

Tense

Past Simple and Past Continuous

1. The Past Simple Tense

Form: Subject + past form of the verb (+ object)

Regular verbs: add -ed (worked, played)

Irregular verbs: change form (go → went, eat → ate)

Examples:

I visited my friend yesterday.

She went to school last week.

They didn't watch the movie.

Did you study last night?

Uses:

To talk about completed actions in the past.

To describe a series of past actions.

To talk about past habits (with 'used to' or adverbs like always, often, never).

2. The Past Continuous Tense

Form: Subject + was/were + verb-ing (+ object)

Examples:

I was reading when you called.

They were watching TV at 8 p.m.

She wasn't listening to the teacher.

Were you sleeping when I arrived?

Uses:

To describe an action that was in progress at a certain time in the past.

To show that one action was interrupted by another (Past Continuous + Past Simple).

To describe two actions happening at the same time in the past.

Comparison:

Past Simple	Past Continuous
Completed action	Action in progress
What happened?	What was happening?
I watched TV last night.	I was watching TV when you called.

Exercises

A. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb

1. I _____ (watch) TV when my brother _____ (come) home.
2. She _____ (not go) to school yesterday because she _____ (be) sick.
3. While we _____ (walk) in the park, it _____ (start) to rain.
4. They _____ (play) football at 5 p.m. yesterday.
5. When I _____ (open) the door, the cat _____ (run) out.
6. He _____ (not study) last night; he _____ (watch) a movie instead.
7. We _____ (sleep) when the phone _____ (ring).
8. I _____ (meet) my old friend while I _____ (shop) at the mall.
9. She _____ (cook) dinner when her husband _____ (arrive).
10. The students _____ (finish) their test at 10:00 a.m.

B. Choose the correct answer

1. I (was reading / read) a book when you called me.
2. They (played / were playing) football yesterday afternoon.
3. She (wasn't listening / didn't listen) when the teacher spoke.

4. What (did you do / were you doing) at 9 p.m. last night?
5. He (was driving / drove) to work when the accident happened.
6. We (watched / were watching) a movie when the lights went out.
7. My mother (was cooking / cooked) while my father (read / was reading) the newspaper.
8. They (didn't go / weren't going) to school yesterday.
9. It (rained / was raining) all night.
10. I (broke / was breaking) my phone yesterday.

C. Write your own sentences

1. A sentence in Past Simple (positive).
2. A sentence in Past Simple (negative).
3. A sentence in Past Continuous (positive).
4. A sentence in Past Continuous (negative).
5. A sentence showing interruption (Past Continuous + Past Simple).

Answer Key

A. Fill in the blanks

1. was watching, came
2. didn't go, was
3. were walking, started
4. were playing
5. opened, ran
6. didn't study, was watching
7. were sleeping, rang

8. met, was shopping
9. was cooking, arrived
10. finished

B. Choose the correct answer

1. was reading
2. played
3. wasn't listening
4. were you doing
5. was driving
6. were watching
7. was cooking, was reading
8. didn't go
9. was raining
10. broke

C. Example answers

1. I visited my friend yesterday.
2. She didn't eat breakfast this morning.
3. They were studying at 8 p.m.
4. He wasn't sleeping when I called.

5. I was walking to school when it started to rain.

Word Order

Introduction

Word order refers to the arrangement of words in a sentence to express meaning correctly. In English, the order of words is fixed and highly important for conveying clear and logical ideas. Unlike some languages that use inflection or word endings to show grammatical relationships, English depends mainly on word order to indicate who is doing what. Therefore, using the correct word order is essential for writing coherent and well-structured essays.

1. The Basic Pattern: S + V + O

The basic structure of an affirmative (positive) sentence in English follows the pattern:

Subject + Verb + Object

This means:

- **The Subject performs the action.**
- **The Verb expresses the action.**
- **The Object receives the action.**

This pattern is called the SVO structure, and it is the foundation of all English sentence building. It helps to make your writing logical and easy to understand.

2. Examples of Basic Affirmative Sentences

1. The student writes an essay.

(Subject = The student, Verb = writes, Object = an essay)

2. Ali studies English.

(Subject = Ali, Verb = studies, Object = English)

3. Teachers help students.

(Subject = Teachers, Verb = help, Object = students)

4. The author develops new ideas.

(Subject = The author, Verb = develops, Object = new ideas)

5. Researchers collect data carefully.

(Subject = Researchers, Verb = collect, Object = data)

3. The Extended Sentence Structure

When writing essays, students often use more detailed sentences that include adverbs (showing how, when, or where an action happens).

The general extended word order in English affirmative sentences is:

Subject + Verb + Object + Manner + Place + Time

S+V+O+M+P+T

Where:

- **Manner** = how the action happens (carefully, slowly, clearly...)
- **Place** = where the action happens (at home, in class, at the university...)
- **Time** = when the action happens (every day, last week, in the morning...)

4. Examples of Extended Affirmative Sentences

1. She writes her essays carefully at home every evening.
2. They study English seriously at the university every day.
3. The professor explains the topic clearly in class each morning.
4. The writer prepares his article patiently in his office at night.
5. Students practice their writing skills regularly in the computer lab.

These examples show how additional information (manner, place, time) follows the main structure without breaking the grammatical order.

5. The Importance of Word Order in Essay Writing

In academic writing, particularly in essays, word order determines how well your ideas are communicated.

Incorrect word order can cause confusion, misunderstanding, or even change the meaning of your sentence.

For example:

 *Writes the student an essay.* (Incorrect)

 *The student writes an essay.* (Correct)

Maintaining proper order shows clarity, academic accuracy, and professional writing skills, which are essential qualities for students of English literature and linguistics.

6. Tips for Students

- Always begin a sentence with the subject, not the verb.
- Use adverbs (manner, place, time) at the end unless they are meant to emphasize something.

- **Keep your sentence structure consistent throughout your essay to maintain coherence.**
- **Practice rewriting sentences with correct word order to improve your writing fluency.**