

Past tenses revision

Past simple

→ an action that happened at a definite time in the past
Last year we **bought** a dog.

→ actions that happened immediately one after the other in the past

Lou **took** a shower, **brushed** his teeth and **went** to bed.



Complete the sentences with the correct past form.

1. By the time we _____ (get) to the theatre, the play _____ (already, start).
2. Last night I _____ (dream) about going to the Moon.
3. When Ginny _____ (see) me yesterday, I _____ (cross) the street.
4. My dad _____ (paint) the living room for two hours before my brother _____ (come) to help him.
5. Nora _____ (lie) in a hammock while Phil _____ (weed) the garden.
6. Before the Smiths _____ (buy) their new house, they _____ (look) for a suitable one for a year.
7. Laura _____ (send) us a postcard from her holiday in Italy.
8. As Claire _____ (dust) the furniture, she _____ (break) her mum's vase.
9. My sister _____ (never, be) to the circus before last week.
10. Pam and I _____ (study) for the history exam when the lights _____ (go) off.
11. The alarm clock _____ (not, ring) yesterday morning and I _____ (be) late for work.
12. Mr. Roberts _____ (work) in the company for six years before it _____ (go) bankrupt.
13. You _____ (not, sleep) when I _____ (return) last night.
14. When _____ (they, visit) you last time?
15. Yesterday at this time, Karen _____ (write) a letter of application to the manager of L'Oréal.
16. I _____ (not, pay) attention to the teacher and my friends _____ (not, pay) attention, either.
17. When we _____ (go) out for a walk last Sunday morning, the sun _____ (shine) and it _____ (be) quite warm.
18. We _____ (never, see) the Pyramids before our trip to Egypt in 2005.
19. _____ (Simon and Alice, get) married last summer?
20. They _____ (wait) for more than an hour before Lady Gaga _____ (appear) on the stage.
21. Michael and Robert _____ (rollerblade) in the backyard when Sally _____ (phone).
22. I _____ (meet) Harry at Brenda's birthday party last month.
23. Where _____ (you, spend) your last winter holidays?

Past continuous

→ an action that was in progress at a stated time in the past
Yesterday at 4 I **was talking** to Meg on the phone.

→ two actions that were happening at the same time
Liz **was vacuuming** while her sons **were tidying** their room.

→ an action that was in progress (longer action) when another action interrupted it
When I came in, Sue **was reading**.



Past perfect

an action that happened before another action in the past
Before we left, we **had booked** a hotel room.

complete past action that had visible results in the past
We felt relieved after they **had arrived** safely.



Past perfect continuous

an action continuing over a period up to a specific time in the past
Pete **had been working** as a doctor for 25 years before he retired last year.

action of certain duration that had visible results in the past
Mark **had been studying** Spanish for five years before he moved to Toledo.



24. My cousin and I _____ (sit) at a park bench when we _____ (hear) a thunder.
25. By six o'clock Ted _____ (pack) all his staff in his backpack.
26. I _____ (sunbathe) for two hours before it _____ (start) to rain.

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Answers

Complete the sentences with the correct past form.

1. By the time we got to the theatre, the play had already started.
2. Last night I dreamt about going to the Moon.
3. When Ginny saw me yesterday, I was crossing the street.
4. My dad had been painting the living room for two hours before my brother came to help him.
5. Nora was lying in a hammock while Phil was weeding the garden.
6. Before the Smiths bought their new house, they had been looking for a suitable one for a year.
7. Laura sent us a postcard from her holiday in Italy.
8. As Claire was dusting the furniture, she broke her mum's vase.
9. My sister had never been to the circus before last week.
10. Pam and I were studying for the history exam when the lights went off.
11. The alarm clock didn't ring yesterday morning and I was late for work.
12. Mr. Roberts had been working in the company for six years before it went bankrupt.
13. You weren't sleeping when I returned last night.
14. When did they visit you last time?
15. Yesterday at this time, Karen was writing a letter of application to the manager of L'Oréal.
16. I wasn't paying attention to the teacher and my friends weren't paying attention, either.
17. When we went out for a walk last Sunday morning, the sun was shining and it was quite warm.
18. We had never seen the Pyramids before our trip to Egypt in 2005.
19. Did Simon and Alice get married last summer?
20. They had been waiting for more than an hour before Lady Gaga appeared on the stage.
21. Michael and Robert were rollerblading in the backyard when Sally phoned.
22. I met Harry at Brenda's birthday party last month.
23. Where did you spend your last winter holidays?
24. My cousin and I were sitting at a park bench when we heard a thunder.
25. By six o'clock Ted had packed all his stuff in his backpack.
26. I had been sunbathing for two hours before it started to rain.