

Past Simple and Past Continuous

16 Complete the sentences with the Past Simple or Past Continuous.

We use the ...

Past Continuous to describe longer activities interrupted by shorter ones in the past.

- a _____ to describe temporary situations in the past.
- b _____ to describe single events in the past.
- c _____ to describe things which were in progress at or around a fixed time in the past.
- d _____ to describe past states.
- e _____ to tell stories.
- f _____ to set the scene in a story or give background information.
- g _____ to describe regular events in the past.

17 Now match the sentences to the functions in Exercise 16, including the examples.

- Katie loved this bear when she was a baby. d
- 1 I was studying Spanish in Barcelona for the summer.
- 2 The bus came down this road every day for twenty years.
- 3 At the party the people were already chatting merrily and the music was playing softly in the background.
- 4 Bernie walked home in the rain, she didn't have an umbrella that day and she didn't have enough change for the bus.
- 5 The chair broke when Davy stood on it.
- 6 While I was downloading the latest tracks my computer shut down.
- 7 At ten o'clock I was still sleeping.

18 Transform the sentences from the Present Simple into the Past Simple.

All the students have lunch at school.

All the students had lunch at school.

- 1 We don't drink wine with our meal.

- 2 Does the shop sell bread?

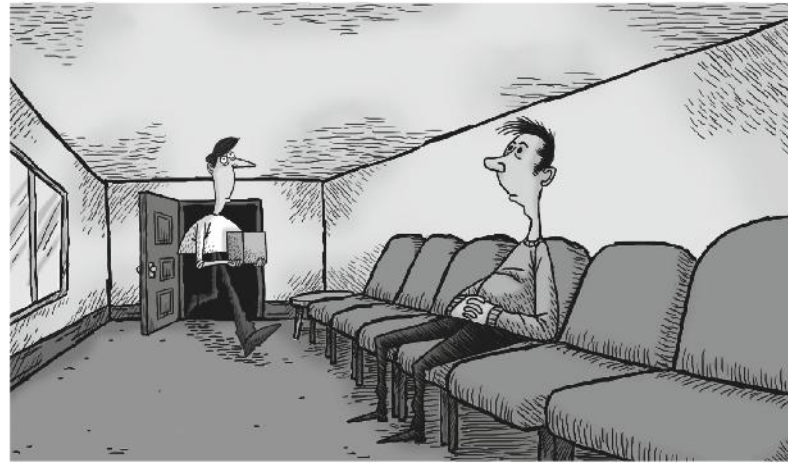
- 3 Nobody buys our products online.

- 4 Where do you meet your friends?

- 5 The company doesn't respond to all complaints.

- 6 I forget the name of the coffee shop I like.

- 7 Do most customers leave positive feedback?



19 Use the verbs in the box in the Past Continuous tense to complete the text about Peter's evening.

text sit move finish wait
think rain carry

Peter's appointment

It was a Wednesday evening and as I remember it 'was raining' outside. It was about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and most people ² _____ work and heading home to enjoy a nice peaceful evening at home. Most people. Not me. I ³ _____ in the doctor's waiting room. I ⁴ _____ nervously for my appointment to get my test results. I ⁵ _____ that it was strange that I was the only person there when the door opened and a man came in. He ⁶ _____ a large box. He sat next to me and placed the box on his knees. I didn't want to chat so I started texting my wife. While I ⁷ _____ I heard a 'miaow' and noticed that the box was ⁸ _____. It made me jump. The man then apologised and explained that the cat was for the doctor. 'Is the cat ill?' I asked the man. 'No, the cat is really well, it's the best rat catcher in the county, the doctor won't be disappointed'.

20 Write the questions to the answers about the text in Exercise 19.

What was the weather like?

It was raining.

- 1 _____
They were finishing work for the day and heading home.
- 2 _____
He was sitting in the doctor's waiting room.
- 3 _____
He was feeling nervous.
- 4 _____
The man was carrying a box.
- 5 _____
He was texting his wife when he heard the cat.

21 Match the two halves of the sentences.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Was Jess feeling angry | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 The children were playing in the garden | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 The shop assistant was chatting on the phone | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 When the earthquake struck | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 The crowd were cheering and dancing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 When dad came home | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- a the people were all sleeping.
b when the music started.
c we were waiting for him.
d when it started to snow.
e when she threw the plate?
f when the customer went to complain.

22 Put the verbs in brackets in the correct tense.

- 1
A You will never guess who I saw (see) when I ¹ _____ (shop) in town?
B Who?
A Meryl Streep!
B Really? What ² _____ (she/do)?
A Well she ³ _____ (talk) on her mobile phone and she ⁴ _____ (look) at clothes.
B Was she alone?
A No, she wasn't. She ⁵ _____ (have) 3 body guards with her. They ⁶ _____ (watch) her every move.
B Gosh, ⁷ _____ anyone else _____ (notice) her?
A Oh yes, loads of people, but we ⁸ _____ (try) to be cool - as if we see famous actresses all the time! I ⁹ _____ (take) a photo on my mobile phone, but it isn't very clear, look.
- 2
A OK, Luke, can you tell me the answer to question 6?
B No, Miss.
A Do you know why you can't answer? Because you ¹ _____ (not listen) when I ² _____ (explain) this exercise.
B I ³ _____ (listen) Miss, it's just that John ⁴ _____ (talk) to me at the same time!
- 3
A When the alarm ¹ _____ (ring) this morning I ² _____ (have) a really strange dream.
B Oh yes, what about?
A I ³ _____ (dream) about a girl I ⁴ _____ (go) to college with five years ago.
B Oh, right. That doesn't sound so strange.
A No, but wait. Then when I ⁵ _____ (read) the paper at breakfast time, I ⁶ _____ (see) her photo.
B No way!
A Yes, she has just won a major sporting competition, isn't that strange?



23 Use the pairs of verbs in the correct tense to complete the sentences.

feed-attack	queue-begin	arrive-stand
not rain-set off	carry-trip	buy-take
ring-explain	talk-call	

- 1 We were queuing for tickets when the match began.
2 The waiter _____ a tray of drinks when he _____ and fell.
3 When the bell _____ the teacher _____ the homework task.
4 The zookeeper _____ the tiger when it _____ him.
5 I _____ about you to Henry when you _____!
6 When the police _____ Justin _____ outside the shop, handing out leaflets.
7 It _____ when we _____ this morning, but now look!
8 I think you _____ the drinks when Alice _____ this photo.

24 Use the prompts to write sentences using the Past Continuous and/or the Past Simple.

- 1 Who / you / talk to / when / I / arrive?
Who were you talking to when I arrived?
2 What / I / say / before / you / interrupt / me?
3 When / she / win / the race / everyone / cheering.
4 You / argue / when / I / come in?
5 They always / visit their Grandmother / when they / be / children.
6 I / cook / dinner / at the same time as / you / do / your homework.
7 The students / talk / and laugh / but when / teacher / arrive / they / stop.
8 I / not / expect a present / so / this / is / a surprise.
9 The band / play / wonderful music and the people / chat / happily.
10 First he cook dinner / then he tidy the house.

25 Complete the letter with one word in each gap.

I am writing to complain about your company's customer service.
On Valentine's day I ¹ called your restaurant to make a reservation for myself and my girlfriend.
I ² _____ to a young man and he assured me that there were tables available, so I ³ _____ a table for 7 o'clock.
We ⁴ _____ at the restaurant at exactly 7 o'clock, but our table ⁵ _____ ready, so we ordered some drinks and sat at the bar. While we ⁶ _____ waiting at least 8 other couples ⁷ _____ into the restaurant and were shown to a table.
I ⁸ _____ to feel a little annoyed about this, but when I ⁹ _____ to the waiter he just smiled and ¹⁰ _____ away!
We ¹¹ _____ for one hour before our table ¹² _____ ready. After five minutes the waiter came to take our order, but most of the food on the menu ¹³ _____ available because we ¹⁴ _____ too late! I ¹⁵ _____ to speak to the manager but he ¹⁶ _____ there! On the busiest night of the year!
In the end we ¹⁷ _____ a very dull plate of pasta each and ¹⁸ _____ home extremely disappointed. I think that in the future you should take fewer bookings and treat your customers better. We will not visit your restaurant again.
Yours sincerely,
Mark Yesan