TENSES

1. Verb Form that shows the time of action, is called the Tense.

1. I play in the evening.
2. I played in the evening.

3. I shall play in the evening.

2. There are three main kinds of Tense

1. Present Tense
2. Past Tense
3. Future Tense.

3. To each Tense there are four different forms

1. (i) Present Indefinite (or) Simple Present
(ii) Present Continuous(or) Progressive Present
(iii) Present Perfect
(iv) Present Perfect Continuous

2. (i) Past Indefinite (or) Simple Past
(ii) Past Continuous (or) Progressive Past
(iii) Past Perfect
(iv) Past Perfect Continuous

3. (i) Future Indefinite (or) Simple Future
(ii) Future Continuous (or) Progressive Future
(iii) Future Perfect
(iv) Future Perfect Continuous

Note : Students have been given elementary knowledge of Tenses in their previous classes. For the purpose of revision, some Tense charts are being given here. Note the Verb forms used in different kinds of Tenses.

CONSOLIDATED TENSE CHART

Indefinite		Continuous	Perfect	Perfect Continuous
PRESENT	write (s)	is / am / are writing	has /have written	has /have been writing
PAST	wrote	was / were writing	had written	had been writing
FUTURE	will / shall write	will / shall be writing	will / shall have written	will / shall have been writing

1. The **Present Simple** (or the Present Indefinite) is used

(1) To express a habitual action; as-

1. He goes out for a walk every morning.
2. I get up every day at five o'clock.
3. My watch keeps good time.

- (2) To express keneral truths; as-
1. The sun rises in the east.
 2. Fortune /avours the brave.
 3. Honesty is the best policy.
- (3) In exclamatory sentences, to express what is actually taking place at the present moment; as-
1. See, how it rains
 2. Here comes the bus
 3. There she goes
- (4) To indicate a future event, provided that the future time is implied by the context; as-
1. He comes (= will come) in a few days' time.
 2. We go (= shall go) to Shimla next week.
 3. They leave for London by the next flight.
 4. We sail for America next Saturday:
- (5) In vivid narrative, as substitute for the Past Indefinite; as-
1. Sohrab now rushes forward and deals a heavy blow to Rustum.
 2. Immediately the Sultan hurries to his capital.

EXERCISE

Use the correct form of the verbs given in brackets

1. My brother often (go) to see English films.
2. Vegetables (come) to our town from the surrounding villages.
3. He always (take) his coffee without sugar.
4. Ice (melt) above 0° Celsius.
5. This parcel (contain) a gift for you.
6. My friends often (send) me presents.

The Past Simple (or the Past Indefinite) is used

- (1) To denote an action in the past; as-
1. We learnt English at school.
 2. He killed a snake.
 3. My father taught in this school.
- (2) To denote a habitual action in the past; as-
1. He came to me every evening.
 2. He never told a lie.
 3. He studied many hours every day.
- (3) To denote an action going on in the past; as
- While they danced (= were dancing) we sang (= were singing).

EXERCISE

Fill in the blanks with the correct Tense form of the verbs given in brackets

1. Last Saturday I (stay) at home.
2. Who (play) the hero in that film.
3. She was sick; so she (not come) to the party.
4. We (eat) our dinner at ten last night.
5. She (Walk) to, college yesterday morning.

1. **The Present Continuous** is used :

(1) To express an action going on at the time of speaking; as—

1. He is writing a letter.
2. The boys are playing hockey.

(2) To express some habit or custom; as—

1. She is working regularly these days.
2. He is always telling lies.

(3) To indicate an action that is planned to take place in the near future; as—

1. I am going to Mumbai tomorrow.
2. She is coming here in the evening.

(4) To describe a temporary action which may not be actually going on at the time of speaking; as—

1. I am playing cricket these days.
2. We are learning French at school.

Important Note : The continuous tense is chiefly used for deliberate actions. Some verbs are, therefore, not normally used in the continuous form. They are used only in the simple present. These verbs can be grouped as follows :

(1) Verbs of senses (involuntary actions); as

feel, hear, see, smell, notice, taste.

(2) Verbs expressing feelings and emotions; as

want, wish, love, like, hate, fear, prefer, refuse, hope.

(3) Verbs of mental activity; as

agree, appreciate, understand, think, believe, forget, know, mean, suppose, remember, recognize, mind.

(4) Verbs of possession ; as

have, own, belong to, possess, owe, contain, consist of.

These verbs may, however, be used in the continuous tense if the action is deliberate ; as

I am thinking of a solution to this problem.

I am minding my new business.

EXERCISE

Use the correct Tense form of the verbs given in brackets

(Present Simple or Present Progressive)

1. He (know) several persons here.
2. Leela (do) her homework. Don't disturb her.
3. I (believe) what you say.
4. Run fast ! The train (whistle).
5. He (resemble), his, father.

(2) **The Continuous** is used for an action continuing at a particular time or during a particular period in the past. The chief interest is not the time of action, but its continuity.

1. When I saw him, he was playing chess.
2. I was writing a letter when he came to my house.

This tense is also used with always, continually, etc., for persistent actions or habits in the past.

1. He was always ringing me up.
2. He was always troubling his parents.

EXERCISE

Fill in the blanks with the correct Tense form of the verbs given in brackets (Simple Past or Past Progressive)

Note : (1) For an action begun and continuing in past time, use the Past Continuous.

(2) For an action completed in the past, use the Simple Past.

1. I (read) a novel when my friend came.
2. I (go) to bed early last night.
3. At midnight, I (lie) awake in my bed.
4. As I (go) to my school, I met an old friend of mine.
5. He jumped off the train while, it (move).

1. The Present Perfect is used :

(1) To denote an action that has just been completed; as-

1. He has reached home safe and sound.
2. He has worked the sum.
3. He has just gone out.

(2) To describe some past event, the present importance or effect of which is to be emphasised; as-

1. He has come to my house many a time (and so it is nothing strange that he has come again).
2. This disease has killed many children (and so something must be done about it).
3. He has travelled round the world (and so he knows much about other countries).
4. The students have gone on strike (and so the situation is serious).

(3) To express some past experience whose time is not given; as-

1. My father has worked with Gandhiji.
2. I have seen the Taj Mahal in moonlight.
3. I have studied in this school.

(4) To show a past action as continuing to the present; as-

1. We have lived here ten years (and we are still living here).
2. He has been ill since last week (and he is still not well).

Note the difference between these two sentences

1. We have lived here ten years.
2. We lived here ten years.

Sentence 1 shows that we are still living here.

Sentence 2 shows that we are living here no longer.

- 2.** The Present Perfect, since it denotes present time, cannot be qualified by an Adverb or phrase denoting past time.

We can't say — He has come yesterday.

He has reached home last night.

We should say — He came yesterday.

He reached home last night.

EXERCISE

Fill in the blanks with correct Tense form of the verbs given in brackets

(Simple Past or Present Perfect)

1. He (be) a teacher since 1998.
2. I don't know him because I (never meet) him.
3. I (come) to this town in 1995.
4. Two convicts (escape) from prison last night.
5. He (already entertain) the guests for two hours.
3. The Past Perfect is used to express an action completed before a certain moment in the past.
It is used whenever we wish to say that some action had taken place before another was begun or completed.
 1. The patient had died before the doctor came.
 2. I had finished my work by evening
4. This tense is also used to express some unfulfilled desire.
 1. I wish my father had been here at this time.
 2. I wish I had worked harder.

Note : If there are two actions taking place in the past

- (i) The action that took place first is put in the Past Perfect Tense.
- (ii) The action that took place later is put in the Past Indefinite Tense.
 1. I had done my exercises when Hari came to see me.
 2. I had written the letter before he arrived.
 3. It started ranting after he had left. fit

EXERCISE

Fill in the blanks with the right Tense form of the verbs given in brackets

(Simple Past or Past Perfect)

Note : In order to express two related actions completed in the past

- (1) The Past Perfect (had + V₃) is used for the action that took place first.
- (2) The Simple Past (V₂) is used for the action that took place later.

1. He said that he (write) the letter.
2. Mohan (reach) home before it started raining.
3. She said that she (ivin) the first prize.
4. We (understand) the poem after the teacher had explained- it to us.
5. He had broken the lock before I (bring) the key.
1. There are several ways of expressing the future in English. They are
 - (a) The simple present
 - (b) The present continuous
 - (c) **will** + infinitive, used for intention
 - (d) The **be going to** form
 - (e) The future simple **will / shall** + infinitive.

2. We can use the Simple Present 'or the Present Continuous) with a time expression of near future; as-

1. I leave tonight.

The boys start school on Monday.

2. I'm leaving tonight.

The boys are starting school on Monday.

3. I'm taking an exam in October.

4. Bob and Bill are meeting tonight.

3. This method of expressing the future cannot be used with verbs which are not normally used in the continuous tenses. These verbs should be put into the Future Simple.

1. I am meeting him tonight.

I will / shall know about it tonight

2. They are coming tomorrow.

They will be here tomorrow.

Note, however, that **see**, when it is used for a deliberate action, can be used in the, continuous tense; as.

I'm seeing him tomorrow.

4. The Simple Future (**will + infinitive**) is used to express intention at the moment of speaking; as-

1. The phone is ringing. I'L answer it.

2. BILL(to waiter) : I'll have an omelette, please.

3. ANN : I'd better order a taxi.

TOM : Don't bother. I'll drive you.

4. MARY (looking at a pile of letters) : I'll answer them tonight.

5. ALAN (on receiving a telegram saying his fattier is ill) : I'll go home tonight'

Put the verbs in brackets into the Present Continuous Tense :-

1. My uncle (make) a speech on Friday.

2. I (take) my sister to the zoo tomorrow.

3. I (meet) her at the station at ten.

4. The sales (not start) till Monday.

5. You (give) him anything for his birthday '? — Yes, I (give) him a dictionary.

6. We (have) dinner early tonight as we (go) to the theatre.