

Course N<sup>0</sup>= 8: VERB TENSES

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## 1 What is a verb tense?

In English like in other languages, we usually *change* the verb in different situations.

When we change the verb to show **WHEN** something happens, it is called the **TENSE (time)** of the verb.

**For example**, there is the verb "to work."

If you want to say the action will happen in the future we have to change it into "will work."

So you say: "I *will work* in a new company the next week."

In this sentence, "will work" is in the future tense.

## 2 Time and Aspect

In English language, the verb gives us information about two important factors: time and aspect

1. We mean by **time**, **When** does the action (verb) happen:

We have basically 3 possibilities: The **past**, the **present** and the **future**.

Example:

"I **presented** my work yesterday." (Time = past)

"I **present** my work." (Time = present)

"I **will present** my work." (Time = future)

2. We mean by **aspect** the way to change the verb in order to show additional information about it. Otherwise, whether the action is **complete** or **in progress**.

For example, "I **present** my work". Here we showed only the time of the verb; however, we do not know if the action is complete or not, in progress or not. This called a simple tense.

#### Simple present

While, if we say, "I **am presenting** my work", here we have added an additional information and we showed that the action is still in progress. **Present progressive (continuous)**

Alternatively, if we say, "I **have presented** my work", here also we have added an additional information and we showed that the action is complete; it is no more in progress. **Present perfect**

- The same ACTION (working) in the same TIME (the present), can be presented in different ASPECTS (Simple present, Present progressive (continuous), Present perfect).
3. The same principle is for the other times: past and future

Aspect/Time	Past	Present	Future
Simple	Simple Past	Simple Present	Simple Future
Progressive	Past Progressive	Present Progressive	Future Progressive
Perfect	Past Perfect	Present Perfect	Future Perfect

4. How we choose the perfect time and aspect for the ver?

If you want to say what you are going to do tomorrow.

- If you do not want to emphasize any particular aspect. How do you say it?

"I **will apply** my experiment tomorrow." (Simple Future)

TIME: Future, ASPECT: Simple

- Now, if you want to emphasize the fact that in 12 AM tomorrow you are going to be in the middle of the experiment in your laboratory (so nobody should disturb you), then you say:

"Tomorrow at 12 AM I **will be applying** my experiment." (Future Progressive)

TIME: Future, ASPECT: Progressive

- If you want to say, that by 16 AM, your experiment will be finished (and you are free to take care of other matters), you say:

"Tomorrow at 16 AM I **will have applied** my experiment." It means the action (applying the experiment) will be finished by 16 AM

5. As a general rule:

- **Regular actions in the present are expressed using the Simple Present tense:**
  - She **likes** to read.
- **Actions that are happening right now, or at the current time period are expressed using the Present Progressive tense:**
  - I **am reading** a scientific article.
- **Things that happened in the past are expressed using the Simple Past tense.**
  - She **started** university in 2020.

- **Actions that were in progress over a period of time in the past are expressed using the Past Progressive tense:**
  - I **was washing** the lab instruments.
- **Things from the past that affect the present are expressed using the Present Perfect tense:**
  - I **have failed** in the exam. Now what am I going to do?
- **Things that will happen in the future (not plans), predictions, promises, intentions, etc. are expressed using the Simple Future tense ("will"):**
  - I **will be** 21 present in the exam.
- **Things that you plan to do in the future, or predictions, are expressed using the Simple Future tense ("going to"):**
  - I **am going** to start an experiment about essential oils.

### 3 The Simple Tenses

The simple tense is a form of a verb that simply shows **when** the action takes place.

- **Simple Past** is a form of the verb that shows the action took place in the past.  
  
For example: I passed the exam yesterday.
- **Simple Present** is a form of the verb that shows the action takes place in the present.  
  
For example: I attend the classes every day.
- **Simple Future** is a form of the verb that shows the action will take place in the future.  
  
For example: I will pass the exam tomorrow.

### 4 The Progressive Tenses

PROGRESSIVE means "continuing."

The progressive tense is a form of a verb that shows the action is **in progress**. Or in other words, it continues.

- **Past Progressive** is a form of the verb that shows the action was in progress at some time in the past. **(was/were + verb + ing)**

For example: Yesterday at 10 AM, I was passing the exam.

- **Present Progressive** is a form of the verb that shows the action is in progress in the present. **(is/are + verb + ing)**

For example: I am passing the exam right now.

- **Future Progressive** is a form of the verb that shows the action will be in progress at some time in the future. **(will + verb + ing)**

For example: I will be passing the exam tomorrow at 10 AM.

## 5 The Perfect Tenses

PERFECT means "complete, finished".

The perfect tense is a form of a verb that shows the action is complete. It does not mean the action is "perfect" (100%). It means the action is **finished**.

- **Past Perfect** is a form of the verb that shows the action was complete before some time in the past. **(had + past participle)**

For example: I had reviewed the course before I came.

- **Present Perfect** is a form of the verb that shows the action was complete before the present. **(have/has + past participle)**

For example: I have finished the work already.

This is a common English tense.

- **Future Perfect** is a form of the verb that shows the action will be complete before some time in the future. **(will + have/has + past participle)**

For example: I will have finished the exam tomorrow by 12 AM.

## 6 The Perfect Progressive Tenses

When the action was in progress, and now it is finished we use perfect progressive tenses!

For example, "I have been reading."

In this sentence the verb is in the Present Perfect Progressive.

And it means that I started to read in the past, and finished by now.

If I want to say that I started to read 2 hours ago, and I was reading until now, I would say:

"I have been reading for 2 hours."

"I have been reading since 4 o'clock."

"I have been reading since I got here."

So the Perfect Progressive tense is a form of the verb that shows the action started, continued, and was complete until some point of time (past, present or future).

- **Past Perfect Progressive** is a form of the verb that shows the action started in the past and continued until some point in the past. **(had + been + verb + ing)**

For example: I had been reading for 2 hours before I was left.

- **Present Perfect Progressive** is a form of the verb that shows the action started in the past and continued until the present. **(have/has + been + verb + ing)**

For example: I have been reading for 3 hours without stopping!

- **Future Perfect Progressive** is a form of the verb that shows the action will continue until some point in the future. **(will + have/has + been + verb + ing)**

For example: By tomorrow 11 AM, I will have been reading for 3 hours!

