

# TIME AND TENSE

Read the following sentences:-

- (1) Roop Singh **works** as a guard.
- (2) Roop Singh **worked** as a guard.
- (3) Roop Singh **will work** as a guard.

works → worked → will work

The different forms of the verb '**work**' indicate their tense forms. Tense denotes

- (a) time of an event, and
- (b) the stage of progress or completeness of an event.

There are three tenses according to time.

## Tense

Correspondences between the form of the verb and the concept of time.

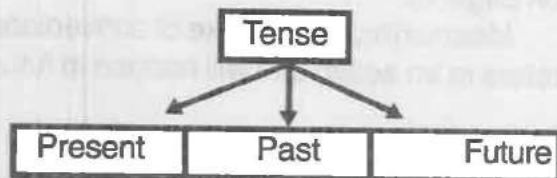
Work → Present

Worked → Past

Will work → Future

USES OF  
TENSE

- (1) Present Tense
- (2) Past Tense
- (3) Future Tense



### Present Tense

Present tense refers to an action that happens in present time.

- (1) Gavaskar **writes** about his experience.
- (2) The facts **throw** a flood of light.
- (3) I **go** to the ground.
- (4) He **is** an educated person.
- (5) There **are** four guards at his residence.
- (6) He **cuts** an apple.

### Past Tense

Past Tense refers to an action that happened in the past.

- (1) Gavaskar **wrote** about his experiences.
- (2) The facts **threw** a flood of light.
- (3) I **went** to the ground.
- (4) He **was** an educated person.
- (5) There **were** four guards at his residence.
- (6) He **cut** an apple.

### Future Tense

It is important to note that in English there is no obvious Future Tense. There are several constructions to denote Future Time. These are discussed on page 13.

Meanwhile, for the sake of convenience, you can say that Future Tense refers to an action that will happen in future time.

- (1) Gavaskar **will write** about his experiences.
- (2) The facts **will throw** a flood of light.
- (3) I **will go** to the ground.
- (4) He **will be** an educated person.
- (5) There **will be** four guards at his residence.
- (6) He **will cut** an apple.

## TIME AND TENSE

3

PRESENT	PAST	FUTURE
work	worked	will work
throw	threw	will throw
write	wrote	will write
go	went	will go
is / are	was / were	will
cut	cut	will cut

Will is a modal auxiliary verb that helps a verb to denote future time. Unlike Present and Past forms of a verb that is V and V+ed forms, Future has no grammatical form. It has to be expressed with **shall, can, could** etc.

FUTURE  
TIME

THROUGH  
DIFFERENT  
FORMS

These are the different ways to change the verb from one form to another:-

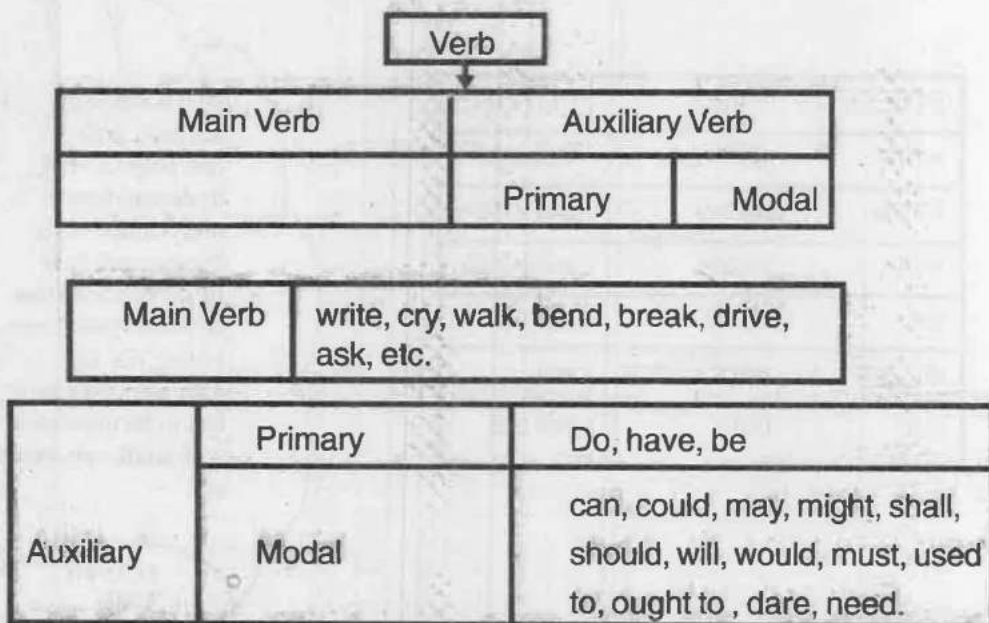
Present	Past	Future
(1) play → -ed →		will + V
(2) work → -ed →		will + V
(3) attack → -ed →		will + V
(4) write → wrote →		will + V
(5) go → went →		will + V
(6) cut → cut →		will + V

Verbs can be regular and irregular. Regular verbs take '-ed' in the past form whereas irregular verbs do not follow any definite pattern.

Want, work, act, play are some of the regular verbs.

Break, drink, cut, meet are some of the irregular verbs.

Verbs can be classified in another way :-



Auxiliary verbs are used as helping verbs:

- (1) He **is** reading a book.
- (2) He **has** been reading a book.
- (3) I **am** reading.
- (4) I **have** bought a pen.
- (5) He **has** eaten his food.

Auxiliary verbs are of two types. They are:

(1) **Primary Auxiliary Verbs:** do, be and have.

(2) **Modal Auxiliary:** can, could, will, would, may, might, etc.

List of Auxiliary Verbs:

Present	-	Past
is/are/am	-	was/were
has	-	had
have	-	had
can	-	could
will	-	would
shall	-	should
may	-	might
must	-	had to

Auxiliary Verbs are combined with the word '**not**' to form the negative,  
like, could + not → could not,  
do + not → do not.

The negative form can be used in a short form like  
could → could not → couldn't

The two words are combined and 'o' is replaced by an apostrophe (').

Auxiliary	Negative	Short Form
do	do not	don't
does	does not	doesn't
did	did not	didn't
have	have not	haven't
has	has not	hasn't
had	had not	hadn't
am	am not	aren't, ain't (colloquial)
is	is not	isn't
are	are not	aren't, ain't (colloquial)
was	was not	wasn't
were	were not	weren't
being	-	-
<b>MODAL AUXILIARY</b>		
can	cannot	can't
could	could not	couldn't
shall	shall not	shan't
should	should not	shouldn't
will	will not	won't
would	would not	wouldn't
need	need not	needn't
dare	dare not	daren't

may	may not	mayn't
must	must not	mustn't
ought	ought not	oughtn't

**Regular Lexical Verbs** form the past tense by adding **-ed** or **-t** to the base form as in the examples below-

Work- worked  
Play- played  
Bend-bent  
Walk—walked

Irregular Verbs do not have the **-ed** forms.

They change their forms differently. Let us consider the followings Verb forms:-

	V <sub>1</sub>		V <sub>2</sub>		V <sub>3</sub>
(1)	cut	-	cut	-	cut
(2)	shut	-	shut	-	shut
(3)	meet	-	met	-	met
(4)	speak	-	spoke	-	spoken
(5)	break	-	broke	-	broken

'-s' and '-ing' form of regular and irregular verbs are the same and so they are predictable. But the past '-ed' and past participle '-en' vary and so they are not predictable.

List  
below

All tense forms of the verbs in (1) and (2) are identical. The tense forms of verb in (3) has two parts identical. (4) & (5) have all the forms that are different.

### The important verb forms

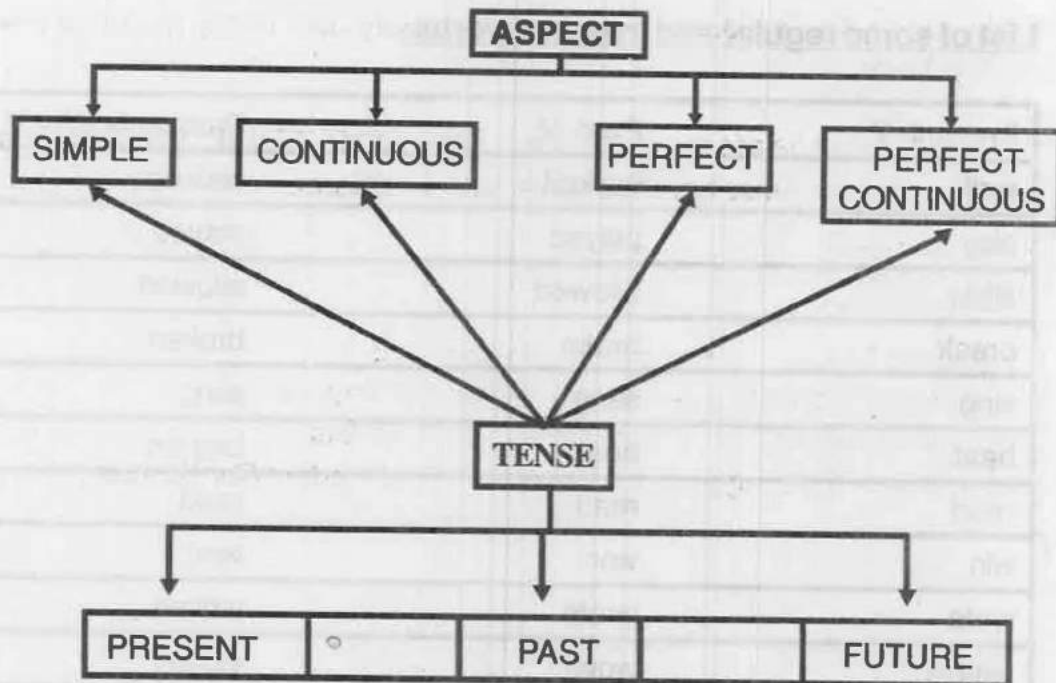
V <sub>1</sub>	-	Base	-	Present + Plural	-	go, come, write, dance,
V <sub>2</sub>	-	Past Form	-	- ed	-	went, came, wrote, danced
V <sub>3</sub>	-	Past Participle or -en Form	-	-en	-	gone, come, played
V <sub>4</sub>	-	Present Participle or -ing Form	-	-ing	-	going, coming, writing, dancing



**List of some regular and irregular verbs:**

Present- V <sub>1</sub>	Past- V <sub>2</sub>	Past participle- V <sub>3</sub>
walk	walked	walked
play	played	played
allow	allowed	allowed
break	broke	broken
sing	sang	sung
beat	beat	beaten
read	read	read
win	won	won
write	wrote	written
weave	wove	woven
hit	hit	hit
bet	bet	bet
cut	cut	cut
let	let	let
hurt	hurt	hurt
meet	met	met
fall	fell	fallen

On the basis of the stages of progress or completeness of the action represented by the verb, Tenses can further be categorised into four parts known as 'aspect' :-



1. He **acts** well.

SIMPLE

2. He **is acting** well.

CONTINUOUS

3. He **has acted** well.

PERFECT

4. He **has been acting** well.

PERFECT CONTINUOUS

**Sentence 1-** is in simple Present Tense form. Here, the action is mentioned simply. Whether the action is complete or incomplete is not indicated by this form.

**Sentence 2-** is in Present Tense Continuous form. The action mentioned is incomplete or continuous or going on.

**Sentence 3 -** The action mentioned is complete, finished or perfect with respect to a point of time.



**Sentence 4** – The action is going on continuously over a long period of time and is yet to finish.

These are the four forms of **PRESENT TENSE**. Similarly, Past Tense and Future Tense have the same number of form.

**PAST TENSE**

1. He **acted** well. \_\_\_\_\_ *Simple Past*
2. He **was acting** well. \_\_\_\_\_ *Past Continuous*
3. He **had acted** well. \_\_\_\_\_ *Past Perfect*
4. He **had been acting** well. \_\_\_\_\_ *Past Perfect Continuous*

**FUTURE TENSE**

1. He **will act** well. \_\_\_\_\_ *Simple Future*
2. He **will be acting** well. \_\_\_\_\_ *Future Continuous*
3. He **will have acted** well. \_\_\_\_\_ *Future Perfect*
4. He **will have been acting** well. \_\_\_\_\_ *Future Perfect Continuous*

	<i>Simple</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Perfect Continuous</i>
Present	I write.	I am writing.	I have written.	I have been writing.
Past	I wrote.	I was writing.	I had written.	I had been writing.
Future	I shall write.	I shall be writing.	I shall have written.	I shall have been writing.

The table for 'write' may be used for any verb as shown below.

	<i>Simple</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Perfect Continuous</i>
Present	I + V <sub>1</sub>	I + am + V <sub>4</sub>	I + have + V <sub>3</sub>	I + have been + V <sub>4</sub>
Past	I + V <sub>2</sub>	I + was + V <sub>4</sub>	I + had + V <sub>3</sub>	I + had been + V <sub>4</sub>
Future	I + shall + V <sub>1</sub>	I + shall be + V <sub>4</sub>	I + shall + have + V <sub>3</sub>	I shall have been + V <sub>4</sub>

### Uses of Tense

#### Simple Present Tense

Simple Present Tense can be used to express:

1. A **regular action**.

- (a) He **takes** a bath every day.
- (b) He **goes** to temple every morning.
- (c) She **loves** to drink hot coffee.

2. It also expresses **universal truth**.

- (a) The earth **moves** round the sun.
- (b) Two plus two **makes** four.
- (c) The boiling point of water **is** 100°C.
- (d) A cow **is** a four-footed animal.

3. Simple Present Tense is used **in quotations**.

- (a) Shelley **says**, "If winter comes can spring be far behind?"
- (b) J.B.S Haldane **says**, "Science affects the average man and woman in two ways".

4. Simple Present Tense is used **in sports commentaries**.

- (a) Gavaskar flicks the ball towards the long-on boundary.

5. To express a **future action that is scheduled**:  
 (a) She **leaves** for Delhi tomorrow.

### Present Continuous Tense

1. *Present Continuous Tense* refers to an action taking place in the present moment.

(a) She **is working** now.

2. An ongoing action which may not be taking place at the moment of speaking.

(a) I **am reading** Kiran Desai's recent novel.

(b) I **am doing** research on atomic energy.

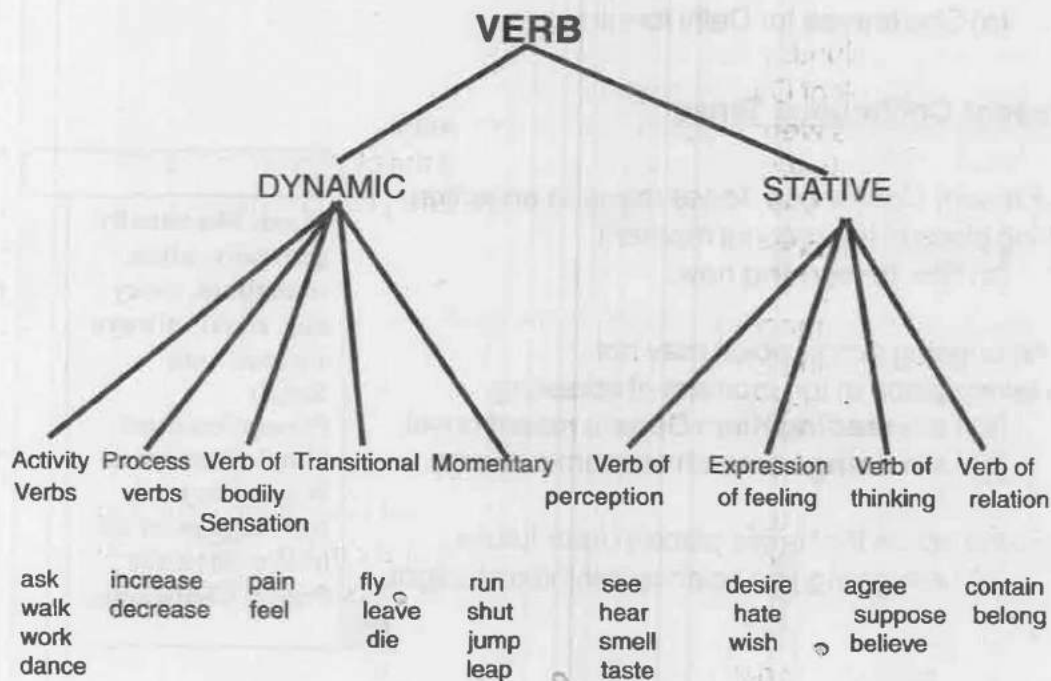
3. Some action that takes place in near future.

(a) I **am going** to a science exhibition tonight.

Words like **usually, generally, often, sometimes, every day, never, always** are used with Simple Present Tense and Simple Past Tense. Words like **now, just, at present** are used to show the Present Continuous.

Few verbs like **see, hear, abhor, think, suppose, remember** are usually not used in the continuous form. These are **stative verbs**.

Another form of verb is the **dynamic** form. This may have the progressive form.



Some of the stative verbs are used as progressive verbs with a change in meaning : I am seeing things. She is hearing strange noises.

### Present Perfect Tense

1. The Present Perfect refers to an event that has just happened.
  - (a) He **has just passed** his medical test.
  - (b) The bus **has just left** for Hajipur.
2. Referring to an event that has no definite time.
  - (a) He **has seen** the hanging bridge.
3. Referring to any such event that comes from the past and continues in the present.
  - (a) I **have worked** on the project for two years.

Like the Present Tense, the Past Tense and its forms also have some specific uses.

- (a) She **went** to Mumbai last Monday.
- (b) I **read** the book of Gandhi a week ago.
- (c) Sunita Williams **went** to space earlier this year.

Past Tense in the above sentences indicates that the events are complete. Adverbs of time such as **last, a week ago, earlier this year, yesterday**, etc. are used with such sentences.

Sentences below suggest some habit in the past.

- (a) We **loved** listening to music.
- (b) I **loved** eating ice-creams.
- (c) She **talked** a lot.

Past Continuous is used to denote an action that was going on in the past or it may refer to two action going on simultaneously in the past or also indicate that when one action was taking place another action also happened.

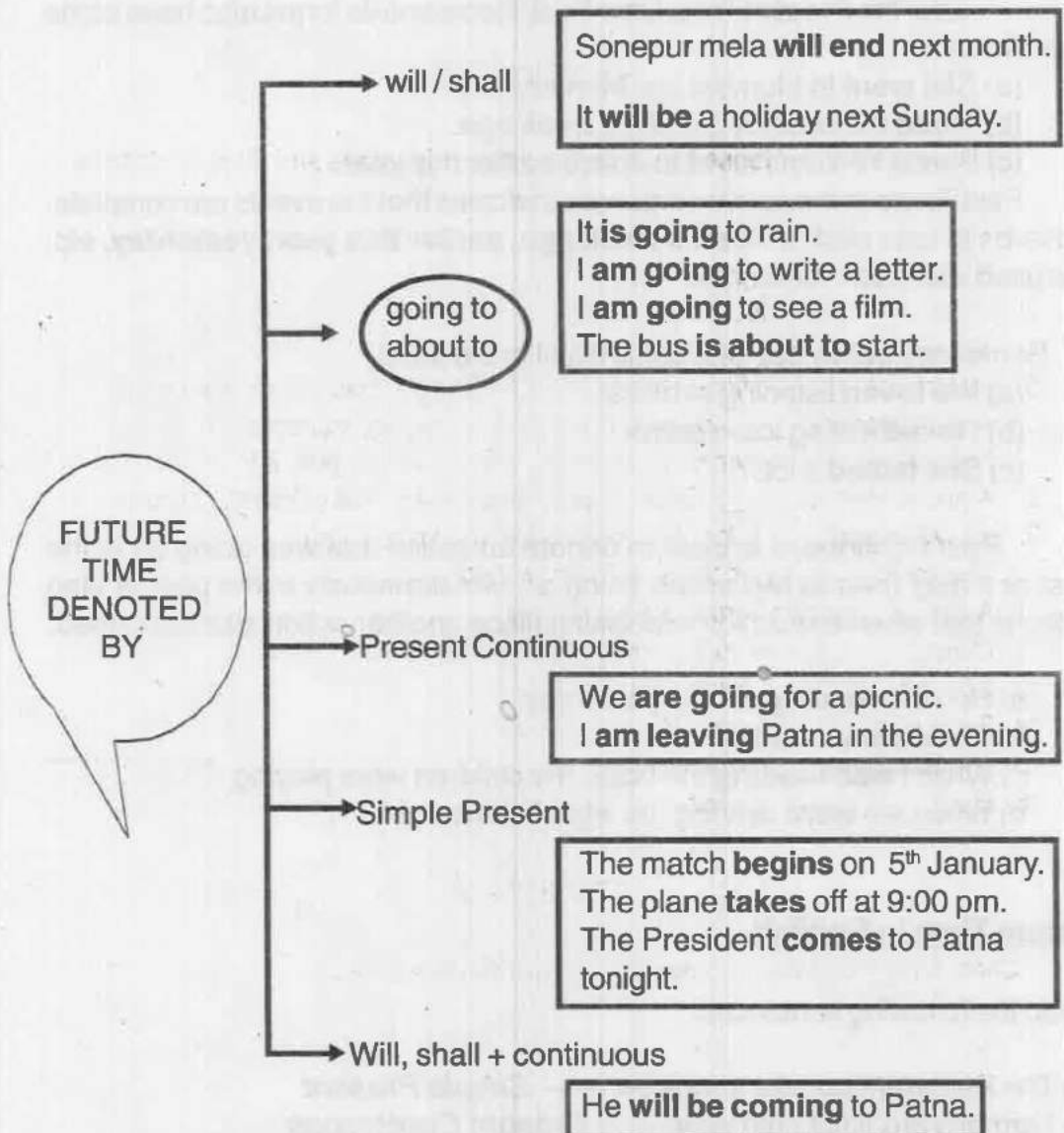
- a) He **was reading** all day yesterday.
- b) We **were working**.
- c) While I **was reading** the book, my children were playing.
- d) When we **were driving** the wheel came out.

### Future Time In English

Read the following sentences:

- (1) The President **comes** tomorrow. — **Simple Present**
- (2) I **am buying** a flat next year. — **Present Continuous**
- (3) She **is going** to London. — **Present Continuous**
- (4) It **is going** to be six o'clock. — **going to + V<sub>1</sub>**
- (5) The match **is about** to begin. — **about to + V<sub>1</sub>**

The verbs in sentences above are in the present form but they denote future time.





**Exercise – 1**

**Choose the correct tense forms of the verbs in brackets and fill in the blanks :**

1. He \_\_\_\_\_ reading. (loves, is loving)
2. I \_\_\_\_\_ some runs. (get, am get)
3. Dhoni \_\_\_\_\_ for India. (playing, plays)
4. Stars \_\_\_\_\_ at night. (shining, shine)
5. Nationalism \_\_\_\_\_ different things at different times. (has meaning, means)
6. A baby monkey \_\_\_\_\_ to come down. (will managing, manages)
7. Nalanda \_\_\_\_\_ the symbol of the most glorious period. (will, is)
8. A snake charmer \_\_\_\_\_ Cobra, a poisonous snake. (will catching, catches)
9. An old beggar \_\_\_\_\_ for alms at the gate. (begging, begs)
10. The earth \_\_\_\_\_ round the sun. (goes, will go)
11. A lion \_\_\_\_\_ a carnivorous animal. (is, will)
12. Often I \_\_\_\_\_ a letter to the news editor. (written, write)
13. Science \_\_\_\_\_ our opinion. (is affect, affects)
14. Sania Mirza \_\_\_\_\_ tennis. (playing, plays)
15. The Ganga \_\_\_\_\_ a holy river. (are, is)
16. Man \_\_\_\_\_ mortal. (is, was)

**Exercise – 2**

**Change the following sentences into past and future tenses :**

1. He is an educated person.
2. She drinks tea every morning.
3. My father teaches me English.
4. She rings the bell.
5. The stars shine brightly.
6. He reads science magazines.
7. The train reaches at time.
8. Girls drive efficiently.
9. Children are an asset to the country.
10. The cat climbs the tree.

11. The dog chases the thief.
12. Trees are important for life.
13. Oxygen is essential for life.
14. We learn to appreciate nature in Wordsworth's poetry.
15. A mother loves her children.

### **Exercise – 3**

**Identify the tense in the following sentences (i.e. simple present, simple past etc.) :**

1. She gets up early in the morning.
2. We will win the cricket series.
3. The sun rises in the east.
4. The Children are playing in the park.
5. The train arrived late.
6. The boys had been playing all day.
7. She has thrown the ball.
8. Jawaharlal Nehru spent some years at Dehra Dun.
9. The winter had denuded almost all the trees of their leaves.
10. Spring is very pleasant.
11. Snow falls in winter.
12. Someone broke the glass.
13. It will be a warm summer next year.
14. She takes a heavy lunch.
15. Overeating is harmful.
16. She has learnt English properly.
17. The Indians have been playing good cricket.
18. We shall work hard.
19. He jumped over the fence.
20. I was reading a newspaper.

### **Exercise – 4**

**Change the sentences into past tense :-**

1. Children like chocolates.
2. The teacher teaches English regularly.

3. The thief steals the precious diamond necklace.
4. The dog tears the mat.
5. The driver drives the car.
6. She celebrates her birthday every year.
7. She loves playing guitar.
8. We go to see the exhibition on Madhubani painting.
9. My friends will visit Nalanda.
10. A mad man jumps in the tiger's cage.
11. We will enjoy a trip to Vaishali.
12. Everyone loves to read the detective novels of Sherlock Holmes.
13. I love to read religious books.
14. The girl plucks a flower.
15. Uncle Podger hangs a picture on the wall.
16. She swims for fitness.
17. We make plans to visit Sanjay Gandhi Zoological Park.
18. The birds fly high in the sky.
19. The Ganga river flows calmly.
20. The player hurts his leg due to carelessness.

### Exercise – 5

**Fill up the blanks with correct tense forms of the verbs given in brackets :-**

1. Children \_\_\_\_\_ to school everyday. (go, goes)
2. The angry tiger \_\_\_\_\_ on the youth. (pounce, pounced)
3. The President \_\_\_\_\_ tomorrow. (arrives, arriving)
4. He always \_\_\_\_\_ in the class (sleeps, sleeping)
5. It is \_\_\_\_\_ now. (rain, raining)
6. The doctor \_\_\_\_\_ you if you go to him. (treat, will treat)
7. She \_\_\_\_\_ a sweet song yesterday. (sang, singing)
8. He is \_\_\_\_\_ today. (comes, coming)
9. She \_\_\_\_\_ the station after the train had left. (reached, reach).
10. He was \_\_\_\_\_ to jail for stealing. (send, sent)
11. The patient \_\_\_\_\_ before the doctor came. (dies, died)
12. Yesterday I \_\_\_\_\_ a good family movie on television. (watching, watched)
13. When she \_\_\_\_\_ her speech we left the hall. (finishes, finished)

**Exercise – 6**

**Change the following sentences into past continuous.**

1. I (knit) a sweater when he came in.
2. He (paint) the wall when it began to rain.
3. The old man (sit) on the bench for the whole day.
4. Everyone (sleep) when there was an earthquake.
5. My mother (prepare) pizza last evening.
6. I (read) when he came in.
7. The old hermit (dig) when the king came there.
8. He (sleep) when the thief entered the house.
9. She (cook) meal when we were playing in the garden.
10. The girl (dance) when her friends studied.