

UNIVERSITÀ DI CAGLIARI



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CORSO DI LAUREA IN ECONOMIA E FINANZA

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PAST CONTINUOUS

• Form:

- Positive: I **was waiting** for you.
- Negative: He **was not** (wasn't) **living** there in march.
- Question: **Were** you **waiting** long? **Where was** he **living**?
- Time expressions often used: **when** or **while** before an unfinished action or the interrupted past

PAST CONTINUOUS – How do we form it?

- **AFFIRMATIVE:**

subject + past simple TO BE + main verb in –ING (+ complement)

EX: I was watching an horror movie when the phone rang and I screamed.

- **NEGATIVE:**

subject + past simple TO BE + NOT + main verb in –ING (+ complement)

EX: Her English was not (wasn't) improving while she was in England.

- **INTERROGATIVE:**

Past simple TO BE + subject + main verb in –ING (+ complement) ?

EX: Were you waiting with your grandma at the bus stop?

- **NEGATIVE QUESTION:**

Past simple TO BE + NOT + subject + + main verb in –ING (+ complement) ?

EX: Why weren't the doctors using the masks in the hospital?

PAST CONTINUOUS

• Uses:

- To describe an action or situation in progress at a time in the past
 - *I was working in the garden all day yesterday.*
- For two actions/situations happening at the same time
 - *While Luigi was playing his match, I was waiting in the car outside.*
- For temporary past situations → *We were living in New York at the time of the 2001 attack to the twin towers.*

PAST CONTINUOUS

- To describe an action or something which happened **before and after another action in the past** : → *The children were doing their homework when I got home.*
- This use of the past continuous is very common at the beginning of a story:
 - *The other day I was waiting for a taxi when ...*
 - *Last week, as I was driving to work, ...*
- For an action or something that happened **at a specific time in the past**:
 - *It was eight o'clock and I was writing a letter.*
 - *This time yesterday I was flying to London*
- We do **not** normally use the past continuous **with stative verbs**. We use the past simple instead: → *When I got home, I really needed (NOT was needing) a shower.*

PAST CONTINUOUS

- For temporary habits or habits that used to happen in the past. We often use 'always', 'constantly' or 'forever' here. (This is the same as the way we use the Present Continuous for habits, but the habit started and finished in the past.) This thing doesn't happen now.

→ *He was always leaving the tap running.* / → *She was constantly singing.*

- With verbs like “*plan, hope, intend*”, the past continuous shows that the action did not happen → *We were planning to come to your party, but Mike was ill.* / *I was hoping to study medicine, but my grades were not high enough.*

- To describe a “background” situation in the past / To set the scene for a story → *When we arrived at the beach, the sun wasn't shining.*

PAST CONTINUOUS

- To describe an unfinished action that was interrupted by another event
or action:

→ *I was having a beautiful dream when the alarm clock rang.*

→ *They were waiting for the bus when the accident happened.*

PAST SIMPLE

- **Form:**

- Positive: *I stayed with my friend last night.*
- Negative: *I **did not** (didn't) stay with her last night.*
- Question: ***Did you stay** with her?*

- **Uses:**

- For a single completed action in the past → *He died in 1593*
- For repeated actions in the past → *Caroline phoned her family every day when she was on holiday.*
- For a series of action (when one thing happens after another) in the past → *We arrived in Rome at 11 o'clock and took a taxi to his apartment.*
- For situations that finished in the past → *He lived from 1593 to 1683.*
- **Time expressions often used:** ago, for, last week/month/year, yesterday, when, after, since + past simple.

PAST CONTINUOUS VS PAST SIMPLE ?

- Past continuous tense is often combined with past simple tense.

An example of this combination is: *While we were sitting at the stadium, the rain began.*

The past continuous tense is "were sitting" and the past simple is "began."

In this combination, the **simple past tense interrupted the past progressive tense** action. This pairing shows that something happened in the middle of something else happening

- We use the past continuous and the past simple together to show that one action (past simple) interrupts another action (past continuous)

→ *The bus was going too fast and it hit the car.*

→ *We were having dinner when she arrived.*

PAST CONTINUOUS VS PAST SIMPLE ?

- We use the past continuous and the past simple together to show that one short action (past simple) interrupts a longer action in progress (past continuous).
The action in the past continuous starts before and often continues after the other shorter action or time.

→ *I saw her in the library yesterday, she was reading a book.*

PAST CONTINUOUS VS PAST SIMPLE ?

1. What _____ (you / do) when I _____ (call) you last night?
 2. I _____ (sit) in a café when you _____ (call).
 3. When you _____ (arrive) at the party, who _____ (be) there?
 4. Susie _____ (watch) a film when she _____ (hear) the noise.
 5. Yesterday I _____ (go) to the library, next I _____ (have) a swim, later I _____ (meet) Julie for a coffee.
1. What were you doing when I called you last night?
 2. I was sitting in a café when you called.
 3. When you arrived at the party, who was there?
 4. Susie was watching a film when she heard the noise.
 5. Yesterday I went to the library, next I had a swim, later I met Julie for a coffee.

PAST CONTINUOUS VS PAST SIMPLE ?

6. We _____ (play) tennis when John _____ (hurt) his ankle.
7. It _____ (be) a day last September. The sun _____ (shine), the birds _____ (sing). I _____ (walk) along the street when I _____ (meet) an old friend.
8. He _____ (live) in Russia when the Revolution _____ (start).
9. When her train _____ (get) to the station, we _____ (wait) on the platform.
10. He _____ (be) so annoying! He _____ (always / leave) his things everywhere.
6. We were playing tennis when John hurt his ankle.
7. It was a day last September. The sun was shining, the birds were singing. I was walking along the street when I met an old friend.
8. He was living in Russia when the Revolution started.
9. When her train got to the station, we were waiting on the platform.
10. He was so annoying! He was always leaving his things everywhere.

PAST CONTINUOUS VS PAST SIMPLE ?

15. On holiday we _____ (visit) Rome, _____ (see) the Vatican, and _____ (spend) a few days at the beach.
16. Why _____ (you / stand) on a chair when I _____ (come) into the room?
17. They _____ (live) in Germany when they _____ (be) young.
18. At 7pm yesterday, we _____ (listen) to music.
19. When I _____ (leave) the house, it _____ (snow).
20. He _____ (work) in a bank when he _____ (meet) his wife.
15. On holiday we visited Rome, saw the Vatican, and spent a few days at the beach.
16. Why were you standing on a chair when I came into the room?
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