

- The verbs **look** (when we refer to somebody's appearance), **feel** (experience a particular emotion), **hurt** and **ache** can be used in simple or continuous tenses with no difference in meaning. *He's feeling stressed. = He feels stressed.*

Adverbs of Frequency

These include: *always, frequently, often, once, twice, sometimes, never, usually, ever, hardly ever, rarely, occasionally*, etc.

- Adverbs of frequency are normally placed before the main verb. *I usually eat dinner with my family. I often call my parents.*
- However, adverbs of frequency are placed after the verb **be** and auxiliary/modal verb (if there is more than one modal/auxiliary verb, the adverb is generally placed after the first). *My mum is always kind. I've rarely been on holiday alone. He may never be forgiven.*

Present Perfect

We use the **present perfect** (*have + past participle*) for:

- an action that happened at an unstated time in the past. The emphasis is on the action. The time when it happened is unimportant or unknown. *I have painted the bedroom. Scott has visited London three times.*
- an action which started in the past and continues up to the present, especially with stative verbs (see above) such as **be, have, like, know**, etc. *Helen has lived in Paris for twelve months.*
- a recently completed action. *Naomi has finished her homework assignment.*
- personal experiences or changes. *Louis has cut his hair.*
- an action which happened within a specific time period which is not over at the time of speaking (with time words/phrases such as: *today, this week/ morning/evening/month/year* etc). *They've organised five conferences this month.*

Note: *She has been to Paris.* (= She has gone and come back.)
She has been in Madrid for five years. (= She lives there.)
She has gone to Berlin. (= She hasn't come back yet.)

The time words/phrases we use with the present perfect are: for, since, already, always, just, ever, never, so far, today, this week/month etc, how long, lately, recently, still (in negations), etc.

Present Perfect Continuous

We use the **present perfect continuous** (*have been + verb -ing*):

- to put emphasis on the duration of an action which started in the past and continues up to the present. *Mark has been studying all day.*
- for an action which started in the past and lasted for some time. It may still be continuing or has finished

already, with the result visible in the present. *Henry is an expert because he has been working in the industry for years.*

- to express anger, irritation or annoyance. *Someone has been using my milk without asking me!*
- for repeated actions in the past continuing up to the present. *Tom will win the competition because he has been training for the event every day.*

The time words/phrases we use with the present perfect continuous are: for, since, How long ...?, all day/ morning/month etc, lately, recently, etc.

Note: With the verbs **live, work, teach** and **feel** we can use the present perfect or the present perfect continuous with no difference in meaning. *She has taught/has been teaching History for the last thirty years.*

Past Simple

We use the **past simple**:

- for an action that happened at a definite time (stated or implied) in the past. *Tony graduated from university last year.*
- for actions that happened immediately one after the other in the past. *Henry closed the front door and locked it.*
- for habits or states which are now finished. *I played in a band when I was at college.*

Note: **used to** can be used instead of the past simple for habits/repeated actions in the past.

The time words/phrases we use with the past simple are: yesterday, then, when, How long ago ...?, last night/ week/month/year/Friday/October etc, three days/weeks etc ago, in 1999, etc.

Past Continuous

We use the **past continuous** (*was/were + verb -ing*):

- for an action which was in progress when another action interrupted it. We use the **past continuous** for the action in progress (longer action) and the **past simple** for the action which interrupted it (shorter action). *Ann was cooking dinner when Ellen called.*
- for two or more simultaneous actions in the past. *Tim was washing the car while Norman was tidying the house.*
- for an action which was in progress at a stated time in the past. We don't mention when the action started or finished. *At 7 o'clock this morning, I was preparing my things for work.*
- to describe the atmosphere, setting, etc and to give background information about a story. *The wind was blowing and the rain was pouring. I was walking home, totally soaked.*

Note: When there are two past continuous forms in a sentence with the same subject, we can avoid repetition by just using the present participle (*-ing* form), and leave out the verb **was/were**.

They were riding their bikes and they were enjoying themselves. = They were riding their bikes and enjoying themselves.

The time words/phrases we use with the past continuous are: while, when, as, all morning/evening/ day/week, etc.

Past Perfect

We use the **past perfect** (*had + past participle*):

- for an action which happened before another past action or before a stated time in the past. *Todd had met Tony by three o'clock.*
- for an action which finished in the past and whose result was visible at a later point in the past. *She had broken her ankle a few months earlier and was still in plaster.*

The time words/phrases we use with the past perfect are: before, after, already, just, for, since, till/until, when, by the time, never, etc.

Past Perfect Continuous

We use the **past perfect continuous** (*had been + verb -ing*):

- to put emphasis on the duration of an action which started and finished in the past, before another action or stated time in the past, usually with **for** or **since**. *I had been driving for about an hour when I realised that I had left my wallet at home.*
- for an action which lasted for some time in the past and whose result was visible in the past. *He had been exercising and was sweating heavily.*

The time words/phrases we use with the past perfect continuous are: for, since, how long, before, until, etc.

used to – would – Past Simple – be/get used to

- We use **used to/would/past simple** to talk about past habits, routines and repeated past actions that no longer happen. *We used to visit/would visit/visited my aunt every summer.* (We don't anymore.)
- We use **used to/past simple** (NOT 'would') for past states. **Would** cannot be used with stative verbs. *He used to have/had a red sports car.* (NOT: *He would have a red sports car.*)
- We use the **past simple** for an action that happened at a definite time in the past. *James flew to France last night.* (NOT: *James used to/would fly to France last night.*)
- We use **be used to + noun/pronoun/-ing form** to talk about habits (= be accustomed to/be in the habit of). *He isn't used to travelling by boat.*
- We use **get used to + noun/pronoun/-ing form** to talk about habits (= become accustomed to). *Tim will soon get used to speaking a foreign language now that he lives in Spain.*

Time words to talk about the past:

- ago** (= back in time from now) is used with the past simple. *I spoke to Jack about two hours ago.*
- since** (= from a starting point in the past) is used with the present and past perfect (simple and continuous). *I haven't seen Vicky since high school.*
- for** (= over a period of time) is used with the present and past perfect (simple and continuous). *Kim had been playing computer games for hours.*
- already** is used in statements and questions in the present and past perfect to show surprise. *I've already cooked dinner. Have you finished that cake already?*
- yet** is used with the present and past perfect in questions and negations. *Have you made the coffee yet? I haven't started cleaning the house yet.*

Comparisons

We use the **comparative** to compare one person or thing with another. We use the **superlative** to compare one person or thing with more than one person or thing of the same group. We also use it to show that one person or thing is the best of its type. We often use **than** after a comparative and **the** before a superlative. *She's fitter than me. He's the smartest person I know.*

Formation of comparatives and superlatives of adjectives and adverbs:

- to one-syllable adjectives we add **-(e)r** to form the comparative and **-(e)st** to form the superlative. *bright – brighter – brightest*
Note: In one-syllable adjectives ending in a vowel + a consonant, we double the consonant. *smug – smugger – smuggest*
- to two-syllable adjectives ending in **-ly, -y, -w** we also add **-er/-est**. *narrow – narrower – narrowest*
Note: In adjectives ending in a consonant + **y**, we replace the **-y** with an **-i**. *happy – happier – happiest*
- other two-syllable adjectives, or adjectives with more than two syllables, form comparatives and superlatives with **more/most**. *arrogant – more arrogant – most arrogant*
- to adverbs that have the same form as their adjectives we add **-er/-est**. *fast – faster – fastest*
- two-syllable or compound adverbs take **more/most**. *quickly – more quickly – most quickly*
Note: *clever, common, cruel, friendly, gentle, pleasant, polite, shallow, simple, stupid, quiet* can form their comparatives and superlatives either with **-er/-est** or with **more/most**.
- Irregular forms:**
good – better – best; bad – worse – worst;
much – more – most; little – less – least;
far – farther/further – farthest/furthest;
much/many/lots – more – most