

Past Tenses



Past Simple

I **went** to school yesterday.

Did you **go** to school yesterday?

They **didn't go** to school yesterday.

the last time

the first time

a day ago

two weeks ago

earlier

today

this week

yesterday

last

night

week

month

etc.



PAST SIMPLE

ACTIONS IN STORIES

He sat down and ordered a coffee.

Use with: the past continuous.

FINISHED TIME WORD

I went to the cinema yesterday.

Use with: yesterday, last night, in 2003, 6 months ago.

FINISHED TIME PERIOD

Leonardo painted the Mona Lisa.

DETAILS OF NEWS

I've hurt my leg. I fell off a ladder.

Use with: the present perfect.



Past Continuous

I **was reading**.

Were you reading?

He **wasn't reading**.

all day long

all night long

all the time

at that moment

while

at 5 o'clock



OVERLAPPING ACTION

I was walking to the station when I met John.

Use with: when + past simple, two o'clock, 7pm.

STORY BACKGROUND

The birds were singing and the sun was shining. Amy sat down.

Use with: the past simple.

SOME PAST HABITS

She was constantly singing.

Use with: always, forever, constantly, at that time, in those days.

PAST CONTINUOUS

EMPHASIS OF LENGTH OF ACTION

I was working in the garden all day.

Use with: all day, all evening, for hours.



Past Perfect

I had done it.

Had you done it?

He hadn't done it.

by...

by the time

before...



ACTION FINISHED BEFORE ANOTHER PAST ACTION

When we arrived, the film had started.

Use with: when + past simple, June, last Tuesday.

HOW LONG TO A POINT IN THE PAST

When he graduated, he had been in London for six years.

Use with: when + past simple, for + time.

**PAST
PERFECT**

