

# Unit 5

## Past simple (I did)

A

Study this example:

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart **was** an Austrian musician and composer. He **lived** from 1756 to 1791. He **started** composing at the age of five and **wrote** more than 600 pieces of music. He **was** only 35 years old when he **died**.

**Lived/started/wrote/was/died** are all *past simple*.



B

Very often the past simple ends in **-ed** (*regular verbs*):

- ☐ I work in a travel agency now. Before that I **worked** in a department store.
- ☐ We **invited** them to our party, but they **decided** not to come.
- ☐ The police **stopped** me on my way home last night.
- ☐ Laura **passed** her exam because she **studied** very hard.

For spelling (stopped, studied etc.), see Appendix 6.

But many verbs are *irregular*. The past simple does **not** end in **-ed**. For example:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| write → <b>wrote</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Mozart <b>wrote</b> more than 600 pieces of music. |
| see → <b>saw</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> We <b>saw</b> Tanya in town a few days ago.        |
| go → <b>went</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> I <b>went</b> to the cinema three times last week. |
| shut → <b>shut</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> It was cold, so I <b>shut</b> the window.          |

C

In questions and negatives we use **did/didn't** + *infinitive* (**enjoy/see/go** etc.):

I	<b>enjoyed</b>		you	<b>enjoy?</b>	I		<b>enjoy</b>
she	<b>saw</b>	<b>did</b>	she	<b>see?</b>	she	<b>didn't</b>	<b>see</b>
they	<b>went</b>		they	<b>go?</b>	they		<b>go</b>

- ☐ A: **Did** you **go** out last night?
- B: Yes, I **went** to the cinema, but I **didn't enjoy** the film much.
- ☐ 'When **did** Mr Thomas **die**?' 'About ten years ago.'
- ☐ They **didn't invite** us to the party, so we **didn't go**.
- ☐ '**Did** you **have** time to do the shopping?' 'No, I **didn't**.'

In the following examples, **do** is the main verb in the sentence (**did ... do / didn't do**):

- ☐ What **did** you **do** at the weekend? (*not* What did you at the weekend?)
- ☐ I **didn't do** anything. (*not* I didn't anything)

D

The past of **be** (**am/is/are**) is **was/were**:

I/he/she/it	<b>was/wasn't</b>	<b>was</b>	I/he/she/it?
we/you/they	<b>were/weren't</b>	<b>were</b>	we/you/they?

Note that we do not use **did** in negatives and questions with **was/were**:

- ☐ I **was** angry because they **were** late.
- ☐ **Was** the weather good when you **were** on holiday?
- ☐ They **weren't** able to come because they **were** so busy.
- ☐ Did you go out last night or **were** you too tired?

## Exercises

## 5.1 Read what Laura says about a typical working day:



Laura

I usually get up at 7 o'clock and have a big breakfast. I walk to work, which takes me about half an hour. I start work at 8.45. I never have lunch. I finish work at 5 o'clock. I'm always tired when I get home. I usually cook a meal in the evening. I don't usually go out. I go to bed at about 11 o'clock, and I always sleep well.

Yesterday was a typical working day for Laura. Write what she did or didn't do yesterday.

- |              |                  |    |  |                           |
|--------------|------------------|----|--|---------------------------|
| 1 She got up | at 7 o'clock.    | 7  |  | at 5 o'clock.             |
| 2 She        | a big breakfast. | 8  |  | tired when                |
| 3 She        |                  | 9  |  | a meal yesterday evening. |
| 4 It         | to get to work.  | 10 |  | out yesterday evening.    |
| 5            | at 8.45.         | 11 |  | at 11 o'clock.            |
| 6            | lunch.           | 12 |  | well last night.          |

## 5.2 Complete the sentences using the following verbs in the correct form:

buy catch cost fall hurt sell spend teach throw ~~write~~

- Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music.
- 'How did you learn to drive?' 'My father taught me.'
- We couldn't afford to keep our car, so we sold it.
- Dave fell down the stairs this morning and hurt his leg.
- Joe threw the ball to Sue, who caught it.
- Ann spent a lot of money yesterday. She bought a dress which cost £100.

## 5.3 You ask James about his holiday. Write your questions.

Hi. How are things?

Fine, thanks. I've just had a great holiday.

- Where did you go?  
To the U.S. We went on a trip from San Francisco to Denver.
- How did you go? By car?  
Yes, we hired a car in San Francisco.
- It's a long way to drive. How long did it take to get to Denver?  
Two weeks.
- Where did you stay? In hotels?  
Yes, small hotels or motels.
- Was the weather good?  
Yes, but it was very hot – sometimes too hot.
- Did you see the Grand Canyon?  
Of course. It was wonderful.

## 5.4 Complete the sentences. Put the verb into the correct form, positive or negative.

- It was warm, so I took off my coat. (take)
- The film wasn't very good. I didn't enjoy it much. (enjoy)
- I knew Sarah was busy, so I didn't disturb her. (disturb)
- We were very tired, so we left the party early. (leave)
- The bed was very uncomfortable. I didn't sleep well. (sleep)
- The window was open and a bird flew into the room. (fly)
- The hotel wasn't very expensive. It cost much to stay there. (cost)
- I was in a hurry, so I didn't have time to phone you. (have)
- It was hard carrying the bags. They were very heavy. (be)



# Unit 6

## Past continuous (I was doing)

A

Study this example situation:



Yesterday Karen and Jim played tennis. They started at 10 o'clock and finished at 11.30.

So, at 10.30 they **were playing** tennis.

They **were playing** = they were in the middle of playing. They had not finished playing.

**Was/were -ing** is the *past continuous*:

I/he/she/it	was	playing
we/you/they	were	doing
		working etc.

B

**I was doing** something = I was in the middle of doing something at a certain time. The action or situation had already started before this time, but had not finished:

**I started doing**

**I was doing**

**I finished doing**

past

past

now

- ☐ This time last year I **was living** in Brazil.
- ☐ What **were you doing** at 10 o'clock last night?
- ☐ I waved to Helen, but she **wasn't looking**.

C

Compare the *past continuous* (I **was doing**) and *past simple* (I **did**):

*Past continuous* (in the middle of an action)

- ☐ I **was walking** home when I met Dan. (in the middle of walking home)
- ☐ Kate **was watching** TV when we arrived.

*Past simple* (complete action)

- ☐ I **walked** home after the party last night. (= all the way, completely)
- ☐ Kate **watched** television a lot when she was ill last year.

D

We often use the past simple and the past continuous together to say that something happened in the middle of something else:

- ☐ Matt **phoned** while we **were having** dinner.
- ☐ It **was raining** when I **got** up.
- ☐ I **saw** you in the park yesterday. You **were sitting** on the grass and **reading** a book.
- ☐ I **hurt** my back while I **was working** in the garden.

But we use the past simple to say that one thing happened after another:

- ☐ I **was walking** along the road when I **saw** Dan. So I **stopped**, and we **had** a chat.

Compare:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> When Karen arrived, we <b>were having</b> dinner. (= we had already started before she arrived) | <input type="checkbox"/> When Karen arrived, we <b>had</b> dinner. (= Karen arrived, and then we had dinner) |
|--|--|

E

Some verbs (for example, **know** and **want**) are not normally used in the continuous (see Unit 4A):

- ☐ We were good friends. We **knew** each other well. (*not* We were knowing)
- ☐ I was enjoying the party, but Chris **wanted** to go home. (*not* was wanting)

## Exercises

**6.1** What were you doing at these times? Write sentences as in the examples. The past continuous is not always necessary (see the second example).

1 (at 8 o'clock yesterday evening) I was having dinner.

2 (at 5 o'clock last Monday) I was on a bus on my way home.

3 (at 10.15 yesterday morning) \_\_\_\_\_

4 (at 4.30 this morning) \_\_\_\_\_

5 (at 7.45 yesterday evening) \_\_\_\_\_

6 (half an hour ago) \_\_\_\_\_

**6.2** Use your own ideas to complete the sentences. Use the past continuous.

1 Matt phoned while we were having dinner.

2 The doorbell rang while I \_\_\_\_\_.

3 The car began to make a strange noise when we \_\_\_\_\_.

4 Jessica fell asleep while she \_\_\_\_\_.

5 The television was on, but nobody \_\_\_\_\_.

**6.3** Put the verb into the correct form, past continuous or past simple.

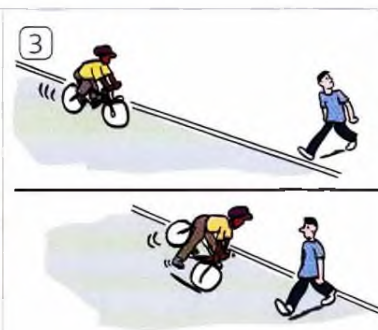


1 I saw (see) Sue in town yesterday, but she \_\_\_\_\_ (not / see) me.

She \_\_\_\_\_ (look) the other way.



2 I \_\_\_\_\_ (meet) Tom and Jane at the airport a few weeks ago. They \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to Paris and \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to Rome. We \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a chat while we \_\_\_\_\_ (wait) for our flights.



3 I \_\_\_\_\_ (cycle) home yesterday when a man \_\_\_\_\_ (step) out into the road in front of me. I \_\_\_\_\_ (go) quite fast, but luckily I \_\_\_\_\_ (manage) to stop in time and \_\_\_\_\_ (not / hit) him.

**6.4** Put the verb into the correct form, past continuous or past simple.

1 Jenny was waiting (wait) for me when I arrived (arrive).

2 'What \_\_\_\_\_ (you / do) at this time yesterday?' 'I was asleep.'

3 '\_\_\_\_\_ (you / go) out last night?' 'No, I was too tired.'

4 How fast \_\_\_\_\_ (you / drive) when the accident \_\_\_\_\_ (happen)?

5 Sam \_\_\_\_\_ (take) a picture of me while I \_\_\_\_\_ (not / look).

6 We were in a very difficult position. We \_\_\_\_\_ (not / know) what to do.

7 I haven't seen Alan for ages. When I last \_\_\_\_\_ (see) him, he \_\_\_\_\_ (try) to find a job.

8 I \_\_\_\_\_ (walk) along the street when suddenly I \_\_\_\_\_ (hear) footsteps behind me. Somebody \_\_\_\_\_ (follow) me. I was scared and I \_\_\_\_\_ (start) to run.

9 When I was young, I \_\_\_\_\_ (want) to be a pilot.

10 Last night I \_\_\_\_\_ (drop) a plate when I \_\_\_\_\_ (do) the washing-up. Fortunately it \_\_\_\_\_ (not / break).