

Simple Past (I did)

A

Study this example:

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart **was** an Austrian musician and composer. He **lived** from 1756 to 1791. He **started** composing at the age of five and **wrote** more than 600 pieces of music. He **was** only 35 years old when he **died**.

lived/started/wrote/was/died are all *simple past*.

W.A. Mozart



1756-1791

B

Very often the simple past ends in **-ed** (*regular verbs*):

- I work in a travel agency now. I **worked** in a department store before.
- They **invited** us to their party, but we **decided** not to go.
- The police **stopped** me on my way home last night.
- Lauren **passed** her exam because she **studied** very hard.

For spelling (**stopped**, **studied**, etc.), see Appendix 6.

But many verbs are *irregular*. The simple past does *not* end in **-ed**. For example:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| write → wrote | <input type="checkbox"/> Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music. |
| see → saw | <input type="checkbox"/> We saw Alice in town a few days ago. |
| go → went | <input type="checkbox"/> I went to the movies three times last week. |
| shut → shut | <input type="checkbox"/> It was cold, so I shut the window. |

For a list of irregular verbs, see Appendix 1.

C

In questions and negative sentences we use **did/didn't** + infinitive (**enjoy/see/go**, etc.):

I	enjoyed
she	saw
they	went

did	you	enjoy?
	she	see?
	they	go?

I		enjoy
she	didn't	see
they		go

- I enjoyed the party a lot. **Did** you **enjoy** it?
- How many people **did** they **invite** to the wedding?
- I **didn't buy** anything because I **didn't have** any money.
- "**Did** you **go** out?" "No, I **didn't**."

Sometimes **do** is the main verb in the sentence (**did ... do / didn't do**). For example:

- What **did** you **do** on the weekend? (*not* What did you on the weekend?)
- I **didn't do** anything. (*not* I didn't anything)

D

The past of **be (am/is/are)** is **was/were**:

I/he/she/it	was/wasn't
we/you/they	were/weren't

was	I/he/she/it?
were	we/you/they?

- I **was** annoyed because **they were** late.
- Was** the weather good when **you were** on vacation?
- They weren't** able to come because **they were** so busy.
- I **wasn't** hungry, so I didn't eat anything.
- Did you go out last night, or **were you** too tired?

Exercises

5.1 Read what Lauren says about a typical working day:



Lauren

I usually get up at 7:00 and have a big breakfast. I walk to work, which takes me about half an hour. I start work at 8:45. I never have lunch. I finish work at 5:00. I'm always tired when I get home. I usually cook dinner a little later. I don't usually go out. I go to bed at about 11:00, and I always sleep well.

Yesterday was a typical working day for Lauren. Write what she did or didn't do yesterday.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 <i>She got up</i> | at 7:00. | 7 | at 5:00. |
| 2 She | a big breakfast. | 8 | tired when |
| 3 She | | 9 | dinner a little later. |
| 4 It | to get to work. | 10 | out last night. |
| 5 | at 8:45. | 11 | at 11:00. |
| 6 | lunch. | 12 | well last night. |

5.2 Complete the sentences using the following verbs in the correct form:

buy catch cost fall hurt sell spend teach throw write

- Mozart *wrote* more than 600 pieces of music.
- "How did you learn to drive?" "My father me."
- We couldn't afford to keep our car, so we it.
- Dave down the stairs this morning and his leg.
- Joe the ball to Sue, who it.
- Kate a lot of money yesterday. She a dress which \$200.

5.3 You ask James about his trip in the U.S. Write your questions.

- YOU: Where *did you go* ?
JAMES: To the U.S. We went on a trip from San Francisco to Denver.
- YOU: How ? By car?
JAMES: Yes, we rented a car in San Francisco.
- YOU: It's a long way to drive. How long ?
JAMES: Two weeks, but we stopped at a lot of places on the way.
- YOU: Where ? In hotels?
JAMES: Yes, small hotels or motels.
- YOU: ?
JAMES: It was very hot – sometimes too hot.
- YOU: the Grand Canyon?
JAMES: Of course. It was wonderful.

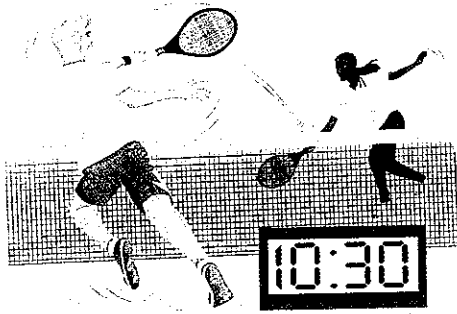
5.4 Complete the sentences. Put the verb into the correct form, affirmative or negative.

- It was warm, so I *took* off my coat. (take)
- The movie wasn't very good. I *didn't enjoy* it much. (enjoy)
- I knew Sarah was busy, so I her. (disturb)
- We were very tired, so we the party early. (leave)
- It was hard carrying the bags. They really heavy. (be)
- The bed was very uncomfortable. I well. (sleep)
- This watch wasn't expensive. It much. (cost)
- The window was open, and a bird into the room. (fly)
- I was in a hurry, so I time to call you. (have)
- I didn't like the hotel. The room very clean. (be)

Past Continuous (I was doing)

A

Study this example situation:



Yesterday Karen and Joe played tennis. They started at 10:00 and finished at 11:30. So, at 10:30 they **were playing** tennis.

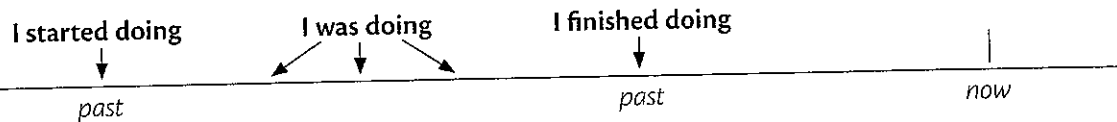
they **were playing** = they were in the middle of playing, they had not finished

was/were + -ing is the *past continuous*:

he/she/it	was	playing doing
we/you/they	were	working, etc.

B

I was doing something = I was in the middle of doing it at a certain time. The action or situation started before this time but had not finished:



- This time last year I **was living** in Hong Kong.
- What **were** you **doing** at 10:00 last night?
- I waved to Hannah, but she **wasn't looking**.

C

Compare I **was doing** (*past continuous*) and I **did** (*simple past*):

I **was doing** (= in the middle of an action)

- We were **walking** home when we met Dan. (in the middle of walking home)
- Kate **was watching** TV when we arrived.

I **did** (= complete action)

- We **walked** home after the party last night. (= all the way, completely)
- Kate **watched** TV a lot when she was sick last year.

D

You can say that something **happened** (*simple past*) in the middle of something else (*past continuous*):

- Matt **called** while we **were having** dinner.
- It **was raining** when I **got** up.
- I **saw** you in the park yesterday. You **were sitting** on the grass and **reading** a book.
- I **hurt** my back while I **was working** in the yard.

But we use the *simple past* to say that one thing happened *after* another:

- I **was walking** along the road when I **saw** Dan. So I **stopped**, and we **talked** for a while.

Compare:

- When Karen arrived, we **were having** dinner. (= we had already started before she arrived)

- When Karen arrived, we **had** dinner. (= Karen arrived, and then we had dinner)

E

Some verbs (for example, **know** and **want**) are not normally used in *continuous* forms (**is + -ing**, **was + -ing** etc.). See Unit 4A for a list of these verbs.

- We were good friends. We **knew** each other well. (*not* we were knowing)
- I was enjoying the party, but Chris **wanted** to go home. (*not* was wanting)

ercises

Complete the sentences. Choose from:



- | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| was looking | was wearing | wasn't listening | weren't looking |
| was snowing | was working | were sitting | were you going |

- Today Hannah is wearing a skirt. Yesterday she was wearing pants.
- "What did he say?" "I don't know. I"
- We in the back of the theater. We couldn't hear very well.
- This time last year John on a farm.
- They didn't see me. They in my direction.
- The weather was bad. It was very cold, and it
- I saw you in your car. Where ?
- I saw Kate a few minutes ago. She for you.

Which goes with which?

- | | | |
|---|--|------------|
| 1 When I got to the cafe, | a when she was living in Rome. | 1 <u>f</u> |
| 2 We fell asleep | b she was working in a clothing store. | 2 |
| 3 Amy learned Italian | c when I was driving home. | 3 |
| 4 Tom didn't come out with us | d but nobody was watching it. | 4 |
| 5 The car began to make a strange noise | e while we were watching a movie. | 5 |
| 6 The TV was on, | f my friends were waiting for me. | 6 |
| 7 When I first met Jessica, | g because he wasn't feeling well. | 7 |

Put the verb into the correct form, past continuous or simple past.

 <p>I <u>saw</u> (see) Sue downtown yesterday, but she (not/see) me. She (look) the other way.</p>	 <p>I (ride) my bike home yesterday when a man (step) out into the road in front of me. I (go) pretty fast, but luckily I (manage) to stop in time, and I (not/hit) him.</p>
--	--

Put the verb into the correct form, past continuous or simple past.

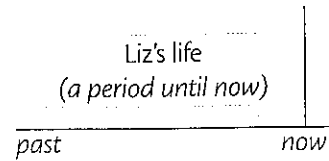
- Jen was waiting (wait) for me when I arrived (arrive).
- "What (you/do) at this time yesterday?" "I was asleep."
- "..... (you/go) out last night?" "No, I was too tired."
- How fast (you/drive) when the accident (happen)?
- Sam (take) a picture of me while I (not/look).
- We were in a very difficult position. We (not/know) what to do, so we (do) nothing.
- I haven't seen Josh for ages. When I last (see) him, he (try) to find a job.
- I (walk) along the street when suddenly I (hear) something behind me. Somebody (follow) me. I was scared, and I (start) to run.
- When I was young, I (want) to be a pilot. Later I (change) my mind.
- Last night I (drop) a plate when I (do) the dishes. Fortunately, it (not/break).

Present Perfect (I have done)

A

Study this example conversation:

- DAVE: **Have you traveled** a lot, Liz?
 LIZ: Yes, I've **been** to lots of places.
 DAVE: Really? **Have you ever been** to China?
 LIZ: Yes, I've **been** to China twice.
 DAVE: What about India?
 LIZ: No, I **haven't been** to India.



Have/Has + traveled/been/done, etc. (past participle) is the present perfect:

I/we/they/you have (= I've, etc.)	traveled been
he/she/it has (= he's, etc.)	done, etc.

The past participle often ends in **-ed** (traveled/decided, etc.), but many important verbs are *irregular* (**been/done/written**, etc.). For a list of irregular verbs, see Appendix 1.

B

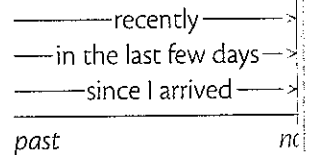
When we talk about a period of time that continues from the past until now, we use the *present perfect* (**have been / have traveled**, etc.). In the conversation in **A**, Dave and Liz are talking about the places Liz **has visited** in her life, which is a period that continues until now. Some more examples:

- Have you ever eaten** caviar?
- We've never **had** a car.
- I don't know what the movie is about. I **haven't seen** it.
- Susan really loves that book. She's **read** it three times. (She's = She **has**)
- It's a really boring movie. It's the most boring movie I've **ever seen**.

C

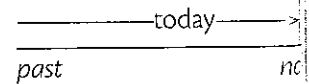
In the following examples too, the speakers are talking about a period that continues until now (**recently, in the last few days, so far, since I arrived**, etc.):

- Have you heard** anything from Ben **recently**?
- I've **met** a lot of people **in the last few days**.
- Everything is going well. There **haven't been** any problems **so far**.
- The weather is bad here. **It's** (= It **has**) **rained** every day **since I arrived**. (= from when I arrived until now)
- It's good to see you again. We **haven't seen** each other **for a long time**.



In the same way we use the present perfect with **today, this evening, this year**, etc., when these periods are not finished at the time of speaking:

- I've **had** four cups of coffee **today**.
- Have you taken** a vacation **this year**?
- I **haven't seen** Tom **this morning**. **Have you?**



D

We say "It's the (first) time something **has happened**." For example:

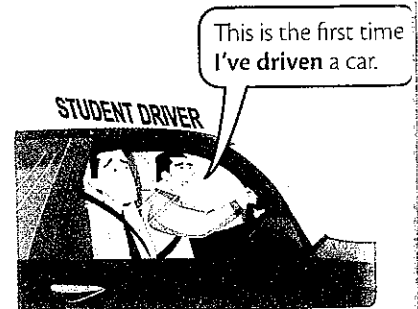
Don is having a driving lesson. It's his first lesson.

We can say:

- It's the first time he **has driven** a car. (*not drives*)
- or He **hasn't driven** a car **before**.
- or He **has never driven** a car **before**.

In the same way we say:

- Sarah has lost her passport again. This is the second time this **has happened**. (*not happens*)
- Andy is calling his girlfriend again. That's the third time he's **called** her **tonight**.



ercises

2 You ask people about things they have done. Write questions with **ever**.

- 1 (ride / horse?) Have you ever ridden a horse?
- 2 (be / California?) Have
- 3 (run / marathon?)
- 4 (speak / famous person?)
- 5 (most beautiful place / visit?) What's

2 Complete B's answers. Some sentences are affirmative and some negative. Use these verbs:

be be eat happen ~~have~~ have ~~meet~~ play read see try

A

B

- 1 What's John's sister like?
- 2 Is everything going well?
- 3 Are you hungry?
- 4 Can you play chess?
- 5 Are you enjoying your vacation?
- 6 What's that book about?
- 7 Is Brussels an interesting place?
- 8 I hear your car broke down again yesterday.
- 9 Do you like caviar?
- 10 Mike was late for work again today.
- 11 Who's that woman by the door?

- 1 I have no idea. I've never met her.
- 2 Yes, we haven't had any problems so far.
- 3 Yes. I much today.
- 4 Yes, but for ages.
- 5 Yes, it's the best vacation for a long time.
- 6 I don't know. it.
- 7 I have no idea. there.
- 8 Yes, it's the second time this month.
- 9 I don't know. it.
- 10 Again? He late every day this week.
- 11 I don't know. her before.

3 Write four sentences about yourself. Use **I haven't** and choose from the boxes.

used a computer taken a bus eaten any fruit
been to the movies read a book lost anything

today
this week
recently
for ages
since ...
this year

- 1 I haven't used a computer today.
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

4 Read the situations and complete the sentences.

- 1 Jack is driving a car for the first time. He's very nervous and not sure what to do.
It's the first time he's driven a car.
- 2 Some children at the zoo are looking at a giraffe. They've never seen one before.
It's the first time a giraffe.
- 3 Sue is riding a horse. She doesn't look very confident or comfortable.
She before.
- 4 Joe and Lauren are on vacation in Japan. They've been to Japan once before.
This is the second time
- 5 Emily is staying at the Prince Hotel. She stayed there a few years ago.
It's not the first this hotel.
- 6 Ben is playing tennis for the first time. He's a complete beginner.
..... before.

Present Perfect and Past 1 (I have done and I did)

A

You can use the present perfect (**I have done**) for new or recent happenings:

- I've **emailed** her, but she **hasn't replied**.
- You've **done** great work on the project. Congratulations!
- The police **have arrested** two people in connection with the robbery.

You can also use the simple past (**I lost, she went, etc.**):

- I **emailed** her, but she **didn't reply**.
- You **did** great work on the project. Congratulations!
- The police **arrested** two people in connection with the robbery.

B

When we say that "something **has happened**," this is *new* information:

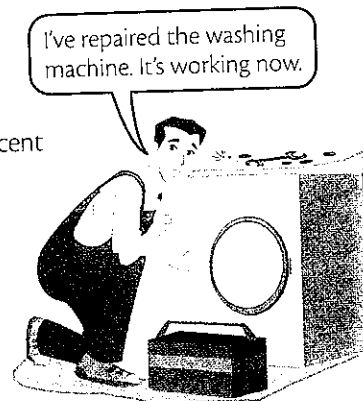
- I've **repaired** the washing machine. It's working OK now.
- "Sally **has had** a baby! It's a boy." "That's great news."

Use the simple past (*not* the present perfect) for things that are not recent or new:

- Mozart **was** a composer. He **wrote** more than 600 pieces of music. (*not has been ... has written*)
- My mother **grew** up in Chile. (*not has grown*)

Compare:

- Somebody **has invented** a new type of washing machine.
- Who **invented** the telephone? (*not has invented*)



C

The present perfect always tells us something about now:

- I'm sorry, but I've **forgotten** your name. (= I can't remember it *now*)
- Sally isn't here. She's **gone** out to the country for a few days. (= she is in the country *now*)
- It's (= It has) **stopped** raining. (= it isn't raining *now*)
- He's **changed** a lot. (= he looks very different *now*)

You can also use the simple past in these examples ("I **forgot** your name," etc.).

Use the simple past (*not* the present perfect) if the situation now is different:

- Sally **went** out to the country for a few days, but she's back now. (*not Sally has gone out*)
- It **stopped** raining for a while, but now it's raining again. (*not It has stopped*)

D

You can use the simple past or present perfect with **just, already** and **yet**.

just = a short time ago

- A: Are you hungry?
- B: No, I **just had** lunch. or I've **just had** lunch.

already = sooner than expected

- A: What time is Mark leaving?
- B: He **already left**. or He's **already left**.




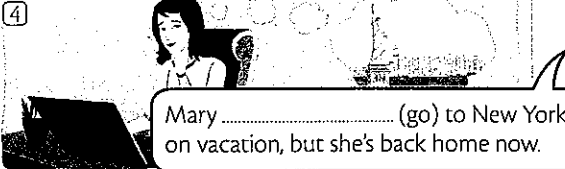
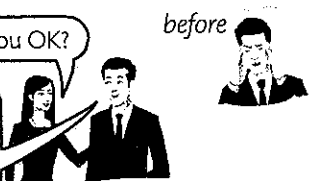
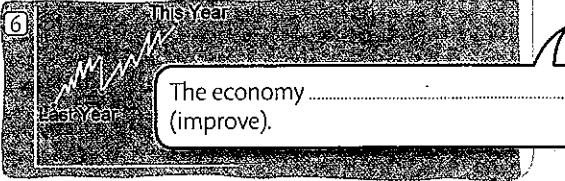
yet = until now (in questions and negative sentences)

Yet shows that the speaker is expecting something to happen (see Unit 108).

- Did it stop** raining **yet**? or **Has it stopped** raining **yet**?
- Sally is still here. She **didn't leave yet**. or She **hasn't left yet**.

Exercises

8.1 Complete the sentences. Use the present perfect where possible. Otherwise, use the simple past.

<p>①</p>  <p>It <u>has stopped</u> (stop) raining, so you don't need an umbrella.</p>	<p>②</p>  <p>The town (change) a lot.</p>
<p>③</p>  <p>I meant to call you last night but I (forget).</p>	<p>④</p>  <p>Mary (go) to New York on vacation, but she's back home now.</p>
<p>⑤</p>  <p>Are you OK?</p> <p>Yes, I (have) a headache, but it's OK now.</p>	<p>⑥</p>  <p>The economy (improve).</p>

8.2 Are the underlined parts of these sentences OK? Correct them where necessary.

- Did you hear about Sophie? She's given up her job. OK
- My mother has grown up in Italy. My mother grew up
- How many plays has William Shakespeare written?
- I know him, but I've forgotten his name. Is it Joe or Jack?
- Who has invented paper?
- Drugs have become a big problem everywhere.
- We've washed the car, but now it's dirty again.
- "Where have you been born?" "In Seattle."
- Mary has gone shopping. She'll be back in about an hour.
- Albert Einstein has been the scientist who has developed the theory of relativity.
- I have applied for a job as a tour guide, but I wasn't successful.

8.3 Read the situations and write sentences with **just**, **already**, or **yet**.

- After lunch you go to see a friend at her house. She says, "Would you like something to eat?"
You say: No, thank you. I just had lunch (have lunch)
- Joe goes out. Five minutes later, the doorbell rings, and the person at the door says, "Is Joe here?"
You say: I'm sorry. (go out)
- You are eating in a restaurant. The waiter thinks you have finished and starts to clear the table.
You say: Wait a minute! (not / finish)
- You are going to a restaurant tonight. You call to make a reservation. Later, your friend says, "Should I make a reservation?" You say: No, (do it)
- You know that a friend of yours is looking for a place to live. Maybe she has been successful.
Ask her. You say:? (find)
- You are still thinking about where to go on vacation. A friend asks, "Where are you going on vacation?"
You say: (not / decide)
- Liz went to the bank, but a few minutes ago she returned. Somebody asks, "Is Liz still at the bank?"
You say: No, (come back)
- Yesterday Carol invited you to a party on Saturday. Now another friend is inviting you to the same party.
You say: Thanks, but Carol (invite)