

## Simple vs. Continuous Tenses: Past

**FORM:**                    **Past Continuous:**  
**“to be” (simple past) + “ing”**

**USE:**                    Use **Simple Past** tense for finished actions and **Past Continuous** for actions that were happening (not finished) at a specific time, or combined with another action introduced by “when” or “while”.

**EXAMPLES:**        *I was sleeping at 8:00. When he arrived home, he woke me up.*

*Supply the PAST TENSE or the PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE form of the verbs as required by the meaning.*

1. She \_\_\_\_\_ (practice) the piano last night.
2. While she \_\_\_\_\_ (practice) the piano, she \_\_\_\_\_ (sprain) her wrist.
3. We \_\_\_\_\_ (see) Pam while we \_\_\_\_\_ (walk) home yesterday.
4. They \_\_\_\_\_ (take) the subway home last evening.
5. While Beth \_\_\_\_\_ (dance) in the show last week, the strap of her costume \_\_\_\_\_ (break).
6. We \_\_\_\_\_ (dance) all night at the disco last weekend.
7. Mat \_\_\_\_\_ (cook) dinner when his wife arrived.
8. What time \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive) at the office this morning?
9. While they \_\_\_\_\_ (sleep) soundly, a burglar \_\_\_\_\_ (steal) their TV.
10. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson \_\_\_\_\_ (build) a new house last year.
11. While he \_\_\_\_\_ (eat) his soup, he \_\_\_\_\_ (find) a hair in it.
12. After looking for 20 minutes, Dan finally \_\_\_\_\_ (find) his keys under the sofa.

Intermediate 1 – Exercise 3 – Simple vs. Continuous Tenses: Past

13. As Joe \_\_\_\_\_ (swim) in the pool yesterday afternoon, he \_\_\_\_\_ (get) a cramp in his leg.
14. Karen \_\_\_\_\_ (swim) 40 laps before work this morning.
15. Peter \_\_\_\_\_ (draw) a beautiful picture for his mother's birthday last week.
16. While Mike and his brother \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a drink yesterday afternoon, they \_\_\_\_\_ (talk) about their problems.
17. As Sandra \_\_\_\_\_ (lie) on the beach, she \_\_\_\_\_ (meet) the man of her dreams.
18. I \_\_\_\_\_ (meet) my friend Nancy at the shopping mall yesterday.
19. While she \_\_\_\_\_ (shut) down her computer, the system \_\_\_\_\_ (crash).
20. He \_\_\_\_\_ (fall) while he \_\_\_\_\_ (run) in the marathon.
21. Tim \_\_\_\_\_ (jog) at 5:15 this morning.
22. Kim \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) all her e-mails before she left for the day.
23. Gloria \_\_\_\_\_ (spill) the milk as she \_\_\_\_\_ (feed) the baby.