

# Verb Tense Review 1 – The Simple Tenses

## Table of Contents

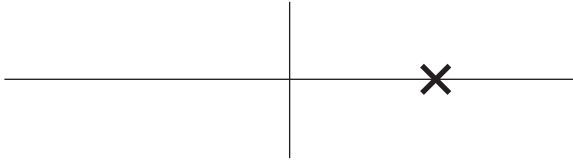
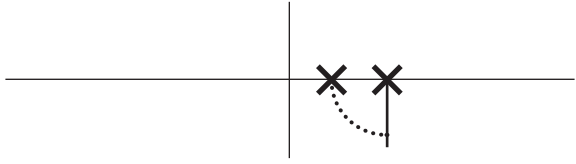
<b>2</b>	<b>QUICK AND HANDY GRAMMAR REVIEW</b> <b>The 6 Simple Tenses</b> <b>&amp; Their Time Markers</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>EXERCISE 7</b> <i>Past and Past Progressive:</i> <i>Pair work exercise.</i>
<b>5</b>	<b>EXERCISE 1</b> <i>Present, Past, and Future:</i> <i>Change the verbs.</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>EXERCISE 8</b> <i>Future and Future Progressive:</i> <i>Group work exercise.</i>
<b>5</b>	<b>EXERCISE 2</b> <i>Present, Past, and Future:</i> <i>Change the verbs (negative forms).</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>EXERCISE 9</b> <i>All Tenses:</i> <i>Rewrite the sentences by changing the verbs.</i>
<b>6</b>	<b>EXERCISE 3</b> <i>Present, Past, and Future:</i> <i>Change the verbs (negative forms and questions).</i>	<b>11</b>	<b>EXERCISE 10</b> <i>All Tenses:</i> <i>Discuss your goals.</i>
<b>7</b>	<b>EXERCISE 4</b> <i>Past and Future:</i> <i>Discuss your weekend plans.</i>	<b>11</b>	<b>EXERCISE 11</b> <i>All Tenses:</i> <i>Write about something that affected you in the past.</i>
<b>7</b>	<b>EXERCISE 5</b> <i>Past and Future:</i> <i>Write about your holidays.</i>	<b>12</b>	<b>ANSWER KEY</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>EXERCISE 6</b> <i>Present and Present Progressive:</i> <i>Complete the story.</i>		

# Quick and Handy Grammar Review: The 6 Simple Tenses & Their Time Markers

Tense	Simple Present	Present Progressive
Diagram		
Form	Base Verb (+ -s for third person singular)	Be + -ing Verb
Function	A repeated action	A continuing present action
Time Markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adverbs of frequency (always, usually, sometimes, never, etc.)</li> <li>every</li> <li>once, twice, three times, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>now</li> <li>right now</li> <li>at the moment</li> <li>at this time</li> <li>nowadays</li> <li>these days</li> <li>currently</li> <li>presently</li> </ul>
Example	<i>I always eat breakfast.</i>	<i>I'm doing my homework now.</i>

Tense	Simple Past	Past Progressive	
Diagram			
Form	<b>REGULAR VERBS:</b> Verb + -ed <b>IRREGULAR VERBS:</b> Various changes	Was / Were + -ing Verb	
Function	A defined past action (we know when the action occurred)	A long past action interrupted by a short past action	Two long past actions occurring at the same time
Time Markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>yesterday</li> <li>the day before</li> <li>yesterday</li> <li>last</li> <li>ago</li> <li>when</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when</li> <li>while</li> </ul>
Example	<i>I went to the gym last week.</i>	<i>I was studying when the phone rang.</i>	<i>I was daydreaming while you were talking.</i>

## Quick and Handy Grammar Review: The 6 Simple Tenses & Their Time Markers cont.

Tense	Simple Future	Future Progressive
Diagram		
Form	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will + Base Verb</li> <li>Be Going To + Base Verb</li> <li>Be + -ing Verb</li> </ol>	Will + Be + -ing Verb
Function	A future action	A long future action interrupted by a short future action
Time Markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tomorrow</li> <li>• the day after tomorrow</li> <li>• next</li> <li>• from now</li> <li>• when</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when</li> </ul>
Example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I will call you tomorrow night.</i></li> <li>• <i>I am going to call you tomorrow night.</i></li> <li>• <i>I'm calling you tomorrow night.</i></li> </ul>	<i>I will be sleeping when the girls get home.</i>

### Note #1: Indicating Time

There are other ways to indicate time in an English sentence besides using time markers.

#### CONTEXT

One way is to notice the **context**. For example, if someone is talking about last weekend, then all of the verbs will probably be in the simple past tense even though "last weekend" may only be mentioned in one sentence.

- *I **went** to a great party last weekend.  
We **ate** lots of delicious food and **danced** until dawn.*

#### OTHER VERBS

Another way is to notice the **other verbs** in the sentence. For example, if a verb is in the simple past tense, then the other verb is almost always in the past as well, even if no time markers are used.

- *They **asked** for directions, but they still **got** lost.*

## Quick and Handy Grammar Review: The 6 Simple Tenses & Their Time Markers cont.

### Note #2: Future Verbs

For the simple future and the future progressive tenses, remember the rule “No two wills.” We can never use *will*, *be going to*, *be + -ing verb*, or *will + be + -ing verb* twice in a sentence. The rule is to use the future tense in the independent clause, and the simple present in the dependent clause. Remember that even though the simple present is used, the whole sentence still has a future meaning!

- *I **will graduate** when I **finish** my exams.*
- *When I **finish** my exams, I **will graduate**.*

### Note #3: Non-Action Verbs

Note that the present progressive tense is almost never used with non-action verbs. In English, the simple present is used with non-action verbs even when a present progressive time marker appears in the sentence. Non-action verbs include *be*, *have*, *feelings*, *thinking verbs*, and *the five senses*.

- *She **is** hungry now.*  
(NOT *She is being hungry now.*)
- *He **likes** horror movies nowadays.*  
(NOT *He is liking horror movies nowadays.*)

## Exercise 1

### THE SIMPLE PRESENT, PAST, AND FUTURE

Choose a word from the box, and use it to form the simple present, simple past, or simple future tense.

1. My dog jumped into the bathtub with me yesterday.
2. The choir \_\_\_\_\_ at the concert tomorrow night.
3. She always \_\_\_\_\_ on the track behind the school.
4. They \_\_\_\_\_ for their honeymoon tomorrow night.
5. He \_\_\_\_\_ beside me every day in class.
6. Last night I \_\_\_\_\_ to my boyfriend for hours.

#### Word List

- jump
- leave
- sing
- run
- talk
- sit

## Exercise 2

### THE SIMPLE PRESENT, PAST, AND FUTURE

Choose a word from the box, and use it to form the simple present, simple past, or simple future tense. Use negative forms.

1. They probably won't go to the meeting tonight.
2. John usually \_\_\_\_\_ for his math tests.
3. The car swerved and \_\_\_\_\_ the tree.
4. The restaurant owner gets mad when his employees \_\_\_\_\_ their hands.
5. We \_\_\_\_\_ the game, but we had a great time.
6. She \_\_\_\_\_ her homework tomorrow.

#### Word List

- wash
- hit
- finish
- go
- study
- win

## Exercise 3

### THE SIMPLE PRESENT, PAST, AND FUTURE

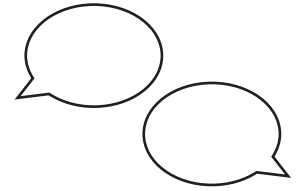
Use the words in brackets to form the simple present, simple past, or simple future tense.

1. I bought a new dress last week.  
(buy)
2. My sister \_\_\_\_\_ breakfast every day.  
(eat)
3. Mr. Jones \_\_\_\_\_ never satisfied with his students' work.  
(be)
4. The pilot \_\_\_\_\_ at the airport until after 9:00.  
(arrive, not)
5. I \_\_\_\_\_ to your party if you really want me to.  
(come)
6. She \_\_\_\_\_ happy when she heard the bad news.  
(be, not)
7. \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ me the day after tomorrow?  
(call)
8. He \_\_\_\_\_ to school very often.  
(go, not)
9. \_\_\_\_\_ your brother \_\_\_\_\_ you two weeks ago?  
(visit)
10. \_\_\_\_\_ she usually \_\_\_\_\_ a dress to school?  
(wear)

## Exercise 4

### THE SIMPLE PAST AND THE SIMPLE FUTURE

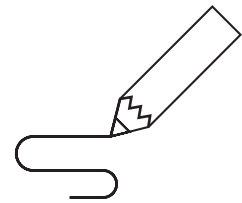
What did you do last weekend? What are you going to do next weekend? Get into pairs or small groups, and discuss your weekend plans. Use past and future verbs.



## Exercise 5

### THE SIMPLE PAST AND THE SIMPLE FUTURE

Write two paragraphs about traveling. Write the first paragraph about a holiday you enjoyed (use past verbs). Write the second paragraph about a trip you want to take (use future verbs).



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## Exercise 6

### THE SIMPLE PRESENT AND THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE

Complete the story. Use the verbs provided to form sentences with the simple present or the present progressive tense.

Every Sunday my family \_\_\_\_\_ to the zoo. My little  
 1. go

sister \_\_\_\_\_ the lions. We \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. love 3. be

at the zoo right now, and it \_\_\_\_\_ a beautiful day.  
 4. be

We \_\_\_\_\_ the big cat show. The zookeeper  
 5. watch

\_\_\_\_\_ the lions. The lions always \_\_\_\_\_  
 6. feed 7. get

excited at mealtime! They usually \_\_\_\_\_ over the meat,  
 8. fight

and my sister \_\_\_\_\_ scared sometimes. But today she  
 9. get

\_\_\_\_\_ afraid. Today she \_\_\_\_\_ and  
 10. feel, not 11. smile

\_\_\_\_\_ her hands. I \_\_\_\_\_ that she  
 12. clap 13. think

\_\_\_\_\_ to bring a lion home as a pet. Now she  
 14. want

\_\_\_\_\_ out to the lions, "Here, kitty, kitty!"  
 15. call



## Exercise 7

### THE SIMPLE PAST AND THE PAST PROGRESSIVE

#### A. Matching

Work with a partner to make complete sentences. Take turns reading the completed sentences out loud. Do they all make sense?

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <u>  d  </u> 1. when my alarm clock rang                   | a) I was daydreaming              |
| <u>     </u> 2. when my car hit the tree                   | b) I was waiting for her          |
| <u>     </u> 3. when the phone rang                        | c) I was taking a shower          |
| <u>     </u> 4. when the teacher yelled at me              | d) I was sleeping                 |
| <u>     </u> 5. when my grandmother arrived at the airport | e) I was driving                  |
| <u>     </u> 6. when it was time to leave the office       | f) I was still writing the report |

#### B. Writing

Now write the complete sentences. Don't forget to add a comma when you begin your sentence with "when."

1. When my alarm clock rang, I was sleeping. / I was sleeping when my alarm clock rang.
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 8

### THE SIMPLE FUTURE AND THE FUTURE PROGRESSIVE

Work with a small group. Imagine that you are hosting a big party for your friend's birthday. Now imagine what you and your guests will be doing at various times during the party. Share ideas and complete the sentences on the right together.

- Ex. When the food is served, our guests will be starving.
1. When our friend arrives, \_\_\_\_\_
  2. When it's time for presents, \_\_\_\_\_
  3. When the dancing starts, \_\_\_\_\_
  4. When the music stops, \_\_\_\_\_
  5. When the cake is served, \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 9

### ALL TENSES

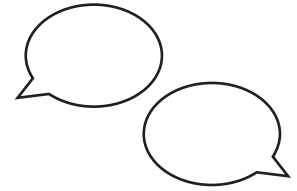
Rewrite the sentences by changing the verb tense. Change the time marker if necessary.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. He doesn't feel good right now.<br/><i>(past)</i></p> <p>_____</p>                                   | <p>6. She is studying French nowadays.<br/><i>(future)</i></p> <p>_____</p>                             |
| <p>2. The cat caught a bird.<br/><i>(future)</i></p> <p>_____</p>  | <p>7. They went to the park a week ago.<br/><i>(present progressive)</i></p> <p>_____</p>               |
| <p>3. My neighbor was waiting for the package to arrive.<br/><i>(present progressive)</i></p> <p>_____</p> | <p>8. I went swimming every day when I was a child.<br/><i>(present)</i></p> <p>_____</p>               |
| <p>4. I watched TV for two hours last night.<br/><i>(past progressive)</i></p> <p>_____</p>                | <p>9. Mary was playing the guitar when the phone rang.<br/><i>(future progressive)</i></p> <p>_____</p> |
| <p>5. The students are going to take a test next week.<br/><i>(past)</i></p> <p>_____</p>                  | <p>10. Our teacher told us to be quiet.<br/><i>(present progressive)</i></p> <p>_____</p>               |

### Exercise 10

ALL TENSES

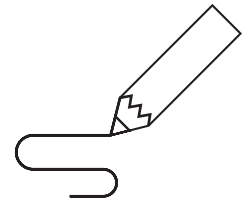
Get into pairs or small groups and discuss your goals and dreams. When you were a child, what dreams did you have for the future (job, family, etc.)? What ambitions do you have for the future? What steps are you taking now to accomplish your goals? Try to use all six verb tenses as often as you can.



### Exercise 11

ALL TENSES

Write a short story about something that affected you in the past. It can be real or made-up. Describe the past event, and explain how it affects you nowadays. Write about how you think it will affect you in the future, and what steps you will take to overcome or learn from it. Try to use all six verb tenses at least once.



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# Answer Key

Use this lesson as a review or quiz after studying the tenses separately. Exercises with a mix of verb tenses show if a student truly understands each tense in a way that studying them in isolation can never indicate.

Note: For answers requiring the simple future tense, *will + base verb* is listed, but other future forms may be possible (*be going to + verb*, *be + -ing verb*).

### Exercise 1

- |              |               |           |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1. jumped    | 3. runs       | 5. sits   |
| 2. will sing | 4. will leave | 6. talked |

### Exercise 2

- |                  |               |                 |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. won't go      | 3. didn't hit | 5. didn't win   |
| 2. doesn't study | 4. don't wash | 6. won't finish |

### Exercise 3

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. bought       | 6. wasn't      |
| 2. eats         | 7. Will, call  |
| 3. is           | 8. doesn't go  |
| 4. won't arrive | 9. Did, visit  |
| 5. will come    | 10. Does, wear |

### Exercise 4

Answers will vary. You may choose to assign a group member to keep track of how many times each student uses the past and future forms.

### Exercise 5

Answers will vary.

### Exercise 6

- |                 |                  |                |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. goes         | 6. is feeding    | 11. is smiling |
| 2. loves        | 7. get           | 12. clapping   |
| 3. are          | 8. fight         | 13. think      |
| 4. is           | 9. gets          | 14. wants      |
| 5. are watching | 10. doesn't feel | 15. is calling |

### Exercise 7

#### A. MATCHING

1. d      2. e      3. c      4. a      5. b      6. f

#### B. WRITING

- When my alarm clock rang, I was sleeping. / I was sleeping when my alarm clock rang.
- When my car hit the tree, I was driving. / I was driving when my car hit the tree.
- When the phone rang, I was taking a shower. / I was taking a shower when the phone rang.
- When the teacher yelled at me, I was daydreaming. / I was daydreaming when the teacher yelled at me.
- When my grandmother arrived at the airport, I was waiting for her. / I was waiting for my grandmother when she arrived at the airport.
- When it was time to leave the office, I was still writing the report. / I was still writing the report when it was time to leave the office.

(continued on the next page...)

## Answer Key cont.

### Exercise 8

Answers will vary.

### Exercise 9

Time markers may vary.

1. He didn't feel good yesterday.
2. The cat will catch a bird.
3. My neighbor is waiting for the package to arrive.
4. I was watching TV for two hours last night.
5. The students took a test last week.
6. She will study French next month.
7. They are going to the park now.
8. I go swimming every day.
9. Mary will be playing the guitar when the phone rings.
10. Our teacher is telling us to be quiet.

### Exercise 10

Answers will vary. You may choose to assign a group member to keep track of how many times each student uses each verb tense.

### Exercise 11

Answers will vary.

#### SPELLING NOTE:

Exercises 5 and 9 show the American spelling of the words *Traveling* and *Neighbor*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Travelling* and *Neighbour*. Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

This review lesson should show you which tenses your students are still struggling with. Our [Grammar Practice Worksheets](#), [Basic Grammar Sentences](#), [Grammar Stories](#), and [Simple Sentences](#) sections have many separate verb tense lessons for further practice.

Refer to our blog post, [100 Days of Grammar](#), for teaching tips, charts, and examples of the individual verb tenses.  
<http://blog.esllibrary.com/2014/07/24/100-days-of-grammar/>