



GRAMMAR



Past Continuous With Past Simple

➤ Past Continuous

Past continuous shows us that the action was already in progress at a certain time in the past.

- What were the men doing at 8 p.m. last night?

They were fixing the power cable.

The statement above shows that they had already started fixing the power cable at 8 p.m. and continued after 8 p.m.

The past continuous also shows that an activity was in progress for some time, not just for a moment.

- We were cleaning the crime scene all evening.
- She was showing the evidence to her boss.

We make past continuous tense with “**was**” or “**were**” and the “**-ing**” form of the verb.

- She couldn't come to the party. She **was attending** a funeral.
- Two weeks ago, we **were working** on a case.
- **Was** Amri **sleeping** when the thief entered his house?
- I **was watching** the news when the car was hit.

➤ Past Simple

Past simple shows us that an action took place in the past, not in the present. Regular past simple verbs have “**-ed**” at the end (e.g. visited, arrested, cared).

- The police **arrested** the criminal yesterday.
- Gina **visited** her cousin at the hospital.

Irregular verbs have a different form, usually with a different vowel sound (e.g. catch → caught, tear → tore, see → saw).

- I **saw** the bridge collapsed a moment ago.
- The guard **caught** the boys outside the school fence.

We make the negative sentence with “**didn’t**” and the infinitive verb.

- The police **didn’t arrest** the criminal yesterday.
- I **didn’t see** the bridge collapsed a moment ago.

We make the question form with “**did**”, the subject and infinitive verb.

- **Did** the **police arrest** the criminal yesterday?
- **Did you see** the bridge collapsed just now?

✦ **Past Continuous and Past Simple**

When we use these two tenses together, it shows that a past simple action happened in the middle of a past continuous action, while it was in progress.

- It was raining cats and dogs when the power went out.
- Latifa was finishing up her report when the manager fainted.
- Did the nurses come when I was sleeping?

We often use these tenses to show an action interrupting another action.

- I broke my leg when I was skateboarding.
- As Luna was walking home, she heard a kitten mewing.
- We were having a cup of tea when the trees fell on the car.