PAST TENSES

Practice Workbook • Simple Past • Past Continuous • Past Perfect • Past Perfect Continuous

Instructions: Read each sentence carefully. Choose or write the correct past tense.

Quick Reminder

Tense	Main idea	Example
Simple Past	Finished action in the past	I visited Rome last year.
Past Continuous	Action in progress at a past time	I was studying at 8 p.m.
Past Perfect	Earlier action before another past action	She had left before I arrived.
Past Perfect Continuous	Action continuing up to another past point	They had been waiting for an hour.

Exercise 1 — Choose the Correct Tense

1. Yesterday, I (walked / was walking) to school.
2. At 7 p.m. last night, we (watched / were watching) a movie.
3. When I arrived, the train (left / had left).
4. She was tired because she (studied / had been studying) for three hours.
5. They (played / were playing) football when it started to rain.
6. He (finished / had finished) his homework before dinner.
7. I (met / was meeting) my friend last Saturday.
8. By the time the teacher came, the students (started / had started) the test.
9. We (waited / had been waiting) for 30 minutes before the bus arrived.
10. While Sarah (cooked / was cooking), her brother cleaned the table.

Exercise 2 — Complete the Sentences

11. I _____ (visit) my grandparents last weekend.
12. At 9 o’clock, Tom _____ (sleep).
13. When we got home, our parents _____ already _____ (eat).
14. She _____ (study) for two hours before she took a break.
15. They _____ (drive) home when they saw the accident.
16. After he _____ (finish) the project, he sent it to his teacher.
17. We _____ (wait) for an hour before the doctor called us.
18. Last summer, my family _____ (travel) to Spain.

Exercise 3 — Find and Correct the Mistake

19. I was went to the store yesterday.

20. She had ate breakfast before school.

21. They were play tennis when it started raining.

22. He had been study English for two years before he moved.

23. We had finished dinner when the guests arrived. (Correct or incorrect?)

24. At 8 p.m., I was watched TV.

25. Sarah visited the museum after she had finished her homework. (Correct or incorrect?)

26. They had been waiting for 20 minutes when the bus finally came. (Correct or incorrect?)

Exercise 4 — Mixed Challenge

27. When I _____ (open) the door, I _____ (see) that someone _____ (break) the window.

28. While we _____ (walk) through the park, it _____ (start) to snow.

29. He was exhausted because he _____ (run) for an hour.

30. After Maria _____ (finish) her exam, she _____ (go) home.

31. Last night, I _____ (read) a book when my phone _____ (ring).

32. By the time the movie started, we _____ (find) our seats.

33. They _____ (live) in London for five years before they moved to Paris.

34. I _____ (not / see) him yesterday because I _____ (work) all day.

Exercise 5 — Short Story

Complete the story with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

Last Saturday, Emma _____ (wake) up early. She _____ (plan) a trip to the countryside. When she _____ (leave) the house, it _____ (rain), but she decided to go anyway.

By the time she _____ (reach) the train station, she _____ already _____ (buy) her ticket online. She _____ (wait) for twenty minutes when the train finally arrived.

During the journey, Emma _____ (read) a book. She was happy because she _____ (finish) all her work before the weekend.

After she arrived, she _____ (walk) around the village and _____ (take) many photos.

Exercise 6 — Write Your Own Sentences

35. Write a sentence using the Simple Past.

36. Write a sentence using the Past Continuous.

37. Write a sentence using the Past Perfect.

38. Write a sentence using the Past Perfect Continuous.

39. Write one sentence using two different past tenses.

40. Write a short 3–4 sentence story using at least three past tenses.

ANSWER KEY

Check your answers only after completing the exercises.

Exercise 1

1. walked
2. were watching
3. had left
4. had been studying
5. were playing
6. had finished
7. met
8. had started
9. had been waiting
10. was cooking

Exercise 2

11. visited
12. was sleeping
13. had already eaten
14. had been studying
15. were driving
16. had finished
17. had been waiting
18. traveled

Exercise 3

19. I went to the store yesterday.
20. She had eaten breakfast before school.
21. They were playing tennis when it started raining.
22. He had been studying English for two years before he moved.
23. Correct.
24. At 8 p.m., I was watching TV.
25. Correct.
26. Correct.

ANSWER KEY — CONTINUED

Exercise 4

27. opened / saw / had broken

28. were walking / started

29. had been running

30. had finished / went

31. was reading / rang

32. had found

33. had been living

34. did not see / was working

Exercise 5

wake → woke

plan → had planned

leave → left

rain → was raining

reach → reached

buy → had already bought

wait → had been waiting

read → was reading

finish → had finished

walk → walked

take → took

Exercise 6 — Sample Answers

35. I visited my cousin last weekend.

36. I was studying at 8 p.m. yesterday.

37. She had finished her homework before dinner.

38. They had been waiting for an hour before the bus arrived.

39. I was walking home when I saw my teacher.

40. Sample answers may vary.