



The Past Tense

in Standard American English

Review, in all aspects

The Past: 4 aspects



Simple Past



Past Progressive (Continuous)



Past Perfect



Past Perfect Progressive

We will cover these skills

- How to make the form
- What each aspect means
- How to use the aspects

Presentation Outline

Past Forms

- Normal (Active Voice) -

- Simple Past :
 - -ed or irregular
 - I walked, I jogged, I ran
- Past Progressive (Continuous) :
 - Was/were + -ing
 - I was walking, you were walking, etc.
- Past Perfect :
 - Had + past participle
 - I had eaten, she had eaten, etc.
- Past Perfect Progressive :
 - Had + been + -ing
 - I had been eating, you had been eating, etc.

– Passive Voice –

Apply Aspect to **Be**, Add Past Participle

- Simple Past :
 - Was/were + past participle
 - I was interrupted, they were interrupted
- Past Progressive (Continuous) :
 - Was/were + being
 - I was being interrupted, they were being interrupted
- Past Perfect :
 - Had + been + past participle
 - I had been interrupted, she had been interrupted
- Past Perfect Progressive (**extremely rare**) :
 - Had + been + being + past participle
 - I had been being interrupted, he **had** been being interrupted

Irregular Forms – Simple & Participle

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IRREGULAR VERBS

infinitive to ...	past simple	past participle have/has ...	infinitive to ...	past simple	past participle have/has ...	infinitive to ...	past simple	past participle have/has ...
be	was/were	been	grow	grew	grown	set	set	set
beat	beat	beaten	hang	hung	hung	sew	sewed	sewn/sewed
become	became	become	have	had	had	shake	shook	shaken
begin	began	begun	hear	heard	heard	shine	shone	shone
bite	bit	bitten	hide	hid	hidden	shoot	shot	shot
blow	blew	blown	hit	hit	hit	show	showed	shown/showed
break	broke	broken	hold	held	held	shrink	shrank	shrunk
bring	brought	brought	hurt	hurt	hurt	shut	shut	shut
build	built	built	keep	kept	kept	sing	sang	sung
buy	bought	bought	know	knew	known	sink	sank	sunk
catch	caught	caught	lay	laid	laid	sit	sat	sat
choose	chose	chosen	lead	led	led	sleep	slept	slept
come	came	come	leave	left	left	smell	smelt	smelt
cost	cost	cost	lend	lent	lent	speak	spoke	spoken
cut	cut	cut	let	let	let	spend	spent	spent
do	did	done	lie	lay	lain	spread	spread	spread
draw	drew	drawn	light	lit	lit	stand	stood	stood
dream	dreamt (-ed)	dreamt (-ed)	lose	lost	lost	steal	stole	stolen
drink	drank	drunk	make	made	made	stick	stuck	stuck
drive	drove	driven	mean	meant	meant	strike	struck	struck
eat	ate	eaten	meet	met	met	swim	swam	swum
fall	fell	fallen	pay	paid	paid	swing	swung	swung
feed	fed	fed	put	put	put	take	took	taken
feel	felt	felt	read	read [red]*	read [red]*	teach	taught	taught
fight	fought	fought	ride	rode	ridden	tear	tore	torn
find	found	found	ring	rang	rung	tell	told	told
fly	flew	flown	rise	rose	risen	think	thought	thought
forget	forgot	forgotten	run	ran	run	throw	threw	thrown
forgive	forgave	forgiven	say	said	said	understand	understood	understood
freeze	froze	frozen	see	saw	seen	wake	woke	woken
get	got	got	seek	sought	sought	wear	wore	worn
give	gave	given	sell	sold	sold	win	won	won
go	went	gone	send	sent	sent	write	wrote	written

* pronunciation

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DUO IRREGULAR VERBS
Art. nr. 41201

Complete List: <https://www.englishpage.com/irregularverbs/irregularverbs.html>

Spelling Changes verb-ing

Verbs ending with one 'e'
('e' sound is silent)

believe
have
live
take
move



**Drop -e
add 'ing'**

believ**ing**
hav**ing**
liv**ing**
tak**ing**
mov**ing**

Short one-syllable verbs ending with CVC

sit
get
plan
run
stop



Double final consonant and add -ing

sit**ting**
get**ting**
plan**ning**
run**ning**
stop**ping**

Two or more syllable verbs with CVC

begin
forget
regret
admit
upset



Double final consonant if last syllable is stressed

begin**ning**
forget**ting**
regret**ting**
admit**ting**
upset**ting**

Verbs ending in -ie

die
lie
tie



**Change -ie to -y
Add -ing**

dy**ing**
ly**ing**
ty**ing**

Irregular
Forms -
Progressive

Modals – Changing from Present to Past

- Present: Can

- Meaning “be able to” – can → could, was/were able to
 - General statement: She could swim as a kid.
 - Specific time: I wasn't able to swim 200 m that day.
- Meaning “be allowed to” – can → could, was/were allowed to
 - Can she go? → Was she allowed to go? **Main clause: ~~Could~~**
 - Mom says I can go. → Mom said I could go.

Modals – Changing from Present to Past

- Present: May

- Meaning “be allowed to” – May → was allowed to
 - May she go now? → Was she allowed to go then?
- Meaning *Possibility* – May → may have
 - She may be lost now. → She may have been lost then.

Modals – Changing from Present to Past

- Present: Must

- Meaning requirement, obligation – Must → had to
 - He had to pay for his bus ticket.
 - I had to file my taxes last year.
- Meaning logical prediction – Must → must have
 - He's not here yet; he must have gotten lost.

Modals – Changing from Present to Past

- Present: Would, Could
 - Meaning: hypothetical or unreal → would have, could have
 - His English was so good, he could have passed that test!
 - I wouldn't have climbed that tree; it was small.
- Present: Should, ought to
 - Meaning: advice, criticism → should have, ought to have
 - She should have called me earlier!
 - This project ought to have been completed.

Modals – Changing from Present to Past

■ Present: Could, Might

Meaning: possibility or guess → Could have, Might have (= **Maybe** was)

- He could be at the park now. → He could have been at the park when she called.
- He might be worried now. → He might have been worried about her at the time.

■ **Future: Will

Meaning: Past reported speech – Will → Would

- I will be there → I said I would be there
- My mom: “I will come visit you.” → My mom said she would come visit me.

Modals – Changing from Present to Past – Summary

Modal → Modal + Have

- May → May have
 - Possibility only
- Could → could have
 - Possibility only
- Might → Might have
 - Possibility only
- Would → would have
 - Unreal/counterfactual only
- Should → Should have
- Ought to → Ought to have
- Must → must have
 - Logical **must** only

Modal → Other Verb

- Can → be able to
 - Ability only
- May, Can → be allowed to
 - Permission only
- Must → have to
 - Requirement only

Modal → Other Modal

- Can → Could
 - Ability **if** description, not completed action
 - Permission **if** in reported speech
- Will → Would
 - Pending action in reported speech

Past Habits: *Would* and *Use to*

In both cases, this usage implies that the past idea is no longer true for you.

Would

- We use *would* to introduce past **actions** that we did habitually
 - When I was young, I would walk to school.
 - As a kid, I would swim every day.
 - When I lived in Tulsa, I would wear shorts to school.
- The usage is always paired with another past idea, to avoid confusion with future hypothetical or advice statements.

Used to

- We use *used to* to introduce past conditions or states.
 - I used to like chocolate.
 - I didn't use to hate spiders.
 - Didn't you use to live in America?
- It can also be used with action verbs.
 - Didn't we use to play together?
 - We used to build LEGO houses.
 - We didn't use to fight about silly things.

- Simple (except **Be**): → Use **Did**
 - I watched TV. → Did you watch TV?
 - She studied Korean. → Did she study Korean?
 - I had three cats. → Did you have any cats?
- Main Verb is **Be** (Simple, Progressive, Passive) → Start with **Be**
 - I was happy. → Were you happy?
 - I was studying math. → Were you studying math?
 - I was loved by all. → Were you loved by all?
- Main Verb is **Have** (Perfect, Perfect Progressive) → Start with **Have**
 - I had read this book. → Had you read this book?
 - I had been sleeping. → Had you been sleeping?
- Main Verb is Modal → Start with Modal
 - I should have visited her. → Should I have visited her?
 - They could see me. → Could they see me?

Questions - ??

- Simple (except **Be**): → Use **Did**
 - I watched TV. → I did not watch TV.
 - She studied Korean. → She didn't study Korean.
 - I had three cats. → I didn't have any cats.
- Main Verb is **Be** (Simple, Progressive, Passive) → Place after **Be**
 - They were happy. → They were not happy.
 - I was studying math. → I was not studying math.
 - She was loved by all. → She was not loved by all.
- Main Verb is **Have** (Perfect, Perfect Progressive) → Place after **Have**
 - I had read this book. → I had not read this book.
 - She had been sleeping. → She had not been sleeping.
- Main Verb is Modal → Place after Modal
 - I could see her house. → I could not see her house.
 - We should have eaten. → We should not have eaten.

Negation -

Questions and Negation: Long Verb Forms

- Sometimes English sentences use several verbs in a row.
 - Example 1: I *was going to be visiting* my sister that week.
 - Example 2: She *could have been waiting* for us for days!
- When this long verb form happens in questions or negation, only the **first verb** changes position to make the question or negation.
 - Example 1 (Q): **Was** I *going to be visiting* my sister that week?
 - Example 1 (N): I **was not** *going to be visiting* my sister that week.
 - Example 2 (Q): **Could she** *have been waiting* for us for days?
 - Example 2 (N): She **could not** *have been waiting* for us for days.

Special Notes: Tense Consistency

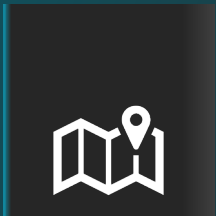
Reminder:

- In academic writing, teachers often ask students to follow “tense consistency.”
- If the first verb in the progressive or perfect aspect is in past tense, then the verb form is allowed in past-tense paragraphs.

Additional Notes:

- In English, the **present perfect** can be used in either a present tense paragraph or a past tense paragraph. Usually, in a past tense paragraph, it is near the end because it hints at the present.
 - Example: My friend called me this morning to say that there were raspberries for sale at the market, but I’ve gone there three times and haven’t found them!
- While *be going to* shifts forward to indicate future, the past version (*were going to*) is part of the past domain. It usually indicates a plan that has been cancelled.

Past Meaning

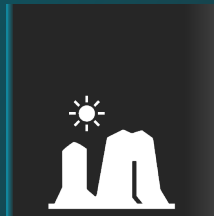


Simple.

Statements of fact or opinion (e.g., *Meat was expensive*)

Habitual actions (e.g., *The sun rose and set every day*)

Completed actions (e.g., *I went to work on Friday*)



Progressive.

Actions in progress (e.g., *I was washing the dishes*)

Background description (e.g., *I was studying English that semester*)

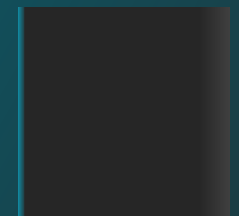
Relative future (*I was meeting a friend later*)



Perfect.

Status that started before the main past moment (e.g., *I told him I had lived in Japan since March*)

Action completed before the main past time (e.g., *By then, I had already read the whole series*)



Perfect Progressive.

Action in progress in the past that started before then. Has a specific start (e.g., *When he called, I had been writing since 9:00*) or duration (e.g., *I realized that I had been studying for five hours!*)

Past Meaning - Passive

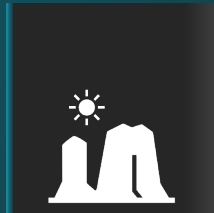


Simple.

Action by someone else, focus on effects (e.g., *I was annoyed by you.*)

Action by unknown agent, description (e.g., *The candles were lit.*)

Event, agent unnecessary (e.g., *300 babies were born that year.*)

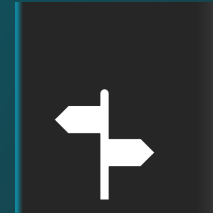


Progressive.

Actions in progress (e.g., *Our hotel room was being prepared.*)

Projects (e.g., *Some classes were being transferred online.*)

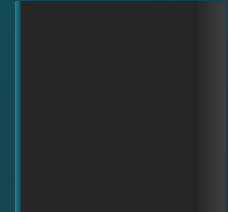
Relative future (e.g., *The trash was being collected later*) – informal



Perfect.

Status that started before the main past time (e.g., *That art had been owned by the museum since March.*)

Action in the past, before the main time (e.g., *All of the money had already been spent.*)



Perfect Progressive.

RARE. Past situation in progress that started in the earlier past. Specific start (e.g., *I had been being bullied since 9th grade*) or duration (e.g., *I had been being lied to for years!*) **Note: Usually, the perfect is better.**



Past Use

- Thanks to the four aspects and **active** versus **passive** voice, there are many verb forms that include the past tense.
- Some of these verb forms allow us to include information about the past and the future.
- When writing paragraphs, it is logical to move forward in time. For example:
 - I had always wanted to visit California because I liked beaches and lots of people. I had a list of all the tourist attractions that I wanted to visit, and I talked to my friends about it and added items to the list whenever I thought of new ideas. Then my friend Rie said that she wanted to go to CA, too! We made our plans and went CA last month, and it was incredible.

Alert!

Special Note on “Perfect” Use

It is possible to use the present perfect in a past tense paragraph.

However...

In many cases, it should not be used in the same paragraph as the past perfect.

Change the order of the sentences to make the paragraph logical.

1. Sara made plans to study in Paris the following year. Sara spoke French, and she loved to cook. Sara had always dreamed of visiting Paris.
2. Hyogo's parents started thinking about getting a dog. Hyogo had never liked dogs. She promised to take care of it, and she did her chores to prove that she was responsible. But Hyogo's little sister was obsessed with puppies and really wanted a dog. He thought they smelled bad.

Past Use:

Practice!

Past Tense Summary

Here is what we learned

- **Form:**

There are four aspects and two “voices” (passive and active) in each tense.

There are many irregular forms of the simple past and the past participle.

Modal verbs use three different patterns to express the past.

- **Meaning:**

It is possible to use the present perfect in the past tense as well as the present tense.

The past *be going to* means that the plans no longer exist (were cancelled).

- **Use:**

It is possible to communicate information about the past, present, and future, using only past tense aspects.

In general, the present perfect and the past perfect should not be in the same paragraph.