



## Verb Tenses

The formulas for conjugating various verb tenses are listed below along with an explanation of when to use each verb tense.

► Simple Present: base form of the verb (for third-person singular, add –s or –es).

- Use to describe customary or habitual actions, and general truths.

I walk to school every day. (habitual action)  
The earth is round. (general truth)

► Present Progressive: am / is / are + present participle (-ing).

- Use to describe actions occurring now, in the present time.

I am wearing my new raincoat.

► Present Perfect: have / has + past participle.

- Use to describe actions that began in the past and continue to the present with the sense that it will continue in the future.

John has worked at the bookstore since last summer.

- Use to describe actions that occurred more than once, or repeatedly, in the past.

Bruce has sung at every concert held at the school.

- Use to describe actions that happened at an unknown past time.

Our friends have travelled to Paris.

- Use to describe a completed action given extra emphasis.

Yes, we have studied for the test.

- Use to describe a recent action given extra emphasis.

The boys have just found the coins.

► Present Perfect Progressive: have / has + been + present participle (-ing).

- Use to describe actions that have been performed recently.

I have been picking cherries.

- Use to describe actions that have started in the past, and have continued into the present.

I have been walking for two hours.

► Simple Past: base form + -ed for regular verbs. Many verbs have an irregular past-tense form. To find the past-tense form of a verb, look up its base form in your dictionary.

- Use to describe actions that took place at a specific time in the past.

I ate breakfast yesterday.

- Use to describe actions that occurred over a period of time in the past, but are no longer occurring in the present.

I sang every day when I was in high school.

► Past Progressive: was / were + present participle (-ing).

- Use to describe an action that was occurring at a specific point in time in the past.

Dave was taking a shower when the phone rang.

- Use to describe an action that lasted for a period of time in the past.

Yannick was dancing while Adrian was playing his guitar.

► Past Perfect: had + past participle.

- Use to describe an action that was completed by a definite time, or before another action was completed in the past.

I had finished dinner by six o'clock.

After he had stepped on the nail, his foot began to hurt.

► Past Perfect Progressive: had + been + present participle (-ing).

- Use to emphasise the duration of an action that was completed before another action in the past.

Laura had been waiting for the bus for twenty minutes when it finally arrived.

► Simple Future: will / shall + base form.

- Use to describe actions that are expected to take place after the present.

Regan will sing at the concert on Friday.

► Future Progressive: will + be + present participle (-ing).

- Use to describe actions that will be in progress in the future.

I will be cheering loudly when The Rutlles walk onstage.

► Future Perfect: will + have + past participle.

- Use to describe actions that will be completed before another future action, or before a specific future time.

The Smiths will have painted their house before you arrive.

Natalie will have eaten five donuts by the end of the night.

► Future Perfect Progressive: will + have + been + present participle (-ing).

- Use to describe actions that have been in progress for a period of time in the future before another event or time in the future.

As of May, Adrian will have been playing in the band for twenty years.