Past Tenses

Past Simple

Past Continuous

Past Perfect Simple

Past Tenses: Structures

▶ **Past Simple**:

Subject + Verb-ed (or irregular form)

○ **Negative**: Subject + did not/didn't Verb (basic form)
○ **Interrogative**: Did + Subject + Verb (basic form)

▶ **Past Continuous**:

Subject + was/were + Verb-ing

○ **Negative**: Subject + was/were + not (wasn't/weren't) +Verb-ing
○ **Interrogative**: Was/Were + Subject + Verb-ing ?

▶ **Past Perfect Simple**:

Subject + had + Past Participle (Verb-ed or irregular form)

○ **Negative**: Subject + had + not (hadn't)+ Past Participle
Interrogative: Had + Subject + Past Participle

Past Simple: uses

To talk about finished actions in the past:

- One action after the other:
  - □ *"She opened the door, turned on the lights and entered the house"*
- An action that happened in a certain situation.
  - □ *"The car knocked the child down when he was crossing the road"*
- A short action finished in the past (you indicate when it happened with an adverb of Time):
  - □ *"Yesterday, I arrived at home too late".*
- A finished action that takes a long period of time (indicated in the sentence):
  - □ *"I lived in Britain when I was young"*

Past Simple: spelling rules

- **If the verb ends in "silent –e"→ It disappears**
  - *" I lived in Italy" (live + ed → lived)*
- **If the verb ends in "consonant + y" → -ied**
  - *"They carried the boxes home" (carry + ed→ carried)*
- **Duplication of the final consonant ONLY IF:**
  1. The verb ends in **CVC**: Consonant + vowel + ONE only Consonant (except X or W)
  2. The last syllable is stressed
  3. The vowel of the last syllable is "short"

  They dropped the ball"   /   "They kidnapped my sister"

  Exception: when the verb ends in "l" it doubles though the last syllable is not stressed. (example: "travelled")

Past Continuous: uses

- To talk about an action in progress in the past (i) or a temporal situation in the past (ii):

    (i) *At midday last Sunday, I was working with my laptop*

    (ii) *In 1998, I was living with my cousin*

- To express the action in progress in which another past action happened:

    "The little kid was crossing the road when a car knocked him down"

- To talk about the context in which the events of a story happened:

    "It was getting dark, the sun was beginning to hide behind the hills, women were tidying up the entrance of the church. Suddenly, a strange red light appeared in the sky"

- To talk about two actions that were taking place simultaneously in the past:

    "My wife was talking on the phone while I was surfing the web"

Past Perfect Simple: uses

▸ To express a finished action that took place before another completed action in the past.

   *"My family <u>had</u> already <u>arrived</u> **before** I left".*

   *"**After** we <u>had finished</u> dinner, we got ready to go out."*

   *"**When** the police arrived, the murderer <u>had killed</u> everyone".*

   *"**By the time** we met, I <u>had eaten</u> all the packets of salt & vinegar crisps"*

▸ To show the cause of a past action

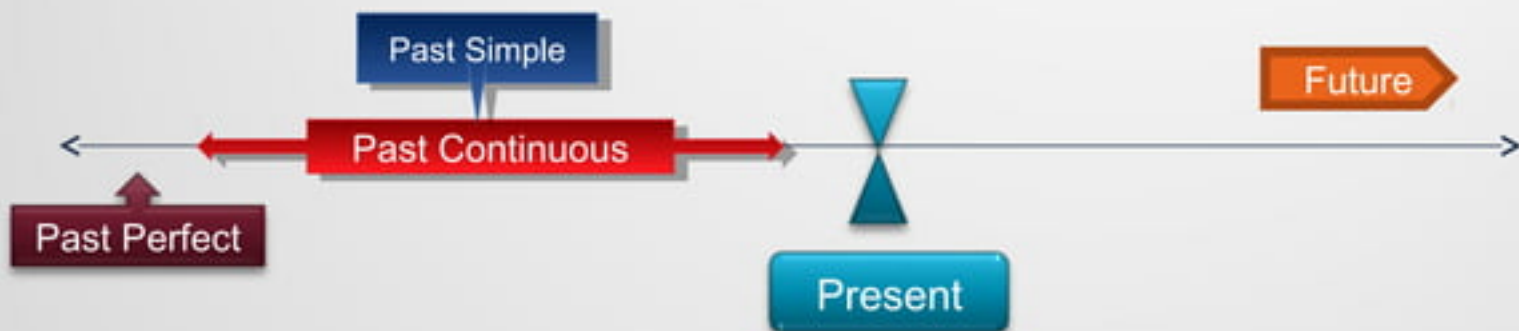   *I was tired on Monday, I hadn't slept well the night before*

▸ With time expressions such as when, after, before, as soon as, by the time, by, until

   ***By the time** I got home, my mother <u>had already</u> prepared dinner*

▸ With adverbs such as ever, never, already, yet, just, so far and still

   *I <u>had never been</u> to such a beautiful place **before***

SUMMARY

Time expressions

- **FOR** +   a period of time   (duration)

  I stayed in Scotland for two years.

- **SINCE** +   a year, an event, etc.   (indicates starting point)

  I know him since my wedding.
  Since 1978 people can vote in Spain.

- **[PAST PERFECT]**   **BEFORE**
                   WHEN   +   PAST SIMPLE
                   BY THE TIME

  I had (already) bought my house before I got married / before I moved to UK
  when I got married   /   when I moved to UK
  by the time I got married / by the time I moved to UK

- **WHILE /AS** + past continuous or past simple
                   =   **WHEN** + past simple,   past
  continuous

  As/ while I was walking, I phoned my grandmother
                   = When I phoned her, I was walking

Time expressions

- **AS SOON AS**
  - ◦ *Phone me, as soon as you arrive in Italy.*
  - ◦ *As soon as the news had been broadcast, I phoned them.*

BE CAREFUL!!!

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  - ◦ *I didn't go out because it was raining*

    = *Since/ As it was raining, I didn't go out.*

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