**SIMPLE PRESENT AND PRESENT PROGRESSIVE (OR CONTINUOUS**)

**FORM**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Simple Present** | **Present Progressive** |
| **base form** (infinitive without to)  (3rd person singular: infinitive + 's')  I speak you speak he / she / it speaks we speak they speak | **form of 'be' (am, is, are) and verb + ing**  I am speaking you are speaking he / she / it is speaking we are speaking they are speaking |
| **Exceptions** | |
| **:**   * **After *o****,* ***ch, sh* or *s*,** add ***es*.**   Example: do - he does, wash - she washes   * **After a consonant, the final consonant *y* becomes *ie*.** (but: not after a vowel)   Example: worry - he worries but: play - he plays | **Exceptions when adding 'ing' :**   * **Silent *e* is dropped**. (but: does not apply for *-ee*)   Example: come - coming but: agree - agreeing   * **After a short, stressed vowel, the final consonant is doubled**.   Example: sit – sitting (cvc)   * **After a vowel, the final consonant *l* is doubled in British English (but not in American English).**   Example: travel - travelling (British English) but: traveling (American English)   * **Final *ie* becomes *y*.**   Example: lie - lying |

**USE**

### In general or right now?

Do you want to express that something happens in general or that something is happening right now?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Simple Present** | **Present Progressive** |
| **in general (regularly, often, never)**  Colin plays football every Tuesday.  **present actions happening one after another**  First Colin plays football, then he watches TV. | **right now**  Look! Colin is playing football now.  **also for several actions happening at the same time**  Colin is playing football and Anne is watching. |
| **Signal words** | |
| * **frequency adverbs** * **every (day, week, month, etc),** * **On Mondays, Tuesdays, etc** * **sometimes, usually, often**   (These time words appear at the **beginning** or at the **end** of a sentence)   * *On Tuesdays, I go to the gym.* * *Every week, I get a massage.* * **Always, often, normally, usually** * **Sometimes, seldom, never, hardly, etc** * (Most time words can be placed **before the main verb** of **after the verb be**) * *He always arrives on time.* * *He is always on time.* | * at the moment * at this moment * today * now * right now * Listen! * Look! |
| **Note:** The following verbs are usually only used in Simple Present: **be, have, hear, know, like, love, see, smell, think, want** | |

### Timetable / Schedule or arrangement? (plan)

Do you want to express that something is arranged for the near future? Or do you refer to a time set by a timetable or schedule?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Simple Present** | **Present Progressive** |
| **action set by a timetable or schedule**  The film starts at 8 pm. | **arrangement for the near future**  I am going to the cinema tonight. |

### Daily routine or just for a limited period of time?

Do you want to talk about a daily routine? Or do you want to emphasis that something is only going on for a limited (rather short) period of time?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Simple Present** | **Present Progressive** |
| **daily routine**  Bob works in a restaurant. | **only for a limited period of time (does not have to happen directly at the moment of speaking)**  Jenny is working in a restaurant this week. |

### Certain Verbs

The following verbs are usually only used in Simple Present (not in the progressive form).

* **state:** be, cost, fit, mean, suit Example: We are on holiday.
* **possession:** belong, have Example: Sam has a cat.
* **senses:** feel, hear, see, smell, taste, touch Example: He feels the cold.
* **feelings:** hate, hope, like, love, prefer, regret, want, wish

Example: Jane loves pizza.

* **brain work:** believe, know, think, understand Example: I believe you.
* **introductory clauses for direct speech:** answer, ask, reply, say

Example: “I am watching TV,“ he says.

**USES SUMMARY**

**SIMPLE PRESENT PRESENT CONTINUOUS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * **To express habitual actions** * **To state permanent truths and facts** * **To express opinions, preferences** | * **To refer to activities that are in progress at the moment of speaking.** * **For activities that are in progress but not at the moment of speaking.** * **For planned activities in the near**   **future** |

**QUESTIONS AND NEGATIVE STATEMENTS**

**Simple Present**

Use **DO** or **DOES** in front of the subject. **Do** you like chocolate? **Does** Mary like chocolate?

Where **DO** you live? What **DOES** John do?

Use **DOES** with he, she , it. Drop the S of the verb.

He **DOES NOT (doesn’t)** like chocolate.

We **DO NOT (don’t)** live near the sea.

**Present Continuous**

Use the verb be (is, are, am) in front of the subject.

**Are** you working this weekend? No, I **am not**

What **is** she talking about?

She **is not (isn’t**) going out tonight

**Exercise 1**

One of the following 10 items is correct. The rest each have one error. Correct each error**.**

1. Right now Paul is talking on the telephone and Betsy working in the garden.
2. It’s a beautiful day outside. Many people is sitting in the park.
3. Where is studying your son?...........................................................................
4. A: What classes are you taking this semester?

B: I’m take biology, English, and calculus.

1. At this moment Jenny is playing with the cat.
2. It’s raining right now, so the boys don’t playing baseball.
3. A: Is your band playing at a lot of weddings these days?

B: Yes, It does.

1. A: Who is making that loud noise?

B: Tommy. He plays with pots and pans in the kitchen.

1. A: Is Joselin singing in the chorus today?

B: No. Most Sundays she is singing in the chorus, but today she’s studying for an important exam.

1. Everyone’s staring at Suzie. She is wearing a silk dress and white gloves.

Normally she’s wearing dirty jeans.

**Exercise 2**

Four of the following items are correct. The rest have one error each. Correct the errors.

1. My family live in Boston.
2. Paul don’t like football.
3. What means the title of this book? I don’t understand it.

………………………………………………………………………………

1. Kate doesn’t smoke. Her brother does.
2. Everyone helps with the house work. Pam cooks, George does the laundry and Van washs the dishes.
3. What happen at a typical American wedding?
4. A: What do birds eat?

B: They are eating worms and insects.

1. Most elderly people don’t listen to hip-hop.
2. A: What does your sister do?

B: She’s an engineer. She works downtown.

1. A:Does this map show the three schools in the neighborhood?

B: Yes. The elementary school is on Main Street, the junior high school was on Riverside Avenue, and the high school is on Broadway.

1. Classes at the elementary school begin at 9:00 A.M. At the junior high and high schools, classes start at 8:15 A.M.
2. These are the results of our survey. In general, adults want to be younger and children wanted to be older.

**Exercise 3**

Three of the following 10 items are correct. The rest have one error. Correct the errors.

1. A: Which are you liking better, oranges or lemons?

B: Oranges. Lemons taste too sour.

1. Lucille is having green eyes and blonde hair.
2. Now I understand the first and second math problems. But I am not knowing the answer to the third one.
3. Mother: Your sister is wearing your new sweater.

Daughter: I know. I’m not minding .

1. Polly is being very funny today. It’s strange. Most of the time she is being very serious.
2. June has three sons. She is having trouble with the oldest one.
3. A: Do you see anyone outside right now.

B: I see a tall man with a dog.

1. Brenda weighs 190 pounds now. She’s appearing upset about it.
2. At this moment I feel terrible. My shoulder aches and my knees hurt too.
3. This is my favorite cook book. It’s containing many recipes for chocolate desserts.

**Exercise 4**

Two of the following items are correct. The rest have one error each. Find the errors.

1. Always Tom eats eggs for breakfast.
2. Rob often stays at work until 5:00 P.M.
3. Ever are you late?
4. Stephanie takes never public transportation.
5. Sometimes I eat eggs for breakfast. Never I eat cold cereal.
6. Paul doesn’t never go to the opera.
7. Kathleen and Craig don’t rarely eat in restaurants.
8. I don’t often tell Harry my opinions. He seldom agrees with me, and I don’t like arguments.
9. George constantly is borrowing money from me. It is very annoying.
10. A: Do you go to church on Sundays?

B: Yes, I never do

**Exercise 5**

**Simple Present / Present Continuous**

Using the words in parentheses, complete the text below with the appropriate tenses.

Top of Form

1. Every Monday, Sally (drive) ****  her kids to football practice.

2. Usually, I (work) **** as a secretary at ABT, but this summer I (study) **** French at a language school in Paris. That is why I am in Paris.   
3. Shhhhh! Be quiet! John (sleep) ****.   
4. Don’t forget to take your umbrella. It (rain) ****.   
5. I hate living in Seattle because it (rain, always) ****.   
6. I’m sorry I can’t hear what you (say) **** because everybody (talk) **** so loudly.   
7. Justin (write, currently) **** a book about his adventures in Tibet. I hope he can find a good publisher when he is finished.   
8. Jim: Do you want to come over for dinner tonight?  
Denise: Oh, I’m sorry, I can’t. I (go) **** to a movie tonight with some friends.   
9. The business cards (be, normally ) **** printed by a company in New York. Their prices (be) **** inexpensive, yet the quality of their work is quite good.   
10. This delicious chocolate (be) **** made by a small chocolatier in Zurich, Switzerland.

**Exercise 6**

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Top of Form

A Trekking Journal  
November 12, 1997  
  
Today (be) **** the second day of my trek around Mount Annapurna. I am exhausted and my legs (shake) **** ; I just hope I am able to complete the trek. My feet (kill, really) **** me and my toes (bleed) ****, but I (want, still) **** to continue.  
Nepal is a fascinating country, but I have a great deal to learn. Everything (be) **** so different, and I (try) **** to adapt to the new way of life here. I (learn) **** a little bit of the language to make communication easier; unfortunately, I (learn, not) **** foreign languages quickly. Although I (understand, not) **** much yet, I believe that I (improve, gradually) ****.  
I (travel, currently) **** with Liam, a student from Leeds University in England. He (be) **** a nice guy, but impatient. He (walk, always) **** ahead of me and (complain) **** that I am too slow. I (do) **** my best to keep up with him, but he is younger and stronger than I am. Maybe, I am just feeling sorry for myself because I am getting old.  
Right now, Liam (sit) **** with the owner of the inn. They (discuss) **** the differences between life in England and life in Nepal. I (know, not) **** the real name of the owner, but everybody (call, just) **** him Tam. Tam (speak) **** English very well and he (try) **** to teach Liam some words in Nepali. Every time Tam (say) **** a new word, Liam (try) **** to repeat it. Unfortunately, Liam (seem, also) **** to have difficulty learning foreign languages. I just hope we don't get lost and have to ask for directions.

**Exercise 7**

1. Mary and Joe (be)  in a clothes shop at the moment.
2. They (look)  at some jeans.
3. Joe only (have)  one very old pair of jeans.
4. So he (want)  to buy a new pair of jeans now.
5. Right now, he (try on)  a pair of blue jeans.
6. “These jeans (fit)  very well,” he (say) .
7. “But they (not suit)  you,” Mary (reply) . “Try on another pair.”
8. “What (think / you) ?” he (ask)  Mary, when has tried on another pair.
9. “Great! How much (cost / they) ?”

**SIMPLE PAST TENSE**

**USES**

* ***Actions that started and finished in the past***

I lost my purse yesterday.

She didn’t sleep well last night

* ***Actions that happened one after the other in the past***

He woke up, got out of bed and had a shower.

I put on my coat, picked up my bag and left the house.

* ***Actions that were repeated or were habits in the past***

Her grandfather made wooden toys.

Did they have DC’s in the year 1960?

Question: (We use **DID** in front of the subject, and the verb changes to the base form)

**Did** you **do** your homework? Yes, I **did**/No, I **didn’t**

What **did** she **buy?**

Negative: I **did not (didn’t**) do my homework

She **did not (didn’t**) know the answer

**TIME EXPRESSIONS WITH THE PAST SIMPLE**

They can be used at the beginning or at the end of a sentence.

a week, a month, a year **ago last** summer

**in** January (months) **on** Monday (days of the week)

i**n** 1990 (years) **on** August 1st (date)

**in** my childhood the day before yesterday

**last** night, year, week, month the other day

yesterday **when** I was five years old

**VERB “TO BE” IN THE PAST SIMPLE**

I **was** on vacation last week I **was not (wasn’t)** on vacation last week

She/He **was** in London last month He/ She **was not (wasn’t**) in London last month

It **was** cold yesterday It **was not (wasn’t**) cold yesterday

We/They/You **were** sick last week We **were not (weren’t**) sick last week

Questions (use **was/were** in front of the person)

**Were** you at home yesterday? Yes, I **was** Where **was** the party last weekend?

**Was** Peter in Europe last year? No, he **wasn’t**. How old **were** you when you came to the USA

**Note: You do not use is/are/was/were in front of the base form of a verb in the simple present or the simple past**

**Incorrect:** I **was lived** in Brooklyn in 1990/ He **is studies** French in school.

**Correct:** I lived in Brooklyn in 1990 / He **studies** French in school.

**Exercise 1**

**IRREGULAR VERBS**

**Fill in the blanks with a verb in the simple past tense. Choose a verb from each list given. Use each verb only once.**

1. Last year this class……………………….…..at 8:30 PM. BUILD

WEAR

1. Mary…………………..……on the slippery steps today. PUT
2. The Browns……….………………a new house last year. FALL
3. The thief………………………..jewelry from that store. FEEL
4. Miss Davis……………………. To Cuba with her sister. FLY
5. Frank……………………..……… along letter last week. BITE
6. He…………………………. his hand with a sharp knife. STEAL
7. Mary……………….………her new dress to the party. TEAR
8. Bill……………………..…….. fifteen dollars yesterday. CUT
9. The man ………………..…..…. the door very quietly. BEGIN
10. Mr. Wilson …..………………….….…. the car carefully. WRITE
11. She…………. the dictionary beside the typewriter. DRIVE
12. We………….…………….. happy because of the news. LEND
13. The dog…………….. me and…………………my clothes. SHUT

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16. Our team……………..the baseball game yesterday. BRING LEND

1. Mr. Smith……………….………..his job last Thursday. CUT
2. The other suit…………….…….………….me very well. BREAK
3. The man…………………..…….the rope with a knife. CATCH
4. The boy ……………. ………the butter on his bread. THROW
5. My brother………………….me twenty-five dollars. DRIVE
6. The boys…………….……….the window with a ball. FIT
7. He………………..the ball to me, and I …..…….…….it. WIN
8. The teacher…………….in front of the blackboard. BUY
9. Fred’s new camera………………..….eighty dollars. QUIT
10. The Browns………………..…a new car last month. SPREAD
11. We…………………..…... to Cincinnati in five hours. COST
12. The students……..…… their dictionaries to class. STAND

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1. John……………….… the answers to the question. SLEEP
2. I…………………. the back door a few minutes ago. FIND
3. He……………………………..for ten hours last night. SPEAK
4. Bill…….…………….…… to the teacher about that. DRIVE
5. I…………………………to work by bus this morning. KNOW
6. Fred…………………………..….. quite sick last night. BRING
7. Betty……………..………. the dishes on the shelf. TELL
8. Mr. Harris ……………………..that class last year. SHUT
9. We……………… ten dollars over the weekend. RIDE
10. Charles……………………… a friend to the party. SPEND
11. The teacher……….. the students the answer. FEEL
12. Frank…………….…..……. the car very carefully. PUT
13. I………………….... the answer in the appendix. TEACH

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1. The men….………...for Chicago last Tuesday. TEACH
2. Frank…………..……..to school with his friend. WIN
3. Moore……………..American history last year. RIDE
4. They ………….…..the news from their friend. TEAR
5. The students……………….the story carefully. BEGIN
6. Our car …………….…the other car very hard. LEAVE
7. Fred ……………….……...his car to Mr. Brown. HEAR
8. She…………….…..her bracelet under a chair. PAY
9. Fred………………….……..the camera from Bill. FIND
10. Fred………….…………..for the camera in cash. SPEAK
11. He …………..…to his boss about that matter. BUY
12. The meeting…………….………..at eight-thirty. HIT
13. She …………….……the paper into two pieces. SELL
14. Miss Davis………….… a prize in that contest. READ

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1. He………………………….the name of the book. STAND
2. She………….the paper into the wastebasket. THROW
3. The ceremony…….…...at eight o’clock sharp. SIT
4. He…………….……the money under the books. MAKE
5. I……………...… in the seat right behind Frank. CUT
6. You ……..……..…. some mistakes on the test. COST
7. They …………….us fifteen dollars yesterday. FIT
8. We…………… on the corner for half an hour. BEGIN
9. The boys………….. the big box very carefully. FORGET
10. His new suit………………… eighty five dollars. KEEP
11. Tom and Ed…………… dinner with Mr. Harris. LEND
12. Fred………………. his hand with a sharp knife. HAVE
13. We…………..…our car in a garage last winter. HIDE
14. Edward’s new suit……….….…him very well. HOLD

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1. The boys…………………..….home an hour ago. CHOOSE HEAR
2. That tree…………………….three feet last year. FEEL
3. Bill…………………….a pretty tie from the rack. TAKE
4. I…………………. a course in American history. SEND
5. The little boy………………… the glass window. GO
6. Alice……………… her pen at school yesterday. MEET
7. Mother…………………….very sick this morning. LOSE
8. They ……………..a letter to Walter yesterday. STAND
9. We …………………..…. his speech on the radio. FALL
10. The wind…………………….very hard last night. BLOW
11. I……………….. on the corner for half an hour. GROW
12. We …..………..our friends there at 5:00 p.m. BREAK
13. He……………. on the ice and …………..his arm. HURT

**Exercise 2**

One of the following 16 items is correct. The rest each have one error. Find and correct each error. Put a check next to the correct sentence.

1. Did you made that chocolate cake?

2. Why Mike and Joe got home late last night?

3. Andrea and Carla was at the party, but I didn’t see them.

4. I buyed a new stereo in November. It broke immediately. What a waste of money!

5 . Did Andy be sick yesterday? I didn’t see him in my chemistry class.

6. Did Veronica went to the dance with Pete?

7. Tony hurted his foot two weeks ago.

8. Was you in the library earlier today?

9. Horace participated in the bowling tournament last month, but he didn’t won”. His best

friend, Tyrone, did.

10. A: What did Rose and Frank buy their niece for her birthday?

B: They didn’t buy anything. They builded her a tree house.

11. Several years ago, Helen fall off her bicycle and broke her leg.

12 . A: Did Rachel catch the ball?

B: Yes, she does. But then she dropped it.

13. A: Please help me. Did I forget anything?

B: Do you bring your passport?

14. A: Were you a high school student in 1970?

B: No. I was only two years old then.

15. Two months ago I took a trip to Barbados. I had a great time. I go to the beach every day

and I ate a lot of seafood.

16. A: Why are you late?

B: I miss the bus, so I walked to work

# Exercise 3

Fill in the following paragraphs with ***the missing verbs in the simple past*** *.*Onlyone is correct.

(First choose the correct verb below and then fill in the paragraphs)

**A.** The day ……………….. terribly. My alarm …….…… and I ………………the house with only 1 hour to spare before the plane………….due to take off. Luckily, there………….. very little traffic and I …………….. at the airport with 30 minutes to spare. I …………….in at the gate and ………… for a coffee. Just as I…………….. down, the announcer ……………. my flight. I …………… my coffee quickly, too quickly in fact as I …………….. some on my shirt. I………………. the sign to the departure gate and ………………….. through passport control. I ……………….. down in the departure lounge. It …………… full of teenagers, obviously a school trip. They…………………………….. a terrible noise. And then I………..…. that terrible announcement, the one you don’t want to hear. There …………… a problem with the engine. I ………………………. around for a place to get another coffee. I ……………..a drinks machine so I ………………….. over to get some. I ………………… in my money and …….. ……..the button for black coffee. When I ……………………. up the cup, it …………………………. only water. At that moment, the hostess………………… that the plane was delayed because of bad weather.

1. The day……………..…….. terribly.

a) take care of b) finish c)announce d) begin

2.. My alarm……………….

a) not- get up b) not- wake up c)not- begin d) not- go off

3.. and I …………..………. the house with only one hour to spare

1. leave b) quit c)enter d) goodbye

4. before the plane………………………due to take off

a) not-go b)become c)wish d)be

5. Luckily, there…………………. very little traffic

a) be b)have c)exist d) turn over

6. and I …………………….at the airport with 30 minutes to spare.

1. go b) reach c)terminate d)arrive

7. I…………………… in at the gate

a) check b) stand c) wait d) stamp

8. and…………………….. for a coffee

a) start b) shout c)go d) whistle

9. Just as I ……………………. down,

a) go b) sit c) jump d) drink

10. the announcer………………….. my flight

a) sing b) whistle c) shout d) call

11. I………………….. my coffee quickly

a) spit b) drink c)sing d) look for

12. too quickly in fact as I ……………………. some on my shirt.

a) spill b)drop c)spread d) smile

13. I………………………. the sign to the departure gate

a) look after b)follow c) discuss d) run after

14. and…………………... through passport control

a) go b) discuss c)smile d) go under

15. I…………………………. down in the departure lounge.

a) hurry b)come c) go d) sit

16. It………………………. full of teenagers, obviously a school trip.

a) be b)happen c) suggest d)disappear

17. They………………….. a terrible noise. (*Use the past continuous*)

a)happen b) smoke c)do d) make

18. And then I ………….that terrible announcement, the one you don’t want to hear.

a) hear b)listen c)feel d) speak

19. There ………………… a problem with the engine.

a) arrive b)happen c) exist d) be

20. I………………………. around for a place to get another coffee.

a) see b) look c) have d) be

21. I………………………….. a drinks machine, so I ………… over to get some.

a) look over/ go b) see/ fall c) see/ go d) look over/ fall

22. I…………………in my money and………………. the button for black coffee.

a) put/ press b) put/ pull c) throw/ press d) throw/pull

23. when I …………. ……… up the cup,

a) take b) push c) pull d) pick

24. it………………. only water.

a) go in b) get up c) fill d) contain

25. At that moment, the hostess………………. that the plane was delayed because of bad

weather.

a) announce b) call c) speak d) mime

***B.*** *In the early 1980’s, Ellis…………… the potential for home computers. Using standard components, he …………………… together his first computer, the YX30, and …………… to market it in 1983. At first, he ……………………… it through specialist electronic magazines. Then he ……………………… advertisements in the “quality” Sunday newspapers. It…………………. an immediate success.*

*Later that year he ………………………. the more powerful YX40. This………………… color graphics and……………………. $15 less than the YX30. However, there………………….. production problems. Many people………………………… their YX40 and …………………….. for their money back. In 1985, Ellis ……………………… bankrupt and Hamster ………………….. the rights to the YX30.*

1. In the early 1980”s, Ellis …… the potential for home computers

a) meet b) return c) see d) include

2. Using standard components, he …………. together his first computer.

a) sell b)make c)have d)put

3. and …………. to market it in 1983.

a) start b) finish c) wait d) understand

4. At first, he ………………. It through specialist electronic magazines.

a) reject b) sell c) photocopy d) take over

5. Then he ………………….. advertisements in the “quality” Sunday newspapers.

a) suggest b) be c) go d) place

6. It……….. an immediate success.

a) be b) go c) start d)finish

7. Later that year he …………… the more powerful YX40.

a)stand in front of b) go c)cost d) bring out

8. This …………… color graphics

a)show b)have c)want d) speak

9. and ……………….. $15 less than the YX30.

a) price b)cost c) lift d) ask

10. However, there ………………. production problems.

a)have b) want c) need d)be

11. Many people………….. their YX40

a)return b)stand on c) sleep with d) want

12. and ………………… for their money back.

a)say b)demand c)want d)ask

13. In 1985, Ellis …………….. bankrupt.

a)ask b) stand c)come d)go

14. and Hamster………….. the rights to the YX30.

a)buy b)bring c) sell d) go

**=========================================**

**PAST CONTINUOUS**

**Examples**

* The cat **was sleeping** on the sofa.
* I **was eating** the dinner when someone knocked at the door.
* While he **was watching** TV, I was working hard.
* I **was** **wondering** if you could help me.

We usually use the **Past Continuous** to talk about activities that lasted for some time in the past. The actions can be interrupted by something or can be happening at the same time.

**Use:**

1. **Duration in the past**
2. **Interrupted actions in progress**
3. **Actions in progress at the same time** in the past
4. **Timid / polite question**
5. **Irritation**

**USE 1: Duration in the past**

We use the Past Continuous to talk about actions or situations that lasted for some time in the past, and whose duration time is unknown or unimportant.

**Examples**:

* I**was watching** TV yesterday in the evening.
* She **was sleeping** on the couch.
* The dog **was barking**.

**USE 2: Interrupted actions in progress**

The Past Continuous is often used when one action in progress is interruped by another action in the past. We usually use when or while to link these two sentences.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sentence in Past Continuous** | **+** | **WHEN** | **+** | **Sentence in**[**Past Simple**](http://www.englishtenseswithcartoons.com/tenses/past_simple) |
| e.g. *I was singing* |  | e.g. *my wife came home* |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WHEN/WHILE** | **+** | **Sentence in Past Continuous** | **+** | **Sentence in**[**Past Simple**](http://www.englishtenseswithcartoons.com/tenses/past_simple) |
|  | e.g. *I was singing* | e.g. *my wife came home* |

**Examples**:

* I **was talking**with James when the telephone rang.
* While Angelica **was playing** tennis, the plane crashed .
* When Bob **was painting** windows, it started raining.

**USE 3: Actions in progress at the same time**

We also use this tense to talk about two or more activities happening at the same. We usually use **when** or**while** to link the two sentences.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sentence in Past Continuous** | **+** | **WHEN/WHILE** | **+** | **Sentence in Past Continuous** |
| e.g. *I was singing* |  | e.g. *She was cooking* |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WHEN/WHILE** | **+** | **Sentence in Past Continuous** | **+** | **Sentence in Past Continuous** |
|  | e.g. *I was singing* | e.g. *She was cooking* |

**Examples**:

* I**was watching** TV and Barbara **was reading** a book.
* The family **was eating** the dinner and **talking**.
* When Bob **was painting** windows, Mary **was working** in the kitchen.

**USE 4: Timid / polite questions**

If we want to ask a polite question, we can use the Past Continuous.

**Examples**:

* I**was wondering** if you could open the window.
* I **was thinking** you might help me with this problem.

Even though the sentences have a Past Continuous form, they refer to the present moment. Their meaning is similar to the "could you" sentences, but they are more polite.

**USE 5: Irritation**

Remember that you can also express irritation over somebody or something in the past.

**Examples**:

* She **was** always **coming** late for dinner!

**FORM**

To form a sentence in the Past Continuous, you need:

**WAS/ WERE** followed by the Present Participle of your verb (verb + **ing**)

**The Present Participle**

The present participle is of a verb is a verb form that appears with the [present tenses](http://www.englishtenseswithcartoons.com/page/present_tenses.html). The present participle is formed by adding **-ing** to the verb.

* talk + ing = talking be + ing = being

**Examples**

At 3 p.m., I **was having** lunch (use 1)

They **were talking** about her when she walked into the room. (use 2)

While Kenneth **was cleaning** the living room, Sam **was**wash**ing** the dishes. (use 3)

We **were** all **thinking** about our holidays (use 2)

**Questions**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Auxiliary verb** | **+** | **Subject** | **+** | **Verb + ing** |
| *was* / *were* | e.g. *I*/*a dog,*etc. | e.g. *swimming*/*talking,* etc. |

**Examples**

**Was** she **going** to the theater when it started raining (use 2)

What **were** the defenders **doing** when Ken struck the ball? (use 2)

**Were** you **paintin**g the house yesterday at 5 PM? (use 2)

**Negative Sentences**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **+** | **Auxiliary verb** | **+** | **Verb + ing** |
| e.g. *I*/*a dog*etc. | *was not*/*were not* | e.g. *swimming*/*talking*etc. |

**Examples**

He asked me why I **wasn’t having** dinner at the hotel (use 1)

We **weren’t playing** football when the earthquake began (use 2)

**Simple Past and Past Continuous**

**Exercise 1**

**Using the words in parentheses, complete the text below with the appropriate tenses.**

Top of Form

1. A: What (you, do) **** when the accident occurred?   
 B: I (try) **** to change a light bulb that had burnt out. 

2. After I (find) **** the wallet full of money, I (go, immediately) **** to the police and (turn) **** it in. 

3. The doctor (say) **** that Tom (be) **** too sick to go to work and that he (need) **** to stay at home for a couple of days.   
4. Sebastian (arrive) **** at Susan's house a little before 9:00 PM, but she (be, not) **** there. She (study, at the library) **** for her final examination in French. 

5. Sandy is in the living room watching television. At this time yesterday, she (watch, also) **** television. That's all she ever does! 

6. A: I (call) **** you last night after dinner, but you (be, not)**** there. Where were you?   
 B: I (work) **** out at the fitness center. 

7. When I (walk) **** into the busy office, the secretary (talk) **** on the phone with a customer, several clerks (work, busily) **** at their desks, and two managers (discuss, quietly) **** methods to improve customer service. 

8. I (watch) **** a mystery movie on TV when the electricity went out. Now I am never going to find out how the movie ends. 

9. Sharon (be) **** in the room when John told me what happened, but she didn't hear anything because she (listen, not) ****. 

10. It's strange that you (call) **** because I (think, just) **** about you. 

11. The Titanic (cross) **** the Atlantic when it (strike) **** an iceberg. 

12. When I entered the bazaar, a couple of merchants (bargain, busily) **** and (try) **** to sell their goods to naive tourists who (hunt) **** for souvenirs. Some young boys (lead) **** their donkeys through the narrow streets on their way home. A couple of men (argue) **** over the price of a leather belt. I (walk) **** over to a man who (sell) **** fruit and (buy) **** a banana.   
13. The firemen (rescue) **** the old woman who (be) **** trapped on the third floor of the burning building.   
14. She was so annoying! She (leave, always) **** her dirty dishes in the sink. I think she (expect, actually) **** me to do them for her. 

15. Samantha (live) **** in Berlin for more than two years. In fact, she (live) **** there when the Berlin Wall came down.

**Exercise 2**.

Top of Form

Last night, while I was doing my homework, Angela (call) ****. She said she (call) **** me on her cell phone from her biology classroom at UCLA. I asked her if she (wait) **** for class, but she said that the professor was at the front of the hall lecturing while she (talk) ****to me. I couldn't believe she (make) **** a phone call during the lecture. I asked what was going on.   
She said her biology professor was so boring that several of the students (sleep, actually) **** in class. Some of the students (talk) **** about their plans for the weekend and the student next to her (draw) **** a picture of a horse. When Angela (tell) **** me she was not satisfied with the class, I (mention) **** that my biology professor was quite good and (suggest) **** that she switch to my class.   
While we were talking, I (hear) **** her professor yell, "Miss, are you making a phone call?" Suddenly, the line went dead. I (hang) ****up the phone and went to the kitchen to make dinner. As I (cut) **** vegetables for a salad, the phone rang once again. It (be) ****Angela, but this time she wasn't sitting in class.

**THE PRESENT PERFECT** Bottom of Form

**Statements Contractions**

I have finished I’ve finished

You You’ve

We We’ve

They They’ve

He has finished He’s finished

She She’s

It It’s

**HAVE/ HAS + the past participle form of the main verb**

**Negative Statements**

I have not finished I haven’t

He has not finished He hasn’t

# Questions

Have you finished? Yes, I have/ No I haven’t

Has he finished ? Yes, he has/ No he hasn’t

# *USES OF THE PRESENT PERFECT*

# *A. Indefinite time*

# 1.*The specific time of the past event is not important* Eg. I have read that book. It’s

# very interesting.

# 

2.*The event may be repeated several times in the past*. Eg. I have seen that movie many

*The exact time is not important*  times.

3. *Questions with* ***ever*** Eg. Have you ever ridden a

(the time can be any time in his life up to the motorcycle?

present time) Yes I’ve sat on one, but I’ve

never actually taken a ride***.***

4. *The adverbs* ***ever, never, already, yet, still, so far, once, twice , three times, many***

***times***, *etc)* *frequently express the indefinite meaning of the present perfect.*

***B. Recent time***

In *conversation, letters, and news reports*, the present perfect often describes ***recent past actions* and** ***experiences,*** especially when their results are very important in the present*.* Adverbs like ***recently and just*** are often used.

E.g. Where’s your sister been lately” I *haven’t seen* her at all

*She’s recently moved* to Boston. She is looking for a job there.

I *have just finished*.

# *C. Continuing up to now*

*The present perfect expresses actions or situations that began in the past and continue up the present time.*

* **For** tells how long **(+period of time)**
* **Since** tells the beginning of the time period **(+point in time)**

***For***  a minute, four hours, three days

***Since*** three o’clock, Thursday, May 17, I saw you, I was a child

*I’ve lived here* ***for ten years*** *(I still live here)*

*We’ve lived here* ***since 1989*** *(We still live here*)

* **For and Since** are not used with expressions with all (all day, all morning, all week, all my life, all winter)

## He’s worked on this assignment all day

*I’ve lived here* ***all my life***

### Present Perfect Vs Simple Past

1. The ***present perfect*** can express situations that continue at the present time.

The ***simple past*** can only express situations that no longer exist.

E.g. She has been lucky all her life (She is still alive)

She was lucky all her life (She is dead)

I’ve worked there for 10 years (I still work there)

I worked there for 10 years ( I don’t work there anymore)

### 2. The simple past is used to talk about historical events that are not connected to the

### present. The present perfect cannot be used to describe these events.

Eg. Shakespeare wrote many plays.

Christopher Columbus discovered America.

3.The ***present perfect*** does not indicate the precise time of an event. The **simple past** is

used for this

Eg. ***I’ve visited*** her two times I ***visite***d her two times ***last year***

4.The ***present perfect*** is often used at the beginning of a conversation or a written text to introduce a general idea with indefinite past time. The conversation or text often ***continues with the simple past*** to give more specific details about the general idea.

Eg. ***Have you ever been*** to Japan?

Yes, I’ve been there twice. I ***stayed*** for two weeks in 1987, and last year I ***stayed***

for a month.

1. In **American English**, it is common to use the **simple past** with ***just, already, and yet*** instead of the present perfect. The simple past sentences have the same meanings as similar sentences in the present perfect.

Eg. Did you eat yet? No, not yet ……………………… Have you eaten yet? No, not yet

You should call Mary

I just called her. ………………………………………….. I have just called her

Don’t forget to buy some milk

I already bought some ………………………………. I have already bought some

**Exercise 1. PRESENT PERFECT AND SIMPLE PAST**

**Circle the correct verb form to complete the sentences**

1. He ..... there when he was a child (has lived/lived)

2 - I ........ her since last year (haven’t seen/ didn’t see)

3 - They ......... a few minutes ago (left/ have left)

4 - She .......... unemployed since she left school (has not been/ was not)

5 - They ....... the contract last week (finalized/ have finalized)

6 - The film .......... yet (hasn’t started/ didn’t start)

7 - She ........ ill since Thursday (was/ has been)

8 - I ........ the project last night (have finished/ finished)

9 - Look- someone ....... their handbag in the room (left/ has left)

10 - ............ to Rome? (Did you ever go/ Have you ever been)

11 - I can't get into my house because I ........ my keys (lost/ have los

12 - Nobody ....... the phone when it rang (answered/ has answered)

13 - I ......... up smoking last year (gave/ have given)

14 - You can't see her because she ......... home (has gone/ went)

15 - ............... to the United States? (Did you ever go/ Have you ever been)

16 - I never ......... my grandmother as she died before I was born (knew/ have known)

17 - It's the first time I ........ caviar (ate/ have eaten)

18 - The first time we ......... was just the other day (spoke/ have spoken)

19 - It stinks in here; someone ........... smoking ( was/ has been)

20 - He's in hospital because he ............ a leg (has broken/ broke)

21 - I've known her since we ......... at school together (were/ have been)

22 - It's ages since we ........ (spoke/ have spoken)

23 - It's been ages since we ........ from Dave (have heard/ heard**)**  
**24** - The last time I saw Fran ........ ages ago (was/ has been)

25 - I ........ from her lately (haven’t heard/ didn’t hear)

26 - I just ........ the time to go to the cinema recently (didn’t have/ haven’t had)

27 - I ........ just Meg and Brian at the party (haven’t seen/saw)

28 - I ........ busy for the past fortnight (was/have been)

29 - She ......... away for the last two weeks (has been/ was)

30 - ......... to the concert on Friday? (did you go/ have you been)

31 - This is the first time I ........ here (have been/ was)

32 - I ....... them since my schooldays (have known/ knew)

33 - He ......... yet (hasn’t arrived/ didn/t arrive)

34 - They ........... the contract yet (haven’t signed/ didn’t sign)

35 - The newspaper ......... very successful lately (hasn’t been/ wasn’t)

36 - He ...... during the war (died/ has died)

37 - I ......... breakfast before leaving home this morning (haven’t had/ didn’t)

38 - I ....... a taxi so I came on the bus (haven’t found/ didn’t find)

39 - John's nervous because he .......... such a difficult test before (has never taken/ never took\_

40 – My TV ....... working last night (stopped/ has stopped)

41 - Two people ....... at the game on Saturday (were arrested/ have been arrested)

42 - I .......... a holiday for ages (didn’t have/ haven’t had)

43 - We ....... out on Saturday night (haven’t gone/ didn’t go)

44 - I ....... it last week (bought/have bought)

45 - She hasn't ........ here for ages (been/ gone)

46 - I .......... to water-ski in 1993 learnt/ have learnt)

47 - She ....... an absolute fortune last year (has earned/ earned)

48 - The weather ....... dreadful for the whole two weeks we were there (was/ has been)

49 - No one ...... to do it yet (has managed/ managed)

50 - I ...... the dog for a walk because it was raining(haven’t taken/ didn’t take)

51 - I ........... finished the exam in time yesterday (only just finished/ have only just finished)

**Exercise 2 . Simple Past / Present Perfect**

**A. Using the words in parentheses, complete the text below with the appropriate tenses**.

Top of Form

1. A: Did you like the movie "Star Wars?"   
B: I don't know. I (see, never) **** that movie.   
  
2. Sam (arrive) **** in San Diego a week ago.   
  
3. My best friend and I (know) **** each other for over fifteen years. We still get together once a week.   
  
4. Stinson is a fantastic writer. He (write) **** ten very creative short stories in the last year. One day, he'll be as famous as Hemingway.   
  
5. I (have, not) **** this much fun since I (be) **** a kid.   
  
6. Things (change) **** a great deal at Coltech, Inc. When we first (start) **** working here three years ago, the company (have, only) **** six employees. Since then, we (expand) **** to include more than 2000 full-time workers.   
  
7. I (tell) **** him to stay on the path while he was hiking, but he (wander) **** off into the forest and (be) **** bitten by a snake.   
  
8. Listen Donna, I don't care if you (miss) **** the bus this morning. You (be) **** late to work too many times. You are fired!   
  
9. Sam is from Colorado, which is hundreds of miles from the coast, so he (see, never) **** the ocean. He should come with us to Miami.   
  
10. How sad! George (dream) **** of going to California before he died, but he didn't make it. He (see, never) **** the ocean.  
  
11. In the last hundred years, traveling (become) **** much easier and very comfortable. In the 19th century, it (take) **** two or three months to cross North America by covered wagon. The trip (be) **** very rough and often dangerous. Things (change) **** a great deal in the last hundred and fifty years. Now you can fly from New York to Los Angeles in a matter of hours.   
  
12. Jonny, I can't believe how much you (change) **** since the last time I (see) **** you. You (grow) **** at least a foot!   
  
13. This tree (be) **** planted by the settlers who (found) **** our city over four hundred years ago.   
  
14. This mountain (be, never) **** climbed by anyone. Several mountaineers (try) **** to reach the top, but nobody (succeed, ever) ****. The climb is extremely difficult and many people (die) **** trying to reach the summit.   
  
15. I (visit, never) **** Africa, but I (travel) **** to South America several times. The last time I (go) **** to South America, I (visit) **** Brazil and Peru. I (spend) **** two weeks in the Amazon, (hike) **** for a week near Machu Picchu, and (fly) **** over the Nazca Lines.

**B. Using the words in parentheses, complete the text below with the appropriate tenses.**

Top of Form

Since computers were first introduced to the public in the early 1980's, technology (change) ****[[1]](#endnote-1) a great deal. The first computers (be) **** simple machines designed for basic tasks. They (have, not) **** much memory and they (be, not) **** very powerful. Early computers were often quite expensive and customers often (pay) **** thousands of dollars for machines which actually (do) **** very little. Most computers (be) **** separate, individual machines used mostly as expensive typewriters or for playing games.   
  
Times (change) ****. Computers (become) **** powerful machines with very practical applications. Programmers (create) **** a large selection of useful programs which do everything from teaching foreign languages to bookkeeping. We are still playing video games, but today's games (become) **** faster, more exciting interactive adventures. Many computer users (get, also) ****on the Internet and (begin) **** communicating with other computer users around the world. We (start) **** to create international communities online. In short, the simple, individual machines of the past (evolve) **** into an international World Wide Web of knowledge.

Bottom of Form

Bottom of Form

**The Past Perfect Simple**

**Form**

► The **past perfect simple** is made with the auxiliary verb ***had*+ past participle form of the** **verb,** e.g. *worked*, *travelled*, *tried* (regular verbs). *written*, *made*, *sung (irregular verbs*).

Positive statement: *I had travelled, He had done*.  
Negative statement: *I had not done (I hadn't done)*  
Question form: *Had I done?*   
Negative question: *Had I not done? (Hadn't I done?)*

**Use**

1. We use the **past perfect simple** **tense** to make it clear that an event **was completed before** another event..

The door bell rang at last. I **had been** in the room since breakfast. (The bell rang at noon. I came in the morning - before that.)  
When I arrived there Sarah **had already left**. (I arrived after lunch. Sara went home before lunch.)  
I was so hungry! I **had not eaten** anything since the morning. (It was late at night.)

2. It is used to refer to activities that were **completed before a point of time**.

In 2015 I had lived in the same place for ten years. Had you ever travelled by plane before your holiday in Spain?

***Compare with Present Perfect***

1. The **past** **perfect tense** is often used with expressions indicating that some activities took some time, such as: for 10 years, since 1995, all week, all the time, always...

When the plane landed Tim **had travelled** all day. My parents moved away from Leeds. They **had lived** there since they got married. In 2015 Derek started to work in Berlin. He had always planned it.

These expressions are also used with the present perfect. The difference is, however, that it refers to activities that started in the past and still continue, the past perfect expresses events that began before a point of time (or another action)and continued to that point.

I **have been** in Paris for a week.*(I came a week ago and I am still in Paris.)* When I met Annie I **had been** in Paris for a week.*(I came to Paris a week before I met Annie and I am not there anymore.)*

2. We also use the **past perfect simple** for an action that ended a long time before the point of time that we refer to.

In 2001 Angie worked in Glasgow. In the 1980's she **had worked** in Wales. (Angie left her job in Glasgow in 1989. In 2001 she worked in Glasgow. But we do not know what she did in the meantime*.)*

**Compare**

1. The [past simple](http://www.e-grammar.org/past-simple-continuous/) is used for activities that happened some time ago. The past perfect simple is used for events that happened before a point of time in the past.

Jim returned at 4 o'clock. He **had called** Jane on the way back home and now she appeared at the door.

In this story the sentences are in a reversed order, because in reality, first Jim called Jane and then he returned. If we want to keep this sentence order, we must use the past perfect tense to make it clear that Jim called Jane first.

2. If the sentence order is the same as the order of the activities, we can use the past simple.

Jim called Jane on the way back home. He returned at 4 o'clock and now she appeared at the door.

This difference is important. In some situations these two tenses have a completely different meaning.

I arrived at the garage. They told me to pay in cash. But I only had my credit card. I couldn't pay.I arrived at the garage. They had told me to pay in cash. I paid and left immediately.

In the first case I did not know that I had to pay in cash. They told me after my arrival.  
In the second case I was informed before my arrival and had no problems.

**In time clauses**

In time clauses after **when** we use the **past simple** if we want to say that the first activity led to the second and that the second followed the first very closely.

When the film ended he switched off the television.

The **past perfect** is used when we want to make it clear that the first event was completed before the second started and that there is no relation between them.

When she had washed the dishes she had a cup of tea.  
 But: When she washed the dishes she put the plates in the cupboard.

If we use **after**in a time clause the past perfect is much more usual.

After Messi had scored the goal the fans went wild.

We use this tense similarly with: **as soon as, until, before, by the time.**

He got up **as soon as** he had heard the alarm clock.

We did not stop **until** we had reached the coast.

Maria had finished her meal **by the time** I arrived.

**The Past Perfect Continuous**

**Form**

The **past perfect continuous tense** is made with the auxiliaries **had been****+ present** **participle** (-ing ending, e.g. working, trying, writing, singing ... )   
 Positive statement: I had been doing. Negative statement: I had not been doing. Question form: Had I been doing? Negative question: Had I not been doing?

**Use**

It is used for activities that began before a point of time and were still continuing at that point of time.

Last summer Josh **had been renovating** his house for two years. (He started three years ago and last summer he was still renovating his house.)

**Note**

The past perfect continuous and the [present perfect continuous](http://www.e-grammar.org/present-perfect-simple-continuous/) are basically very similar. The difference is, however, that in the past perfect we refer to the point of time in the **past**, while in the present perfect we refer to the **present** times.

I **have been practicing** since the morning. (I am still practicing.)

At 11 o'clock I **had been practicing** for two hours. (I began at 9 o'clock and at 11 o'clock I was still practicing.)

**The past perfect simple vs past perfect continuous**

For activities that can continue for a long time we can use both the simple and continuous (work, run, study, travel, sleep...). There is practically no difference in meaning, but the continuous is more usual in English.

Stephen was pretty tired. He **had worked** all day. Stephen was pretty tired. He **had been working** all day.

In other cases these two forms have a completely different meaning.

Before midnight Paul **had translated** the article. (He finished his work.)  
 Before midnight Paul **had been translating** the article.(He did not finish it. He was

still translating at that moment.)

If we refer to a number of individual events or events that were repeated, we must use the simple form.

Before the lesson ended they **had written** three tests. (three individual completed activities)

But: It was exhausting. They **had been writing** tests since the lessons started. (one uninterrupted incomplete activity)

**Exercise 1-Using the words in parentheses, complete the text below with the appropriate tenses**

I can't believe I (get)…………………. that apartment. I (submit)………………….. my application last week, but I didn't think I had a chance of actually getting it. When I (show)….. up to take a look around, there were at least twenty other people who (arrive)…………………. before me. Most of them (fill, already) ……………………….. out their applications and were already leaving. The landlord said I could still apply, so I did.

I (try)………………….. to fill out the form, but I couldn't answer half of the questions. They (want) ………………….. me to include references, but I didn't want to list my previous landlord because I (have) …………………… some problems with him in the past and I knew he wouldn't recommend me. I (end)…………………. up listing my father as a reference.

It was total luck that he (decide) …………………… to give me the apartment. It turns out that the landlord and my father (go)…………………. to high school together. He decided that I could have the apartment before he (look) …………………. at my credit report. I really lucked out!

**Exercise 2-Past Perfect / Past Perfect Continuous**

I'm sorry I left without you last night, but I told you to meet me early because the show started at 8:00. I (try)………. to get tickets for that play for months, and I didn't want to miss it. By the time I finally left the coffee shop where we were supposed to meet, I (have) ……………. five cups of coffee and I (wait)…………. over an hour. I had to leave because I (arrange) …….………… to meet Kathy in front of the theater. When I arrived at the theater, Kathy (pick, already)……………….. up the tickets and she was waiting for us near the entrance. She was really angry because she (wait)………………….. for more than half an hour. She said she (give, almost)…………….. up and (go)…………….. into the theater without us.

Kathy told me you (be)…………………… late several times in the past and that she would not make plans with you again in the future. She mentioned that she (miss)……………….. several movies because of your late arrivals. I think you owe her an apology. And in the future, I suggest you be on time!

**Exercise 3-Present Perfect / Past Perfect**

1. It is already 9:30 PM and I (wait)………………… here for over an hour. If John does not get

here in the next five minutes, I am going to leave.

2. I was really angry at John yesterday. By the time he finally arrived, I (wait)…………….. for over an hour. I almost left without him.

3. Did you hear that Ben was fired last month? He (work)……………………… for that import company for more than ten years and he (work)……………….. in almost every department. Nobody knew the company like he did.

4. I (see)……………….. many pictures of the pyramids before I went to Egypt. Pictures of the monuments are very misleading. The pyramids are actually quite small.

5. Sarah (climb)………………. the Matterhorn, (sail)……………… around the world, and (go)…………… on safari in Kenya. She is such an adventurous person.

6. Sarah (climb)……………… the Matterhorn, (sail)………………. around the world and (go)………………….. on safari in Kenya by the time she turned twenty-five. She (experience) ……………………more by that age than most people do in their entire lives.

7. When Melanie came into the office yesterday, her eyes were red and watery. I think she (cry)……………….

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)