

PAST TENSES

Simple Past

Form:

Take the base verb and change the word form to the past tense form. Usually this means adding /ed/ to the end of the word. However, there are a lot of **irregular verbs** with different past tense forms.

AFF: She went to Africa three years ago

NEG: She didn't go to Africa three years ago

INT: Did she go to Africa three years ago?

Uses:

Actions completed in the past

EXAMPLES:

-The scientists **conducted** an experiment. They **thought** the experiment would prove their theory.

-Columbus discovered America in 1492

Past Continuous

Form: The past form of "to be" (was, were) + verb + ing

AFF: She was having a great time when her parents called her

NEG: She wasn't having a great time when her parents called her

INT: Was she having a great time when her parents called her?

Uses:

-Describing a past action that was happening at a certain time in the past

EXAMPLE: At 11pm, I **was** still **working** on my homework.

-Describing a past action that was interrupted by another action

EXAMPLE: I **was trying** to sleep when I heard a knock at my door.

-When describing two past events that took place at the same time, this tense is used to describe the longer of the two events.

EXAMPLE: She burned herself while she **was cooking** dinner.

Past Perfect

Form: had+ past form of a verb

AFF: They had done the homework before I arrived

NEG: They hadn't done the homework before I arrived

INT: Had they done the homework before I arrived?

Uses:

-We use past perfect to describe the action that happened BEFORE another action in the past

EXAMPLE: I **had gone** home; then I read a book and fell asleep..

Past Perfect Continuous

Form: had + been + verb + ing

AFF: They had been cooking when I arrived

NEG: They hadn't been cooking when I arrived

INT: Had they been cooking when I arrived?

Uses:

-Describing an action that began further in the past than other actions, but overlaps with actions that began later.

EXAMPLE: She said she **had been working** in a hospital when World War II started, and she worked there for many more years.