

**Course Topic: Teaching Grammar****Course Instructor:**

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**Course Synopsis:**

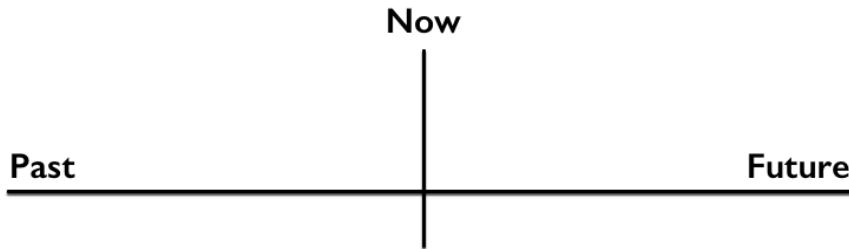
While the form of English grammar, or how it is made, is quite straightforward, the use of those forms is somewhat more complicated. It is actually the use of grammar, not the form, that presents the most challenges for both students and teachers alike. In this session we will examine one of the most effective techniques to use when teaching the use of grammar to students - timelines. We will briefly discuss how to draw basic timelines including the use of symbols and colours. We will then walk through possible timelines for all of the verb tenses in English to illustrate the different uses of these tenses. At the end of this session you will have a solid understanding of how to create accurate and useful timelines for each of the tenses in English.

**Course Agenda:**

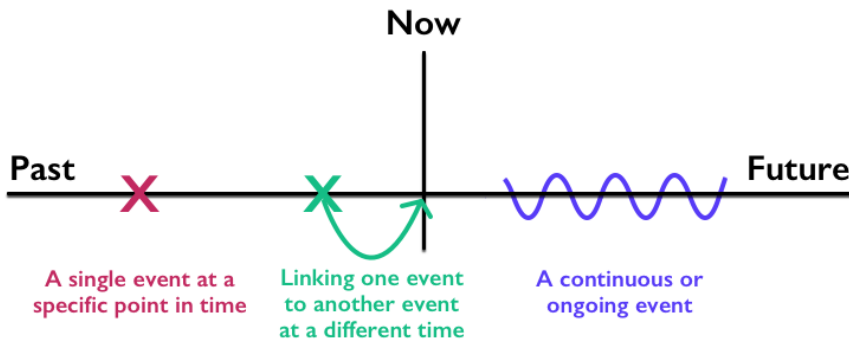
1. Tips for Drawing Timelines
2. Using Timelines to Represent Each of the English Verb Tenses

### 1. Tips for Drawing Timelines

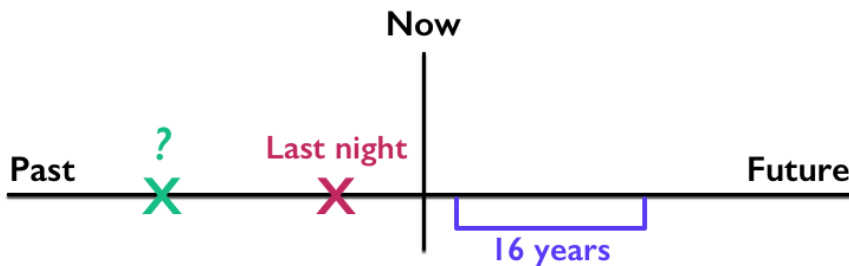
A timeline is a way that we can represent how an event looks, in terms of time, with a particular verb tense. When drawing timelines, we need to first label three reference points, our elements of time – **past**, **now** and **future**.



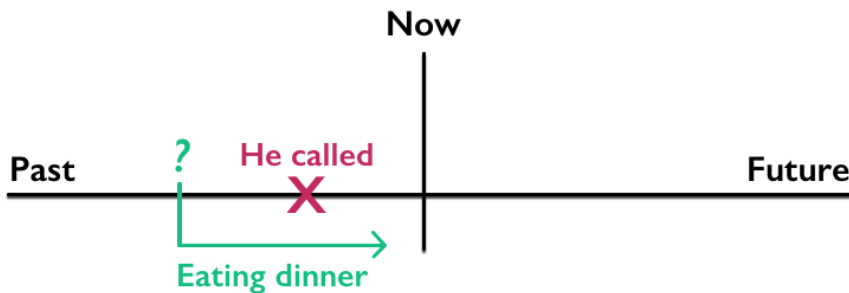
Next, we will need to represent the aspect, or the type of event that is occurring. There are three main types of events that we can represent visually on our timelines: a single event at a specific point in time, a continuous or ongoing event, and an event that is linked to another event at a different time. The image below gives you an idea of how to represent these three types of events on your timeline.



We also want to label *when* the event occurred or the *duration* of the event, if we have that information. If we don't know when the event occurred, we will use a question mark to signify that that information is unknown.



It is a good idea to use different colours to clearly differentiate between two events.



When you are drawing your timelines, keep in mind these two final tips:

- Make sure your lines are straight, not slanted.
- Make sure your timeline is large enough to be seen from the back of the class.

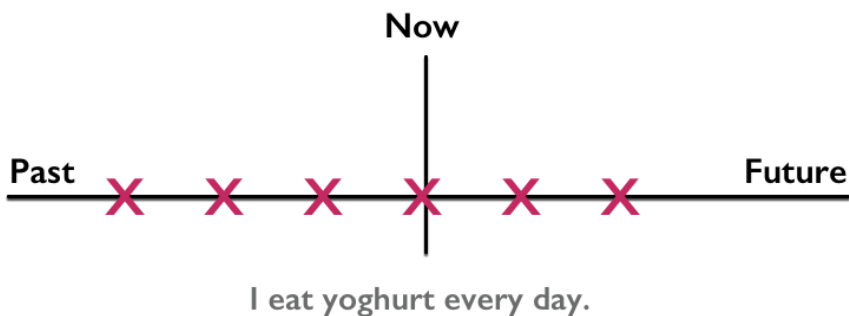
## 2. Using Timelines to Represent Each of the English Verb Tenses

It is important to remember that timelines illustrate the *use* of a verb tense, not the *form*. For this reason, you may need to use several different timelines to illustrate the various uses of a verb tense.

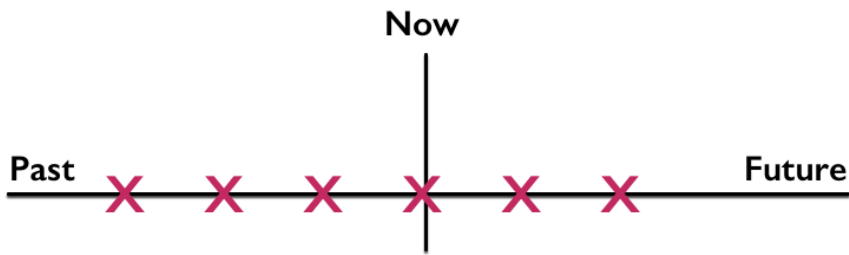
The following examples illustrate how we can visually represent each of the different verb tenses in English on a timeline.

### SIMPLE PRESENT

#### a. Habits or routines

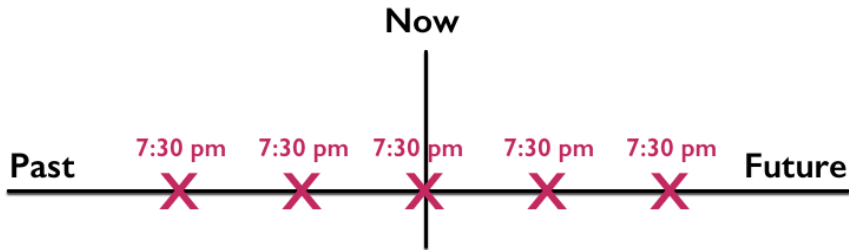


b. General truths



The sun rises every day in the east.

c. Regularly scheduled events



The train leaves at 7:30 pm.

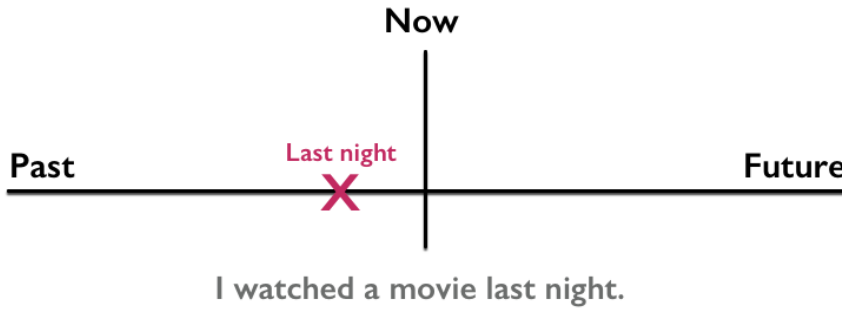
d. Running commentary



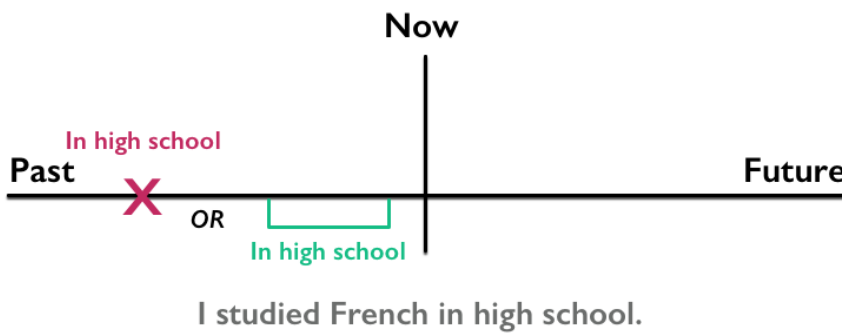
He shoots, he scores!

**SIMPLE PAST**

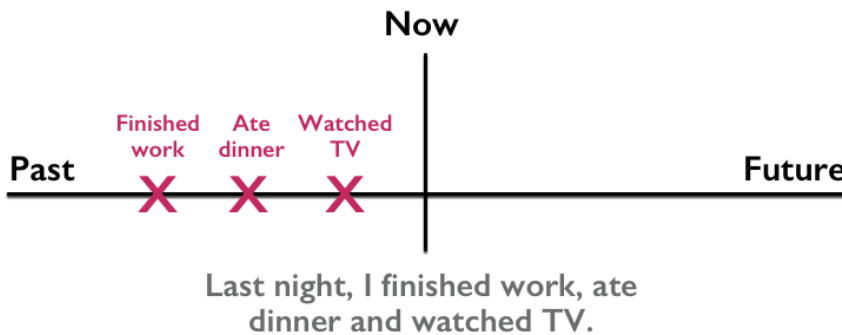
- a. A single finished event that occurred in the past at a specific time



- b. A habit or routine that occurred in the past



- c. A series of finished events that occurred in the past



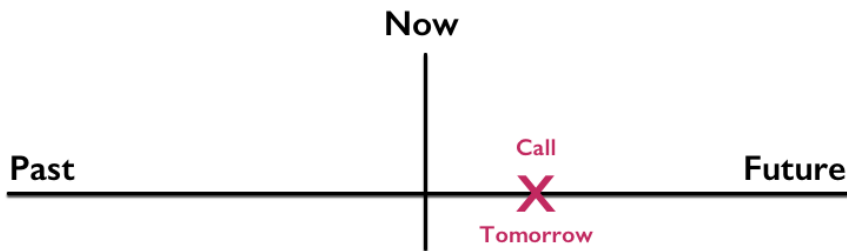
**SIMPLE FUTURE**

**a. Making predictions**



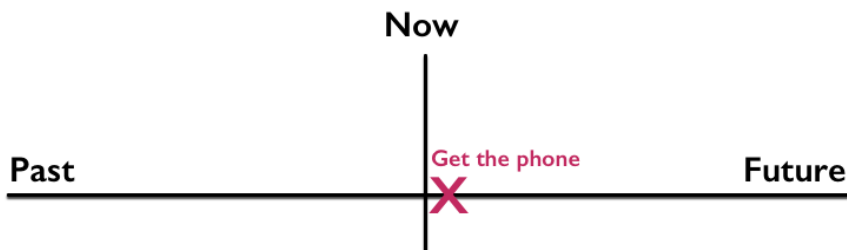
I will finish my degree next year.

**b. Making promises**



I will call you tomorrow.

**c. Offering to do something**



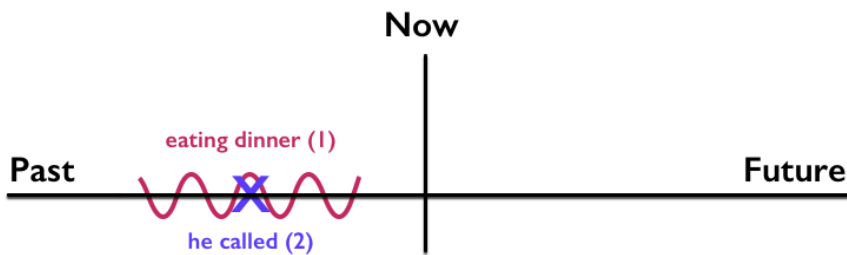
I'll get the phone.

**PRESENT PROGRESSIVE (CONTINUOUS)**



I am talking on the phone.

**PAST PROGRESSIVE (CONTINUOUS)**



I was eating dinner when he called.

**FUTURE PROGRESSIVE (CONTINUOUS)**



We will be eating dinner when you arrive.

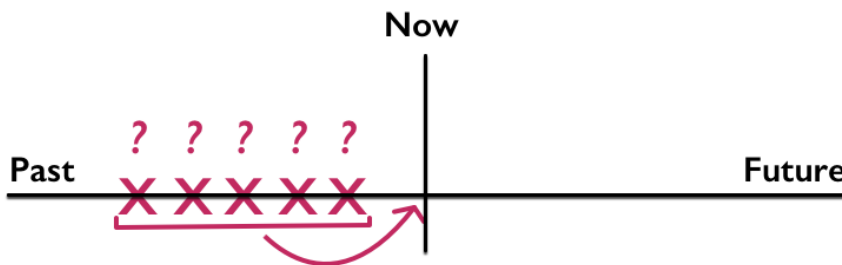
**PRESENT PERFECT**

- a. An event that happened in the past, at an unspecified time, and is somehow relevant to the present



I have been to France.

- b. An event that happened multiple times in the past, at unspecified times, and is somehow relevant to the present



I have seen that movie five times.

- c. An event that has not happened yet but is expected to occur in the immediate future.

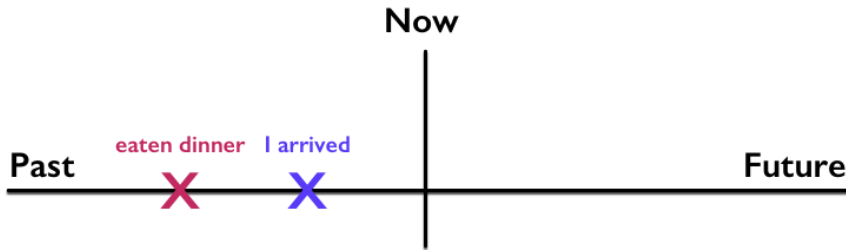


He has not finished his homework yet.



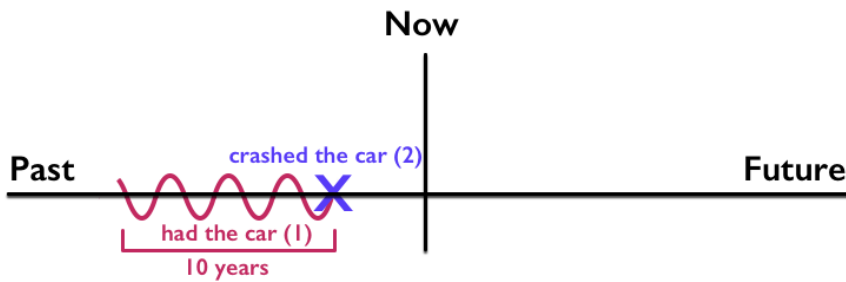
**PAST PERFECT**

- a. Two events that happened in the past in a specific order



He had eaten dinner before I arrived.

- b. An ongoing event that stops with the occurrence of a second event



He had had the car for 10 years before he crashed it.

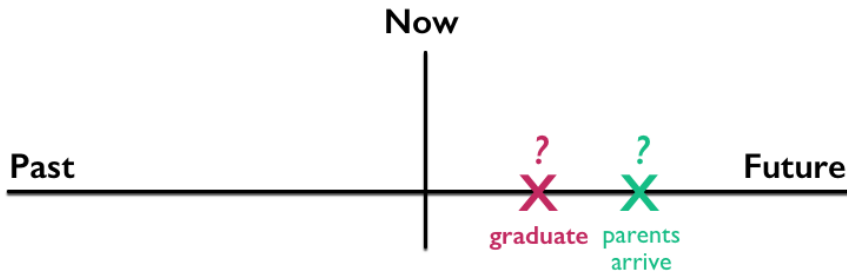
**FUTURE PERFECT**

- a. An event that will occur before a specified time in the future



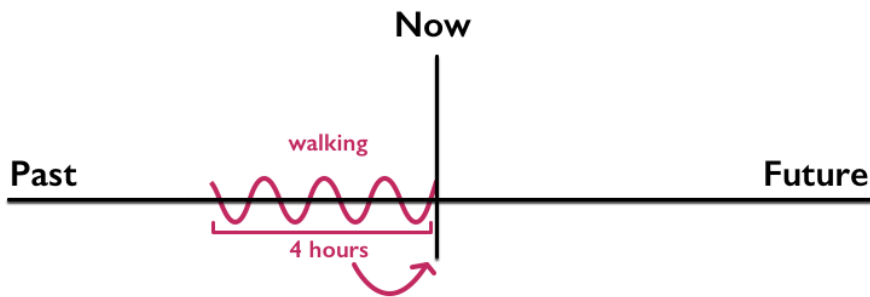
I will have graduated by April next year.

b. Two events that will happen in a specific order in the future



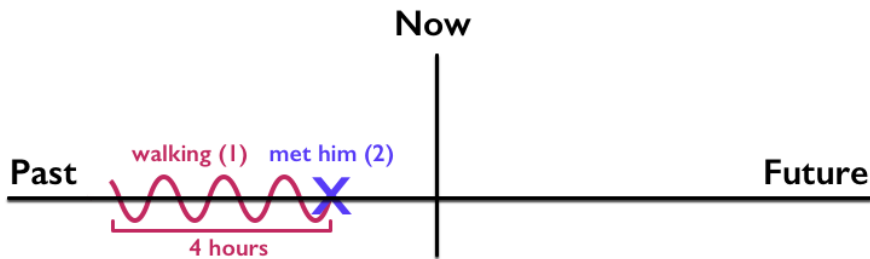
I will have graduated by the time my parents arrive.

**PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE (CONTINUOUS)**



I have been walking for four hours.

**PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE (CONTINUOUS)**



I had been walking for four hours when I met him.

**FUTURE PERFECT PROGRESSIVE (CONTINUOUS)**



I will have been walking for four hours when I arrive.

Remember to keep timelines in your repertoire when you are teaching grammar. They are an invaluable tool to help students visually understand how to place events in time with the different verb tenses in English.

Thanks for participating!

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