

Tense in English

COURSE: BASIC GRAMMAR & WRITING

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What is Tense?

tense (noun): a verb-based method used to indicate the time, and sometimes the continuation or completeness, of an action or state in relation to the time of speaking.

ORIGIN - Latin *tempus* "time"

The concept of tense in English is a method that we use to refer to time - past, present and future. Many languages use tense to talk about time. Other languages have no concept of tense at all, but of course they can still talk about time, using different methods.

Tenses denote the time of action. They show when the work is done.

They are: **(1)Present Tense (2)Past Tense (3)Future Tense**

Present Tense

The verb that refers to the present time is said to be in the present tense; as

I write this letter to help you.

There are four types of Present Tense:

(a) Simple Present Tense

(b) Present Continuous Tense

(c) Present Perfect Tense

(d) Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Simple Present

It is used to denote scientific facts, universal truths and work done on daily basis.

ASSERTIVE RULE --- i) sub + V1 / s/es + object

Ex: She writes a letter / I write a letter

NEGATIVE --- sub + do/does + not + v1 + s/es + object

Ex: She does not write a letter / I do not write letter /

INTERROGATIVE – i) Do/Does + sub + v1 +/- s/es + object + (?)

Ex: Does she write a letter? / Do I write a letter? /

INTERROGATIVE NEGATIVE– i) Does + sub + not + v1 +/- s/es + object

Ex: Does she not write a letter? / Doesn't she write a letter? / Do I not write a letter? / Don't I write a letter?

Simple Present (2)

It is used to denote scientific facts, universal truths and work done on daily basis.

ASSERTIVE RULE - sub + am/is/are + obj.

Ex: Mr. Alam is fahim's father. I am an early riser.

NEGATIVE - sub + am/is/are + not + obj.

Ex: I am not a good painter. The water is not cold.

INTERROGATIVE - Am/is/are + sub + obj.

Ex: Is the weather good for a picnic? Are they ready for the test?

INTERROGATIVE NEGATIVE– Am/is/are + sub + not + obj?

Ex: Is she not a good singer?

Simple Present (Usage)

Facts, Truths, Generalizations	The sun is bright / Cows don't fly / It is hot in summer
Habits and Routines	You do your homework everyday / I always eat my dinner at 8pm daily / You study English every Saturday
Non-Continuous Verbs (Stative Verbs)	I love my family / It tastes good / They need help / Ratul Feels happy
Near Future, Scheduled Events	I have class at 11.30am / Fahim arrives on Monday / We start work soon / This section submits the homework tomorrow
Negative Usage	Ron eats bread – Ron does not eat bread. They swim well – They do not swim well.
Question Form	Does Ron eat bread? / Doesn't Ron eat bread? Do they swim well? / Don't they swim well?

Present Continuous

It is used to express an action taking place at the time of speaking.

ASSERTIVE RULE --- sub + is/am/are + v1 + ing + object

Ex: She is writing a letter

NEGATIVE RULE --- sub + is/am/are + not + v1 + ing + object

Ex: She is not writing a letter

INTERROGATIVE RULE --- is/am/are + sub + v1 + ing + object

Ex: Is she writing a letter?

INTERROGATIVE NEGATIVE RULE --- is/am/are + sub + not + v1 + ing + object

Ex: Is she not writing a letter? / isn't she writing a letter?

Present Continuous (Usage)

Actions happening now	I am teaching English / You are attending classes from home
A longer action in progress	I'm reading an interesting book these days / Fahim is preparing for the IELTS exam / Jeba & Samiha are working at a company / Shorna & I are taking this course
Near future	She is meeting some friends tonight / We are going on vacation in March
Negative Form	I am not having fun / You are not seeing him tonight / Jeba is not working in the project
Question Form	Is he preparing to study in Canada? – Isn't he preparing to study in Canada? Are you coming to the class? – Aren't you coming to the class? Are we watching Pushpa tonight? – Aren't we watching Pushpa tonight?

Present Perfect

It is used to show an action that started in the past and has just finished.

ASSERTIVE RULE --- sub + has/have + v3 + object

Ex: She has written a letter

NEGATIVE RULE --- sub + has/have + not + v3 + object

Ex: She has not written a letter

INTERROGATIVE RULE --- has/have + sub + v3 + object

Ex: Has she written a letter?

INTERROGATIVE NEGATIVE RULE ---has/have + sub + not + v3 + object

Ex: Has she not written a letter? / Hasn't she written a letter?

Present Perfect (Usage)

An action happened in the past at an unknown time	I have been to India / My friends have seen the movie / His phone has been fixed / Rafi has gone home
An action started in the past and continues to now	You have had a car since last year / Anna has liked him for two weeks / We have eaten lunch here for 2 weeks
An action completed in the very recent past	I have just been to the doctor / Ratul has just seen his baby / She has eaten the burger already
Negative Form	I have not been to Europe / Anna has not liked him for weeks / We haven't eaten dinner yet
Question Form	Has she eaten the burger? – Hasn't she eaten the burger? Where have you been? Who has she talked to? What countries have you visited? How long have you been working here?

Present Perfect Continuous

This tense shows the action which started in the past and is still continuing.

ASSERTIVE RULE --- sub + has/have + been + v1 + ing + object

Ex: She has been writing a letter

NEGATIVE RULE --- sub + has/have + not been + v1 + ing + object

Ex: She has not been writing a letter

INTERROGATIVE RULE ---has/have + sub + been + v1 + ing + object + (?)

Ex: Has she been writing a letter?

INTERROGATIVE NEGATIVE RULE --- has/have + she + not + been + v1 + ing + object + (?)

Ex: Has she not been writing a letter? / Hasn't she been writing a letter?

Present Perfect Continuous(Usage)

An action that started in the past and continues to the present	Rina has been studying English for an hour / Lily has been playing the piano for two years / It has been growing since last October
An action that has been happening recently	You have been missing many classes lately / We have been practicing English together recently / Lately, John has been swimming a lot
An action that recently stopped but has a present result	I'm tired because I have been running / The street is wet because it has been raining / You don't understand because you haven't been listening / I have been studying all night, so I'm exhausted
Negative Form	I have not been feeling well these days / She has not been cooking lately / Ron hasn't been eating healthy food recently
Question Form	Has he been reading for an hour? – Hasn't he been reading for an hour? Have they been working since last night? – Haven't they been working since last night? What have you been doing lately? How have you managed the company alone? Who have you been talking to? Why has he been feeling sad?

Past Tense

The verb that refers to the past time is in the Past Tense.

Ex: I wrote this letter yesterday.

There are four types of past tense. They are:

- (a) Simple Past Tense
- (b) Past Continuous Tense
- (c) Past Perfect Tense
- (d) Past Perfect Continuous Tense

Simple Past

Used to indicate an action completed in the past. It often occurs with adverb of time. Sometimes it is used without an adverb of time.

Assertive Sentences – Subject + V2 + Object + (.) / Subject + was/were + object

Ex: She wrote a letter. / She was scared.

Negative Sentences -- Subject + did not + V1 + Object + (.)

Ex: She **did not** write a letter.

Interrogative Sentences - Did + Subject + V1 + Object + (?)

Ex: **Did** she write a letter?

Interrogative Negative Sentences - Did + Subject + not + V1 + Object + (?)

Ex: Did she not write a letter? / Didn't she write a letter?

Simple Past (Usage)

'be' verb was/were	I was scared / Josh was a teacher / They were at home / You were a good student
Regular Verbs	She played a game / He watched a movie /
Irregular Verbs	We bought a camera / You came home late / I ate with my friend / They went to university
Negative Form (was/were)	I was not hungry / The children were not quite / The dog was not playful
Negative Form (non 'be' verbs)	I did not like him / They did not dance / We did not think about that
Question Form	Was he angry? – Wasn't he angry? Did Fahim live here? – Didn't Fahim live here? What did you do last summer? When did you go home last Saturday? Where did you eat lunch? Why did the company fire him?

Past Continuous

Used to denote an action going on at some time in the past.

Ex: I was driving a car.

Rule: Was/Were + v + ing

Assertive Sentences – Subject + was/were + V1+ing + Object + (.)

Ex: She was writing a letter.

Negative Sentences - Subject + was/were + not + V1+ing + Object + (.)

Ex: She was not writing a letter.

Interrogative Sentences - Was/were + Subject + V1+ing + Object + (?)

Ex: Was she writing a letter?

Interrogative Negative Sentences - Was/were + Subject + not + V1+ing + Object + (?)

Ex: Was she not writing a letter?

Past Continuous (Usage)

Actions ongoing in the past	I was walking in the park in the morning / She was living here last year / The dog was eating dinner 10 minutes ago
Actions ongoing in the past that were interrupted by another action - WHEN	I was playing games when you called / We were studying when you arrived / Alisha and I were walking when we saw the accident
Two actions happening at the same time in the past - WHILE	While I was playing football, she was watching me / While her husband was driving, she was taking pictures
Two actions happening at the same time in the past - WHEN	They were living there when the fire broke out / He was studying when his father was watching cricket
Question Form	Was it raining this morning? – Wasn't it raining this morning? Were they working there when the building collapsed? – Weren't they living there when the building collapsed? What were they doing yesterday afternoon? Where were they going together? Why was she crying after finishing the book? Who were the children staying with last Friday?

Past Perfect

Used to describe an action completed before a certain moment in the past, usually a long time ago. If two actions happened in the past, past perfect is used to show the action that took place earlier.

Assertive Sentences – Subject + had + V3 + Object + (.)

Ex: She had written a letter.

Negative Sentences - Subject + had + not + V3 + Object + (.)

Ex: She had not written a letter.

Interrogative Sentences - Had + Subject + V3 + Object + (?)

Ex: Had she written a letter?

Interrogative Negative Sentences - Had + Subject + not + V3 + Object + (?)

Ex: Had she not written a letter?

Past Perfect (Usage)

An action in the past that happened before another action in the past	I had visited Dubai before I moved here / Shaan had bought the book before he read it / The plane had left by the time they reached the airport
An action in the past that happened before another action in the past + Duration	He had owned the house for 5 years before he sold it / Fahim had been lonely for a long time until he got a puppy / Samiha & Ratul had been friends for 3 years before they got married.
Negative Form	I had not eaten at the restaurant we went yesterday / The cat had not chased the bird for very long before it flew away / They had not known each other for three months before they got married
Question Form	Had she eaten lunch by noon? - Hadn't she eaten lunch by noon? Had it rained before they left? Where had he worked before? Who had he talked to this morning? What had he eaten before lunch? How long had they known each other?

Past Perfect Continuous

Used to denote an action that began before a certain point in the past and continued up to some time in past.

Ex: I had been learning English in this school for 20 days

Assertive Sentences – Subject + had + been + V1 + ing + Object + (.)

Ex: She had been writing a letter.

Negative Sentences - Subject + had + not + been + V1+ ing + Object + (.)

Ex: She had not been writing a letter.

Interrogative Sentences - Had + Subject+ been+ V1 + ing + Object + (?)

Ex: Had she been writing a letter?

Interrogative Negative Sentences - Had + Subject +not + been + V1 + ing + Object + (?)

Ex: Had she not been writing a letter?

Past Perfect Continuous (Usage)

Past Perfect Continuous Tense	I had been waiting for the bus for two hours before it arrived / Lora had been cooking for 3 hours before she finished / Tim & Nora had been walking for 2 hours before they sat down
Cause & Effect	Jason was tired because he had been working for hours / The children had been playing, so the room was a mess / The pavement was wet because it had been raining
Negative Form	I had not been feeling well before I quit from the job / You had not been cutting onions for long before you cried
Question Form	Had he been driving all day before he arrived? – Hadn't he been driving all day before he arrived? Why had you been studying so much? What had they been playing before playing football? Who had she been talking to before she left home? Where had you been traveling before you came here?

Future Tense

The verb that refers to the future time is the Future Tense.

Ex: I shall write another letter tomorrow.

Note: Sometimes a past tense may refer to present time and a present tense may express future time.

There are four types of future tense. They are:

- (a) Simple Future Tense
- (b) Future Continuous Tense
- (c) Future Perfect Tense
- (d) Future Perfect Continuous Tense

Simple Future

This tense tells us about an action which has not occurred yet and will occur after saying or in future.

Rule – Will/Shall + Verb (1st form)

Positive / Affirmative Sentences – Subject + Shall/Will + V1 + Object + (.)

Ex: She will write a letter.

Negative Sentences - Subject + Will/Shall + Not + V1 + Object + (.)

Ex: She will not write a letter.

Interrogative Sentences - Will/Shall + Subject + V1+ Object + (?)

Ex: Will she write a letter?

Interrogative Negative Sentences - Will/Shall + Subject + Not + V1 + Object + (?)

Ex: Will she not write a letter?

Simple Future (Usage)

Will	I will close the window / I will be at the library tomorrow / The economy will get better next year / I will help you with your homework
'Be' going to (instead of will)	I am going to buy some milk / It is going to rain tomorrow / He is going to make a trip in the summer
Negative Form	Sam will not like his English score / You will not tell him about this matter / He is not going to fly until next week / You are not going to go to the party
Question Form	Will you attend the class? / Will he play with us?

Future Continuous

It is used to express an ongoing or continued action in future.

Ex: *He will be distributing sweets in temple tomorrow at 12 o'clock.* In the example, the action will start in future (tomorrow) and action is thought to be continued till sometime in future. We use the future continuous to talk about something that will be in progress at or around a time in the future.

Positive / Affirmative Sentences – Subject + Will + Be + V1 + ing + Object + (.)

Ex: She will be writing a letter.

Negative Sentences - Subject + Will/Shall + Not + Be + V1 + ing + Object + (.)

Ex: She will not be writing a letter.

Interrogative Sentences - Will + Subject + Be + V1 + ing + Object + (?)

Ex: Will she be writing a letter?

Interrogative Negative Sentences - Will/Shall + Subject + Not + Be + V1 + ing + Object + (?)

Ex: Will she not be writing a letter?

Future Continuous (Usage)

Future form – will be & going to be	I will be taking the test soon / He will be travelling next month I am going to be taking the test soon / They are going to be shifting the home next Friday / He is going to be living there
Ongoing action in the future	My dad will be cheering when the game ends / He is going to be working tomorrow / We are going to be shopping on Sunday
Two actions in the future	I will be sleeping when they arrive / We will be having dinner when the movie starts / Tina is going to be working when you leave
Negative Forms	Raka will not be performing / The book will not be launching this month
Question Form	Will he be travelling next month? / Will they be arranging a meeting tomorrow? Is he going to be visiting a doctor? Where will he be studying? What is she going to be reading after this book? How will he be managing the rent for next month? When is Rahat going to be moving to Canada?

Future Perfect

It is used to express an action which will happen/occur in future and will be completed by a certain time in future. We use the future perfect to say that something will be finished by a particular time in the future.

Ex: They will have shifted the house by Sunday morning.

Positive / Affirmative Sentences – Subject + Will + Have + V3 + Object + (.)

Ex: She will have written a letter by Sunday.

Negative Sentences - Subject + Will/Shall + Not + Have + V3 + Object + (.)

Ex: She will not have written a letter by Sunday

Interrogative Sentences - Will/Shall + Subject + Have + V3 + Object + (?)

Ex: Will she have written a letter by Sunday?

Interrogative Negative Sentences - Will/Shall + Subject + Not + Have + V3 + Object + (?)

Ex: Will she not have written a letter by Sunday?

Future Perfect (Usage)

An action in the future that will happen by a specific time in future	The snow will have stopped by April / By the time you graduate, you will have completed five years of study / Her arm will have healed by summer
Negative Form	I will not have completed this course by April / You will not have eaten dinner by 7pm / By noon, I will not have taken the flight for USA /
Question Form	Will you have gone to office by 11am? / Will Rita have completed her BSc. by 2025?
WH question	Where will you have travelled by December? / Who will she have interviewed by noon? / How will she have started to learn on her own?

Future Perfect Continuous (Future Perfect Progressive)

- It is used to talk about actions that will commence at a fix time in future and will continue for some time in future. If there is no time reference, then it is not a Future perfect continuous tense.
- Without continued time reference, such sentences are Future Continuous Tense. Continued time reference only differentiates between Future Continuous Tense and Future Perfect Continuous Tense.
- The future perfect progressive emphasize the duration of an activity that will be in progress before another time or event in the future. Ex: *This time tomorrow, I will be enjoying the cricket match in the stadium.*
- It is also used to talk about planned actions or actions expected to happen. Ex: *They will be staying for a week.* The future perfect progressive emphasize the duration of an activity that will be in progress before another time or event in the future. .

Positive / Affirmative Sentences – Subject + Will + Have + been + V1 + ing + Object + (.)

Ex: She will have been writing a letter for two hours by midnight.

Negative Sentences - Subject + Will/Shall + Not + Have been + V1 + ing + Object+ (.)

Ex: She will not have been writing a letter for two hours by midnight.

Interrogative Sentences - Will/Shall + Subject + Have been + V1 + ing + Object +(?)

Ex: Will she have been writing a letter for two hours by midnight?

Interrogative Negative Sentences - Will/Shall + Subject + Not + Have been + V1 + ing + Object +(?)

Ex: Will she not have been writing a letter for two hours by midnight?

Future Perfect Continuous (Usage)

Describe an ongoing action or situation that will last for a specified period of time in the future	She will have been living in Bogura for 10 years by 2024 / By midnight, she will have been sleeping for 12hrs / In June, I will have been working at this University for six months
Negative Form	I will not have been eating pizza for 2 hours by 5pm / They will not have been searching for the cat for 22hrs by 1pm / She will not have been returning the book for 5days by Friday
Question Form	Will Messi have been playing football for PSG for 1 year by August 2022?
Wh Question	Where will you have been walking? / What will you have been wearing for the ceremony? How will you have been travelling on your own?

Thank You 😊