

Rules for Tenses in English Grammar with Examples

Rules of Tenses help one understand how to correctly use the different tenses in a sentence, without making a grammatical mistake and also by easily indicating when an event or action has occurred.

Tenses can be divided into three parts:

1. [Present Tense](#)
2. [Past Tense](#)
3. [Future Tense](#)

Each of the three above mentioned tenses can further be divided into subparts. These subparts include:

- Simple
- Continuous
- Perfect
- Perfect Continuous

In this article, we shall discuss in detail the tenses rules for the above-mentioned types of verb tenses, followed by examples to explain them clearly.

Present Tense

Present Tense can be defined as an expression for an activity that is currently in action or is habitually performed. It is used for a state that generally exists or is currently ongoing.

Simple Present Tense

Singular

Rule: Subject + V1 + s/es + Object

Example: The girl sings a song

Here the subject is Girl (singular) and “s” has been added to the verb (sing), followed by the object (song)

Plural

Rule: Subject + V1 + Object

Example: The girls sing a song

Here the subject is Girls (plural) and no changes have been made with V1 (first form of verb) and the object

- [Simple Present](#)
- [Present Continuous](#)

Present Continuous Tense

Rule: Subject + is/am/are + V1 + ing + object

Example: She is eating food
Here the subject is She, followed by “is”

The first form of verb (V1) here is “eat” and “ing” has been added to it, followed by the object “food”

Present Perfect Tense

Singular

Plural

Rule: Subject + has + V3 + Object

Rule: Subject + have + V3 + Object

Example: He has cleaned the utensils

Here, “He” is the subject + has

“Cleaned” is the third form of verb and utensils is the object

Example: They have cleaned the utensils

Here, “They” is the subject + have

“Cleaned” is the third form of verb and utensils is the object

- Present Perfect
- Present Perfect Continuous Tense
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Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Singular

Plural

Rule: Subject + has been + V1 + ing + Object

Rule: Subject + have been + V1 + ing + Object

Example: She has been practising since morning

Here “She” is the subject + has been, followed by “ing” added to the the first form of verb “practise” and then the object

Example: They have been practising since morning

Here “They” is the subject + have been, followed by “ing” added to the the first form of verb “practise” and then the object

Given below are a few examples that may help you differentiate between the four sub parts of present tense easily:

1. Raj speaks German (Simple Present for Singular)
2. They speak German (Simple Present for Plural)

3. She is speaking German (Present Continuous)
4. He has learnt German (Present Perfect for Singular)
5. They have learnt German (Present Perfect for Plural)
6. She has been learning German (Present Perfect Continuous for Singular)
7. They have been learning German (Present Perfect Continuous for Plural)

Past Tense

Any event or action that took place in the past can be referred to as the past tense. Below we have discussed in detail the four sub parts of past tense in English grammar.

- **Simple Past**

Simple Past Tense

Rule: Subject + V2 + Object

For example: He ran away

Here, the subject is “He” and “ran” is the second form of verb (V2) of “run” followed by the object

- **Past Continuous**

Past Continuous Tense

Singular

Plural

Rule: Subject + was + V1 + ing + Object

Rule: Subject + were + V1 + ing + Object

For example: She was going shopping

Here, the subject is “She” + was

It is followed by the first form of verb (V1) “go” + “ing” and then the object “shopping”

For example: They were going shopping

Here, the subject is “They” + were

Followed by the first form of verb (V1) “go” + “ing” and then the object “shopping”

- **Past Perfect**

Past Perfect Tense

Rule: Subject + had + V3 + Object

For example: Sumit had left the job

Here the subject is “Sumit” + had

Then “left”, which is the third form of verb (V3) “leave” is given followed by the object

- Past Perfect Continuous

Past Perfect Continuous Tense

Rule: Subject + had been + V1 + ing + Object

For example: They had been preparing for their performance for two months

Here the subject is “They” + had been

It is followed by “preparing”, which is the first form of verb (V1) of “prepare” and then the object

To help you understand past tense and its form even better, given below are a few examples to simply the concept:

1. I played football yesterday (Simple Past)
2. I was playing football yesterday (Past Continuous for Singular)
3. They were playing football yesterday (Past Continuous for Plural)
4. They had played football yesterday (Past Perfect)

Future Tense

The actions that are to take place in the future fall in the category of the future tense. We have discussed the subparts of the future tense in detail further below in the article, followed by the examples for the same.

- Simple Future

Simple Future Tense

Rule: Subject + will/shall + V1 + Object

For Example: I will visit my Uncle tomorrow

Here, the subject is “I” + will

It is followed by the first form of verb (V1) “visit” and then the object

- Future Continuous

Future Continuous Tense

Rule: Subject + will be/shall be + V1 + ing + Object

For Example: I shall be going to the market tomorrow

In this example, the subject is “I” + shall be

Following it is the first form of verb (V1) “go”+ing and then the object

- Future Perfect

Future Perfect Tense

Rule: Subject + will have/shall have + V3 + Object

For Example: I shall have prepared the notes by tomorrow morning

In this example, the subject is “I” + shall have

It is followed by “prepared”, which is the third form of Verb (V3) “prepare” and then the object

- Future Perfect Continuous

Future Perfect Continuous Tense

Rule: Subject + will have been + V1 + ing + Object

For Example: She will have been working here since 2015

Here, the subject is “She” + will have been

It is followed by the first form of verb “work”+ing and then the object

Given below are a few examples that may help you clarify the future tense concept clearly:

1. She will go to school tomorrow (Simple Future)
2. She will be going to school tomorrow (Future Continuous)
3. She will have gone to school tomorrow (Future Perfect)
4. She will have been going to school tomorrow (Future Perfect Continuous)