

Tenses

Simple present

- he/she/it + s
Add 's' to the infinitive in the third person singular (he/she/it): he/she/it looks. But I/you/we/they look.
- Irregular verbs have to be learnt!
- Form questions and negative sentences with do/does + infinitive:
How much do you spend on clothes?
The government doesn't spend enough money on education.

Examples of typical use

- Humans need approximately eight hours of sleep a night. (For facts and general statements)
- Does Jill always read in the evening?/Jack leaves the house at 7 am (For everyday activities or habits.)
- The two knights fight, the Queen screams, and then the King saves her. (For a set sequence of events or actions.)
- The play opens at the Monty Theatre in a month. (For scheduled future events with an adverbial phrase of time.)

Present progressive

- am/are/is + -ing (present participle)
I'm learning/you're reading/she's watching
- Form questions by inversion: What are you doing?
- Form negatives by adding 'not': They aren't coming.
- Some verbs are never used in the progressive form, especially many that express feelings or belief, e.g. believe, love, hate, seem, have (in the sense of own), feel, notice, realize.

Examples of typical use

- Greg is cooking dinner (now)./We are building a house. (For an activity that is going on right now and will continue for a certain limited or temporary period of time.)
- They are visiting us in three weeks. (For planned future events with an adverbial phrase of time.)

Simple past

- verb + -ed: Regular verbs add 'ed' to the infinitive:
look – looked.
- Irregular past forms have to be learnt!
go – went
- Form negatives and questions with did/didn't + infinitive:
Did you watch Big Brother on TV last night?
We didn't go to the cinema on Saturday.
- With was/were: Form negative sentences by adding 'not' and form questions by inversion:
Karen wasn't very happy about her grades.
Where were you last night?

Examples of typical use

- Columbus discovered America in 1492./ They returned from the Canary Islands a week ago. (For activities that began and ended at a specific time in the past.)
- As the train left the station, Helen looked around the compartment. There was no one else in sight. She took out the letter and started to read. (For a series of events in the past as in a story, often called the "narrative past")

Tense markers:

yesterday, ago, last (week, month, year ...), in (2007 ...), on Tuesday, etc.

Past progressive	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> was/were + -ing (present participle) They were playing football. Form negative sentences by adding 'not': They weren't playing football. Form questions by inversion: Were they playing football? 	<p>Examples of typical use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They were cleaning the house when the guests arrived. (For an activity in the past that was already in progress when something else happened.) While Patty was mowing the lawn, Sid was cleaning the windows. (For several activities or events that were happening at the same time in the past.)

Present perfect simple	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has/have + past participle: Monica has found her English book. Form the past participle of regular verbs by adding '-ed' to the infinitive: play – played. Learn the past participles of irregular verbs! Form negative sentences by using 'hasn't/haven't': Monica hasn't found her English book. Form questions by inversion: What has Monica lost? 	<p>Examples of typical use</p> <p>With the present perfect simple the result of the action is usually more important than the action itself. Never use the present perfect with adverbs of past time, e.g. yesterday, last week, three years ago, in 2006.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They have moved to Stratford. (For activities that happened recently, and whose effects are still felt in the present.) The test results have just arrived./I have had good marks so far this year./Have you ever been to New York? (With certain adverbs: just, so far, ever, never, recently.) I haven't eaten chocolate for three weeks!/I haven't seen Melanie since 2004. (With 'for' and 'since', for activities that started in the past and are continuing.) <p>Tense markers: already, yet, for, still, always, lately, recently, today, this week, so far, up to now</p>

Present perfect progressive

- have/has + been + -ing (present participle):
He has been looking for a job for three years now.
- Form negative statements by using 'hasn't/haven't':
You haven't been looking properly.
- Form questions by inversion:
Have you been looking properly?

Examples of typical use

The present perfect progressive is used in much the same way as the present perfect simple, but the activity is more important than the result.

- We have been looking for a camping site all day.
(For activities that have been going on either continuously or at intervals up to the present, often with adverbials of time such as 'all day', 'for a week', etc.)
- It's been raining.
(With no mention of time, the activity has taken place very recently and the result is clearly visible.)

Past perfect simple

- had + past participle:
He had found ...
- Form negative sentences with 'hadn't':
He hadn't found ...
- Form questions by inversion:
What had he found?

Examples of typical use

- When we arrived at the station the train had already left. (For an activity that happened before another activity in the past, showing the connection between the two activities.)
- Jane admitted that she had forgotten to do her homework. (In indirect speech, when the original statement is in the past or present perfect.)

Past perfect progressive

- had been + -ing (present participle):
They had been working.
- Form negative sentences with 'hadn't':
They hadn't been working.
- Form questions by inversion:
What had they been doing?
- The activity is more important than the result.

Examples of typical use

- He was tired because he had been working so hard. (For a past activity that occurred before another and there is a direct relation to the activity that followed.)
- He said that he had been working hard. (For indirect speech, when the original statement is in the present perfect progressive.)

Future simple ('will' future)

- will/shall + infinitive: *It will rain tomorrow.*
- Form negative sentences with 'won't':
It won't rain tomorrow.
- Form questions by inversion:
Will it rain tomorrow?

Examples of typical use

- English 'will' = German 'werden/wird'
German 'will' = English 'want/wants'
- *You'll be a great movie star some day.*
(For things that are likely to happen at a defined or undefined time in the future.)
 - *On Saturday there will be rain and snow for most of the day.* (For forecasts, such as the weather forecast.)

Future progressive

- will + be + -ing (present participle):
They will be doing ...
- Form negative sentences with 'won't':
They won't be doing ...
- Form questions by inversion:
What will they be doing?

Examples of typical use

You will be sleeping by the time I get home.
(For events – often planned – that will be going on at a certain time in the future when another event occurs.)

Future perfect simple

- will + have + past participle:
Joanna will have finished.
- Form negative sentences with 'won't':
Joanna won't have finished.
- Form questions by inversion:
Will Joanna have finished?

Examples of typical use

Joanna will have finished the college course by the time she is 18.
(For future activities that take place before other future activities to show a relation between them. The simple present is used for the other activities.)

Future perfect progressive

- will + have been + -ing (present participle):
They will have been studying.
- Form negative sentences with 'won't':
They won't have been studying.
- Form questions by inversion:
Will they have been studying?

Examples of typical use

They will have been studying English for eight years before they take the exam.
(Used in the same way as the future perfect simple but placing more emphasis on the activity.)