

# 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

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

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

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

N.B. 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.

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

Next summer, when the weather \_\_\_\_\_ (be) very warm, people all over Europe \_\_\_\_\_ (probably say) that we are exposed to a phenomenon of global warming. As soon as the snow \_\_\_\_\_ (melt) a little in the Alps, skiers \_\_\_\_\_ (deplore) the greenhouse effect. It may be true that we are gradually destroying the environment, and unless we \_\_\_\_\_ (do) something about the harmful gases such as CO<sub>2</sub>, the situation \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (be) too late. By then the average global temperature \_\_\_\_\_ (climb) from 15 degrees to 20 degrees. In other words, by the middle of the next millennium, we \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (spread), the ocean level \_\_\_\_\_ (rise), whereas certain icy regions \_\_\_\_\_ (turn) into excellent agricultural fields with fertile soil. This is bound to cause injustice even wars. So while\* we \_\_\_\_\_ (invent) new technologies, we should also take measures to protect our environment. Unless our governments \_\_\_\_\_ (enforce) new legislation, both developing and developed countries \_\_\_\_\_ (have to) face increasing difficulties. \* “while” = “during the time in which”

## 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 <u>was</u> a child*, my father <b>took</b> me to a football match every weekend.</p> <p>He <u>spoke</u> to the new students at the end of the class.</p> <p>He <u>caught</u> the 8.50 yesterday too, didn't he?</p> <p>She <u>swept</u> the garage two days ago after he had left.</p> <p><b>Did</b> she <u>write</u> the email today or yesterday?</p>	<p>When he <u>realized</u> what had happened, he <u>went</u> right <b>back</b> and <u>gave</u> the money <b>back</b>.</p> <p>When I <u>went</u> in, he <u>stood up</u> and <u>shook</u> hands with me.</p> <p>In 1938 Orson Welles <u>made</u> Americans believe that Martians had come to make war.</p> <p><b>Did</b> they <u>tell</u> 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**

<p><b>Present Perfect: simple form (since/for)</b></p> <p>He <b>has written</b> a novel about extraterrestrials.  <b>I've seen</b> your face before. <b>Haven't</b> already we <b>met</b>?</p> <p><b>Very recent action - almost in the present</b>  <b>He's just received</b> a letter from his girlfriend.</p>	<p><b>Present Perfect: continuous form (since/for)</b></p> <p>He <b>has been having</b> problems sleeping <b>Since July</b>.  <b>We've been living</b> in London <b>for</b> six months.</p> <p><b>Very recent action - almost in the present</b>  <b>I've just been listening</b> 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 <b>was waiting</b> for him, when he <b>arrived</b> .	He <b>was watching</b> television, while I <b>was reading</b> a book.
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**\*Past Perfect**

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

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

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

One day, as I \_\_\_\_\_ (concentrate) on an assignment, Paul \_\_\_\_\_ (come) rushing in. I \_\_\_\_\_ (work) so hard all day that I hardly noticed he \_\_\_\_\_ (be) out of breath. Suddenly, he \_\_\_\_\_ (tell) me he \_\_\_\_\_ (win) at the national

lottery, and he \_\_\_\_\_ (plan) to fulfill our dream of spending 3 months in Australia. Two months later, we \_\_\_\_\_ (pass) our Baccalaureate and then \_\_\_\_\_ (fly) directly to Sydney from where we \_\_\_\_\_ (tour) the country. We \_\_\_\_\_ (lose) contact after our university studies. Since then, it seems that Paul \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to live abroad. Unfortunately, I \_\_\_\_\_ (not see) him for many years now, but I still to this day \_\_\_\_\_ (not forget) the moment he \_\_\_\_\_ (announce) to me that he \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (come) with me, because then I wouldn't have had so much trouble deciding what to do. If only I \_\_\_\_\_ (know) what to say yesterday, when my boyfriend was acting so impolitely! I wish I \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (not keep) interrupting me every time I try to say something. He treats me as though I \_\_\_\_\_ (be) an idiot. And I'm not! It's high time I \_\_\_\_\_ (leave) him. Don't you agree?

**Pat:** It's high time you \_\_\_\_\_ (rethink) your whole situation. I wish you \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (own) you, it's really time you \_\_\_\_\_ (set) things straight. But I'd rather you \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (tell) him you rang, but since you don't want anyone to know, I \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (sell) all my belongings, and I \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (do) away with my car by selling it in January at a good price (before the accident!), I \_\_\_\_\_ (have) more money in cash last year and I \_\_\_\_\_ (certainly win) more bets at the football pools. I \_\_\_\_\_ (be) rich right now!

**Susan:** You're not being sensible! You're out of your mind! If you \_\_\_\_\_ (go on) betting all the time, you \_\_\_\_\_ (lose) everything you own, and you \_\_\_\_\_

(never save) enough money to go anywhere.

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

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

<i>Simple form</i>	<i>Continuous form</i>
<p>She <b>sat down, opened</b> the box and <b>took</b> the present out.            When he <b>got</b> to the cinema, the doors <b>were</b> closed.            She <b>explained</b> to them what <b>had happened</b>.            The announcer <b>told</b> the uneasy listeners that a metal spaceship <b>had landed</b> near Princeton, New Jersey.  <b>Did</b> she <b>remember</b> what we <b>had told</b> her?</p>	<p>He <b>was working</b> and <b>watching</b> television at the same time.  <b>Was</b> he <b>sleeping</b>, while she <b>was getting</b> the suitcases ready?            I thought she <b>had been crying</b>, as her eyes <b>were</b> red.            They <b>had been performing</b> all night and <b>hadn't</b> even <b>noticed</b> how tired they were.  <b>Had</b> he <b>been waiting</b> 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 \_\_\_\_\_ (happen). I \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) a TV broadcast and \_\_\_\_\_ (contentedly eat) popcorn, when suddenly I \_\_\_\_\_ (hear) a shrill sound. I \_\_\_\_\_ (rush) to the window and \_\_\_\_\_ (look out). Since I \_\_\_\_\_ (not notice) anything bizarre, I \_\_\_\_\_ (go back) to the couch. I simply \_\_\_\_\_ (figure) that the strange noise \_\_\_\_\_ (merely\* be) a special effect in the film. When the film \_\_\_\_\_ (end), I \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to the kitchen. While I \_\_\_\_\_ (prepare) a club sandwich, a friend of mine \_\_\_\_\_ (call) me on the phone. She too \_\_\_\_\_ (mention) the same strange noise she \_\_\_\_\_ (hear) while she \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) the film. Then three other neighbors \_\_\_\_\_ (call me up) and \_\_\_\_\_ (tell) me exactly the same story. What exactly \_\_\_\_\_ (happen)? Perhaps extraterrestrial beings \_\_\_\_\_ (land secretly) all around our neighborhood, while we \_\_\_\_\_ (quietly watch) TV, and we \_\_\_\_\_ (not even be) aware of it. We \_\_\_\_\_ (miss) a big event that evening, and we \_\_\_\_\_ (not be) able to tell our kids about it! (\* "merely" = "simply")