



Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo Escuela Superior de Tizayuca



Área Académica: Licenciatura en Turismo.

Tema: Past progressive/continuous

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Tema: Past progressive/continuous

Abstract

Students need to know grammar structures in order to communicate well.

This is a basic tense.

Keywords: Past progressive/continuous, interrupted actions

Past Progressive – Diagram

We use the Past Progressive when we talk about something which was happening around a period of time in the past.

Past Continuous (Progressive)



We use the Past Progressive (blue) together with the Simple Past (pink). The Past Progressive is used for the action in the past which was in progress when a new action (Simple Past) happened.

Past Continuous (Progressive)



Two actions which were in progress in the past do not influence each other.

Past Continuous (Progressive)



Past

Present

Future



AFFIRMATIVE, NEGATIVE AND QUESTIONS

Affirmative sentences:

I/he/she/it **was playing** football.

We/you/they **were playing** football.

NOTE: Use **was** with **I, he, she, it** -
and **were** with **all other pronouns**.

In affirmative sentences we do not use short forms in the Past Progressive.

Negative sentences:

I/he/she/it **was not playing** football.

We/you/they **were not playing** football.

We use short forms in the Past Progressive in negative sentences:

I/he/she/it **wasn't playing** football.

We/you/they **weren't playing** football.





Questions:

In the Past Progressive we put the auxiliary (was or were) before the subject (Auxiliary - Subject - Verb - Rest). see: Questions in Past Progressive

Was I/he/she/it **playing** football?

Were we/you/they **playing** football?

SHORT AND LONG FORM

Long forms and short forms in the Past Progressive

We use short forms of the auxiliaries. The Past Progressive is formed with the auxiliary to be (was, were), so short forms are only possible in negative sentences.

affirmative	
long form	short form
I was reading	can't be formed
he, she, it:	
he was reading	
we, you, they:	
we were reading	



negative (**not** after to be)

long form

I **was not reading**

he, she, it:

he **was not reading**

we, you, they:

we **were not reading**

short form

I **wasn't reading**

he, she, it:

he **wasn't reading**

we, you, they:

we **weren't reading**



SIGNAL WORDS

Past Progressive/Continuous - Signal words

Signal words tell you what tense you have to use. In the Past Progressive we often use a period of time. A typical signal word is **while**. The Past Progressive is frequently used in sentences together with the Simple Past.

while *(In this part of the sentence we usually use Past Progressive.)*

While we **were watching** TV, Andy **was surfing** the internet.

when *(In this part of the sentence we usually use Simple Past. The Past Progressive is used in the other part of the sentence.)*

The ladies **were talking** when the accident **happened**.



SPELLING

Past Progressive – Spelling

Be careful with some words when adding -ing to the infinitive.

- **1) consonant after a short, stressed vowel at the end of the word**

Double the consonant.

sit – he **was sitting**

put - he **was putting**

If the consonant is not stressed, we do not double it:

benefit - benefiting (Here we stress the first 'e', not the 'i'.)

In British English we double one -l at the end of the word:
travel – travelling

- **2) one -e at the end of the word**

Leave out the -e.

write – he **was writing**

take – he **was taking**

BUT:

double –e: add -ing

see – he **was seeing**



- 3) verbs ending in -ie

Change 'ie' to 'y'.

lie - he was lying

- 4) verbs ending in -c

Change 'c' to 'ck'.

picnic - he was picnicking



SPECIAL VERBS

1) have as a full verb

affirmative sentence

I **was having** a bath.

he, she, it:

He **was having** a bath.

we, you, they:

You **were having** a bath.

negative sentence

I **was not having** a bath.

He **was not having** a bath.

We **were not having** a bath.

question

Was I **having** a bath?

Was he **having** a bath?

Were we **having** a bath?



2) do as a full verb

affirmative sentence

I **was doing** an exercise.

he, she, it:

He **was doing** an exercise.

we, you, they:

We **were doing** an exercise.

negative sentence

I **was not doing** an exercise.

He **was not doing** an exercise.

We **were not doing** an exercise.

question

Was I **doing** an exercise?

Was he **doing** an exercise?

Were we **doing** an exercise?



SUMMARY

Past Progressive – Use

- **1) actions were in progress at special time in the past**
Peter **was reading** a book yesterday evening.

- **2) two actions were happening at the same time (the actions do not influence each other)**

Anne **was writing** a letter while Steve **was reading** the New York Times.

- **3) together with the Simple Past**

While we **were sitting** at the breakfast table, the telephone **rang**.

- **4) repeated actions irritating the speaker (with always, constantly, forever)**

Andrew **was always coming** late.



Past Progressive - Signal words

While

Past Progressive - Form

to be (was, were) + infinitive + -ing

Past Progressive - Examples

Affirmative sentences:

I **was playing** football.

You **were playing** football.

Negative sentences:

I **was not playing** football.

You **were not playing** football.

I **wasn't playing** football.

You **weren't playing** football.



Questions:

Was I **playing** football?

Were you **playing** football?



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USE

Past Progressive/Continuous – Use

The Past Progressive is used when we talk about something which was happening at a special time in the past. It is also called Past Continuous. Have a look at the following examples:

- **1) action was in progress at special time in the past**

Peter **was reading** a book yesterday evening.
She **was listening** to the radio.

- **2) two actions were happening at the same time (the actions do not influence each other)**

Anne **was writing** a letter while Steve **was reading** the New York Times.

- **3) together with the Simple Past**

While we **were sitting** at the breakfast table, the telephone **rang**.

Note:

Past Progressive: **were sitting** at the table

Simple Past: the telephone **rang**.





The action in the Simple Past interrupted the action in the Past Progressive.

- **4) repeated actions irritating the speaker** (with always, constantly, forever)

Andrew **was** always **coming** late. (*I don't like it.*)

Simple Past:

Andrew always **came** late. (*Here I don't give a comment.*)

Taken from:

- http://www.english-hilfen.de/en/grammar/past_progressive_diagram.htm