

Review of Tenses

Instructions: In each exercise use only the tenses given in the examples and then put the verbs in the correct tense and form. Use full and not contracted forms. Be careful with adverbs.

Exercise 1: Present Tenses

Present Tense in the Simple Form

Habits: Every day he listens to the radio at 7 in the morning Some people tell between 200 and 300 lies a day! He says whatever he likes. He tells me he can't stand criticism. Does he speak several foreign languages fluently?	Opinions: We expect politicians to be dishonest. He thinks Martians do not exist. It makes me wonder how gullible we really are. I believe we must stop destroying our environment. Do you think he needs more practice? Does he agree with you?
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Present Tense in the continuous form (Action occurring while the speaker is talking.)

The present moment Be quiet! I am reviewing for my English test. She isn't feeling well right now. "Star Wars" is playing at our local cinema tonight. Is he talking with his teacher right now? Are they preparing dinner or still watching the film?	The "very near" future*: tonight / tomorrow / next summer We are going to the cinema tonight . The children are visiting the zoo tomorrow . We are going to travel to South America next summer . (NB. "to be going to" expresses an idea of " <i>intention</i> " in the future.)
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A typical university student (Use only the present tense):

Every day, his alarm clock **goes off** (go off) at 6 o'clock and he **wakes up** (wake up). Then he **gets up** (get up), **takes** (take) a shower and **gets dressed** (get dressed). His brother generally **has** (have) breakfast with him. **Does** he **listen** (listen) to the radio in the morning? Yes, he **often listens to** (often listen to) the 7 o'clock news. After breakfast, he **always brushes** (always brush) his hair and his teeth. Usually, he **gets** (get) a ride with a friend of his who **owns** (own) a car, but sometimes he **takes** (take) the bus. He **has to** (have to) be at school by 8 o'clock. Right now, he **is sitting** (sit) in the bus. What **is** he **thinking** (think) about? He **is thinking** (think) about his math assignment. He **is also reviewing** (also review) for the chemistry test he **is taking** (take) this afternoon. Usually, he **gets** (get) good grades in chemistry, but every time he **does not study** (not study), his mark **is** (be) low. Fortunately, he **sees**¹ (see) that the bus **is arriving** (arrive) now. Tonight he **is spending** (spend) the evening with some pals. He often **goes** (go) to the cinema especially when a good film **is playing**² (play).

¹ In written English full forms are preferred to contractions, but "doesn't"/"don't" can be seen in texts. The verbs "see", "hear", "taste", "smell" (the verbs which refer to our senses) do not take the "ING" form. Instead, we **usually** say, "I **can** see, I **can** smell..." etc.

² A good film **is playing** (and not "**plays**"), because it is being shown "NOW" at the present moment, even if it is not every hour of the day.

Exercise 2 * Time Clauses in the future following certain expressions

These expressions are “when”, “whenever”, “as soon as”, “unless”, “while”, “by the time”, “provided” or “by the time”. Notice that after these expressions —used in subordinate clauses—we **never** use “will/shall”. In short after these expressions we never use the future tense.

<p>When he arrives, I'll tell him that you rang.</p> <p>Whenever he is ready, we will let him try.</p> <p>As soon as I get to the office I will telephone him.</p> <p>Whenever they decide, we'll send them the order.</p> <p>Unless we hurry, we will miss the flight.</p> <p>While he is visiting Paris, he will go to Versailles.</p>	<p>By the time we arrive, the film will already have started.</p> <p>NB. By 2015 all automakers will have put out* an electric model.</p> <p>By 9 o'clock the film will already have started*.</p> <p>*When there is only a “principle clause”, we use the future.</p> <p>By 2015=When we reach the year 2010, all automakers will have...</p> <p>By 9 o'clock=When it is 9 o'clock, the film will already have...</p>
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Global warming:

Next summer, when the weather **is** (be) very warm, people all over Europe **will probably say** (probably say) that we are exposed to a phenomenon of global warming. As soon as the snow **melts** (melt) a little in the Alps, skiers **deplore/will deplore** (deplore) the greenhouse effect. It may be true that we are gradually destroying the environment, and unless we **do** (do) something about the harmful gases such as CO₂, the situation **will undoubtedly get** (undoubtedly get) worse. In the past, nobody ever thought that mankind's pollution would one day affect the air we breathe and even the temperature of our planet. Nevertheless, today numerous scientists claim that by the year 2500 it **will be** (be) too late. By then the average global temperature **will have climbed** (climb) from 15 degrees to 20 degrees. In other words, by the middle of the next millennium, we **will already have witnessed** (already witness) a rise of 5 degrees C. Indeed, a considerable number of specialists in the field say that by the second half of the next millennium desert areas **will have spread** (spread), the ocean level **will have risen** (rise), whereas certain icy regions **will have turned** (turn) into excellent agricultural fields with fertile soil. This is bound to cause injustice even wars. So while³ we **are inventing** (invent) new technologies, we should also take measures to protect our environment. Unless our governments **enforce** (enforce) new legislation, both developing and developed countries **will have to** (have to) face increasing difficulties.

Exercise 3: Past Tenses

*Past: Simple Past

The date or time is often indicated (“1938” / “ago”) or expressed indirectly “when I was a child”.

<p>When I was a child*, my father took me to a football match every weekend.</p> <p>He spoke to the new students at the end of the class.</p> <p>He caught the 8.50 yesterday too, didn't he?</p> <p>She swept the garage two days ago after he had left.</p> <p>Did she write the email today or yesterday?</p>	<p>When he realized what had happened, he went right back and gave the money back.</p> <p>When I went in, he stood up and shook hands with me.</p> <p>In 1938 Orson Welles made Americans believe that Martians had come to make war.</p> <p>Did they tell the truth and nothing but the truth?</p>
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*Past: Present Perfect (simple & continuous forms)—*Action situated between the past and the present*

³ “while” = “during the time in which”

<p><i>Present Perfect: simple form (since/for)</i></p> <p>He has written a novel about extraterrestrials. I've seen your face before. Haven't already we met?</p> <p><i>Very recent action - almost in the present</i></p> <p>He's just received a letter from his girlfriend.</p>	<p><i>Present Perfect: continuous form (since/for)</i></p> <p>He has been having problems sleeping since July. We've been living in London for six months.</p> <p><i>Very recent action - almost in the present</i></p> <p>I've just been listening to the song you like the best</p>
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***Past: Continuous (It is used only when there are two actions occurring at the same time. The one, which lasts the longest, is in the continuous form.)**

His girl friend was waiting for him, when he arrived .	He was watching television, while I was reading a book.
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***Past Perfect**

<p><i>Past Perfect: simple form</i></p> <p>She had baked a cake before she went to the meeting.</p>	<p><i>Past Perfect: continuous form</i></p> <p>I had been waiting for 3 hours, when he finally arrived.</p>
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A friend of mine:

I was **born** (be born) in a small village in the North of France. I **lived** (live) there until I was (be) 11. Then my father **had to** (have to) change jobs so my parents **moved** (move) to Paris. I went (to go) to junior high school in the suburbs. Occasionally, we **visited** (visit) downtown Paris, and I **was allowed** (be allowed) to see the Louvre. I **had never seen** (never see) such a huge museum before. Remember, before coming to Paris, I **had only experienced** (only experience) the life of the countryside. People in Paris kept (keep) asking me, "Have you **ever been to*** (go) such a big place in all your life?" Of course, I **had** to (have to) answer, "No".

When I had **only** three years left of secondary school, my parents **wanted** (want) me to attend a Lycée (High School) in the west of Paris. When I **had been** (be) at this new High School for only two months, I **met** (meet) Paul, who immediately **became** (become) my very best friend. Together we **went** (to go) to many interesting places; and during our summer vacations, we traveled (travel) **to** distant countries. Our parents **let** (let) us go on these trips because they trusted (trust) us. They, themselves, had **traveled** (travel) as teenagers so they wanted (want) their children to have the same opportunities.

One day, as I **was concentrating** (concentrate) on an assignment, Paul came (come) rushing in. I **had been working** (work) so hard all day that I hardly noticed he was (be) out of breath. Suddenly, he told (tell) me he had **won** (win) at the national lottery, and he was **planning** (plan) to fulfill our dream of spending three months in Australia. Two months later, we **passed** (pass) our Baccalaureate and then flew (fly) directly to Sydney from where we **toured** (tour) the country. We **lost** (lose) contact after our university studies. Since then, it seems that Paul has **gone** (go) to live abroad. Unfortunately, I have **not seen** (not see) him for many years now, but I still to this day **have not forgotten** (not forget) the moment he announced (announce) to me that he had **won** (win) at the lottery!

***Important:** The verb "to go" followed by "to" has two past participles: **gone to**, **been to**. The past participle "Gone" means having left without returning, "Been" means having *left and returned*. Do not confuse "been to" with the past participle of the verb "to be" (which is also "been").

Exercise 4: Simple Past and Past Perfect Tenses after Certain words and Phrases: “wish”, “would rather + subordinate”, “it is (high) time” + subordinate, “as if”

1. “wish” + simple past = a wish that could be fulfilled (*carried out*), a wish that is possible: I wish I knew the answer, and then I **would** act quickly. *Be careful with the verb “to be”: I wish I were you.

To understand the use of “to wish”, change to “if only I knew the answer.” If only I were you.

2. “wish” + past perfect = a wish that cannot be fulfilled, a wish that is impossible: I wish I had written her telephone number down, then I **could have invited** her to our party. I wish I could have persuaded him, and then he **wouldn't have made** that big mistake!

3. “would rather” + subordinate / “I'd rather” + subordinate

I'd rather we **changed to a different means of transport**. Or in the negative as is often the case: I'd rather you **didn't tell (did not tell)** her the news until we arrive.

4. “It is time...” or “It is high time...” or “It is really time...” + past (preterit)

It's (high) time we went home. / It is time we decided on a gift for her.

5. He talked to me as if he were* an expert, but of course he's not! *Not a mistake. The **past plural** is used even for the singular. (In fact it is the subjunctive.) This grammar point is to be found in nearly all TOEFL tests. So beware!

Take my advice!

Mary: I wish you had **come** (come) with me, because then I wouldn't have had so much trouble deciding what to do. If only I had **known** (know) what to say yesterday, when my boyfriend was acting so impolitely! I wish I could **have made** (can make) him stop making fun of me when all those people were asking me so many questions. I'm going to explain to him politely that I'd rather he **did not keep/didn't keep** (not keep) interrupting me every time I try to say something. He treats me as though I **were** (be) an idiot. And I'm not! It's high time I **left** (leave) him. Don't you agree?

Pat: It's high time you **rethought** (rethink) your whole situation. I wish you had **gone** (go) hiking with us this last weekend instead of going to that symposium. You would have had a great time with us and enjoyed yourself no end. If Paul is really behaving as if he **owned** (own) you, it's really time you **set** (set) things straight. But I'd rather you did **not take/didn't take** (not take) a decision in haste that you might regret later.

Remember that English people may occasionally say “had rather”, but Americans always say “would rather” and the TOEFL is an American exam! In both countries we say “had better”.

Exercise 5 * Conditionals with “If” Clauses

1. **Present + Present: Generalization**

If you **don't remember** how to spell a word, you **can** look it up in the dictionary.

If you never **attempt** anything, you **never achieve** anything. (**A saying = proverb**)

2. **Present + Future: Future prediction, real condition, great certainty**

If you **keep** calm, everything **will be** all right. (In most cases use "will" for the future not "shall".)

3. **Present + conditional (would/could/might): Future prediction, but with uncertainty**

If you **keep** calm, everything **could turn out** all right.

4. **Past + conditional: Real or unreal hypothesis (wish may, or may not, be fulfilled)**

If I **earned** as much as he does, I **would be** rich (I **could become** rich).

If I **were** you, I'd accept! (...I **would accept**!)

If only I **could learn** to ask for help, I **would do** so whenever I needed to.

5. **Past perfect + conditional: Past hypothesis about a past situation, unreal condition/wish cannot be fulfilled**

If only I **had known** that before, I **would have telephoned** her.

If I **hadn't spoken** to her, she **would have gone** away.

If, if, if...

Susan: If I see our friend Alex, I will **tell** (tell) him you rang, but since you don't want anyone to know, I **will not/won't explain** (not explain) anything to him about our conversation.

Art: Please don't. But as I was saying, if tomorrow I won at the football pools, I would **sell** (sell) all my belongings, and I would **go** (go) round the world.

Susan: But really, if you wish to go abroad, why don't you start by selling your car? If you sold it today, you **would be able** (be able) to travel around Europe this coming summer.

Art: You're perfectly right, and you know what? We could speculate even further. If I **had done** (do) away with my car by selling it in January at a good price (before the accident!), I would **have had** (have) more money in cash last year, and I **would certainly have won** (certainly win) more bets at the football pools. I **would be** (be) rich right now!

Susan: You're not being sensible! You're out of your mind! If you go **on** (go on) betting all the time, you will **lose** (lose) everything you own, and you will **never save** (never save) enough money to go anywhere.

Art: Oh, you've been telling me that for ages. If I had **listened** (listen) to you last year, today I would **not even be driving** (not even drive) a car!

Susan: But Art, as everyone says, "If you never listen to advice, you **will never learn/never learn** (never learn) anything". You're on the wrong track! It's really high time you stopped (stop) betting!

N.B. The pools = (chiefly British) nationwide gambling with bets on the results of football matches

Exercise 6: Past Tenses

Both the past and the past perfect in both the simple and continuous forms.

Simple form	Continuous form
<p>She sat down, opened the box and took the present out. When he got to the cinema, the doors were closed. She explained to them what had happened. The announcer told the uneasy listeners that a metal spaceship had landed near Princeton, New Jersey. Did she remember what we had told her?</p>	<p>He was working and watching television at the same time. Was he sleeping, while she was getting the suitcases ready? I thought she had been crying, as her eyes were red. They had been performing all night and hadn't even noticed how tired they were. Had he been waiting for a long time before they arrived?</p>

Remember that in 9 cases out of 10 we use the simple past (as here) and not the present perfect to describe something that happened in the past.

A shrill sound, a signal? *(At times there may be two possible right answers.)*

Last Tuesday evening, something really strange **happened** (happen). I **was watching** (watch) a TV broadcast and **contentedly eating** (contentedly eat) popcorn, when suddenly I heard (hear) a shrill sound. I **rushed** (rush) to the window and **looked out** (look out). Since I **didn't notice** (not notice) anything bizarre, I **went back** (go back) to the couch. I simply **figured** (figure) that the strange noise **had merely been** (merely⁴ be) a special effect in the film. When the film **ended** (end), I **went** (go) to the kitchen. While I **was preparing** (prepare) a club sandwich, a friend of mine **called** (call) me on the phone. She too **mentioned** (mention) the same strange noise she **had heard** (hear) while she **was watching/had been watching** (watch) the film. Then three other neighbors **called me up** (call me up) and **told** (tell) me exactly the same story. What exactly **had happened**? Perhaps extraterrestrial beings **had secretly landed/had secretly been landing** (land secretly) all around our neighborhood, while we **were quietly watching** (quietly watch) TV, and we **had not even been** (not even be) aware of it. We **had missed/missed** (miss) a big event that evening, and now we **wouldn't be** able to tell our kids about it!

⁴ merely = simply