

Tenses

Verbs are used to show action and the tense of the verb refers to the time of action.

Present Tense

A verb that refers to present time is said to be in present tense.

Simple Present Tense: We use this to refer to:

1. Regular actions, habits, current situations or facts in general.
Example: Pollution destroys the ozone layer.
2. Long lasting or permanent situations.
Example: Mr. Mehra's bungalow stands on ten acres of land.
3. Actions which are going to happen soon.
Example: The flight takes off in five minutes.
4. Short actions happening at the time of speaking.
Example: I agree that what I said earlier was wrong.

Present Continuous Tense: We use this to refer to:

1. Actions which happen around the time of speaking or writing.
Example: He is cycling around the garden.
2. Situations which are temporary, lasting for a short time.

Example: I am staying in my brother's house until my new house is ready.

3. Planned future actions.
Example: We are going on an excursion next week.
4. Actions happening at the time of speaking.
Example: We are baking bread for lunch.

Present Perfect Tense: We use this to talk about completed actions; however the exact time of an action is not stated.

1. It denotes an action that has happened at an indefinite time.
Example: I have written a letter to grandpa. He has just attended a conference.
2. It denotes an action that has been continuous from the past upto the present.
Example: We have known each other for the past seven years.
3. It denotes a completed action which is connected to the present moment.
Example: Tom has purchased a new car.

It is formed with has/have + past participle of the verb

Past Tense

Simple Past Tense: We use this to refer to:

1. An action or event that occurred at a definite time in the past and is over at the time of speaking.
Example: People walked from one place to another before the invention of the wheel.
2. An action or event that took place over a period of time in the past but does not happen anymore.
Example: During my college days, I shared my room with my best friend.
3. Report certain past events or situations.
Example: Last week, a fire broke out in the building.

Past Continuous Tense: We use this to refer to:

1. An action that was going on at a definite time in the past.
Example: My friends and I were watching a movie last night.
2. Two actions that were going on at the same time.
Example: Mahesh was sorting the books while Vijay was writing the names of the books.
3. Something that happened while a longer action was going on in the past.

Example: June was watering the plants when a beggar came up to her.
4. Repeated actions in the past.
Example: We spent an hour looking for the car keys this morning.

Past Perfect Tense: We use this to refer to:

1. An event which happened before another event in the past.
Example: The sun had risen before we left the house.
2. A time in the past to show that the event occurred before that point.
Example: By two o' clock he had read most of the novel.

It is formed with **had** + the Past Participle

Future Tense

Simple Future Tense: We use this to refer to:

1. Actions or events that will happen in the future.
Example: John will retire next year.

2. Predictions, to talk about actions which we cannot control.
Example: The cyclone will destroy all the coastal villages.
3. Something which we decide to do at the time of speaking.
Example: I shall meet you at the bus stop tomorrow morning.

Remember!

1. The following are some words that may be used with verbs in the future tense
Tomorrow next week this Saturday next month
2. We can also use the 'going to' form for future action that is planned earlier or events that we think are likely to happen in the future.
Example: Peter is going to watch the football finals tomorrow evening.

Future Continuous Tense: We use this to refer to:

1. Actions or situations which will be going on at a certain time in the future.
Example: They will be announcing the results of the election after 5p.m tomorrow.
2. Actions or situations in the future which have already been planned or which take place regularly.
Example: He will be participating in the car racing event.

Future Perfect Tense: We use this to refer to:

1. Actions that not yet been done.
Example: The workers will have cleared an abandoned plantation by 2021.
2. Actions or events which will be finished by an approximate time in the future by using words like 'already' and 'just'.
Example: By June, Harry will have already completed his degree in architecture.
Grandpa will have just turned ninety at the end of this year.

Remember!

The following verbs do not usually take the continuous tense whether past, present or future

1. Verbs of senses or perception: see, hear, smell ,touch, taste
2. Verbs that express feelings and emotions: feel, fear, forgive, hate, hope, refuse, want, wish
3. Verbs that express mental activity or thinking: agree, appreciate, forget, know, remember, thinking, notice
4. Verbs that show possession: own , owe, contain, possess, have
5. Verbs of appearance: seem , look, appear