

Past Tense

⇒ Past Continuous Tense

The Past Continuous Tense, also known as the **Past Progressive Tense**, is used to indicate an **ongoing action** that occurred in the past. It is formed by combining the past tense of the auxiliary verb "**to be**" (**was/were**) with the present participle (**-ing form**) of the main verb.

⇒ Structure

1. Affirmative statements

Subject + was/were + verb-ing

Examples:

- She was reading a book.
- They were playing soccer.



2. Negative statements

Subject + was/were + not + verb-ing

Examples:

- He was not working on the project.
- We were not listening to the radio.



3. Questions

Was/Were + subject + verb-ing

Examples:

- Was she cooking dinner?
- Were they watching a movie?



⇒ Usage

1. Describing ongoing actions in the past

Example: I was studying when the phone rang.

2. Describing parallel actions in the past

Example: While she was preparing dinner, the children were playing outside.

3. Describing background information in a story

Example: It was raining and the wind was blowing when the protagonist entered the haunted house.

4. Indicating a past action that was interrupted by another action

Example: They were discussing the plan when the boss entered the room.

5. Describing a continuous action in the past that happened over a period of time

Example: He was living in Paris for three years before he moved to London.

⇒ Common mistakes

- Avoid using past continuous with non-action verbs (e.g., know, want, believe, understand).

Incorrect: I was knowing the answer.

Correct: I knew the answer.

- Remember the correct auxiliary verb (was/were) depending on the subject.

Incorrect: She were studying.

Correct: She was studying.

