# UNIT 3 Past Continuous



**Were** Paul and Claire **working** at 8 o'clock last night? No, they weren't. They **were having** dinner at a restaurant.

We form the past continuous with was/were (past simple of the verb to be) and the main verb with the -ing suffix. We form questions by putting was/were before the subject. We form negations by putting the word not after was/were.

	Affirma	tive			
I was He/She/lt was You/We/They were } studying.					
	Interrog	ative			
Was I he/she/it he/she/it you/we/they studying?					
	Negat	ive			
	Long form	Short form			
I He/She/lt You/We/They	was not was not were not	wasn't wasn't weren't	} studying.		



A fire broke out yesterday at Crofton Electronics. What were the people doing when the fire broke out? Look at the pictures. In pairs, ask and answer questions using the prompts below, as in the example.

SA: What was Tim doing? SB: He was sitting at his desk.





(wait) outside.

## Put the verbs in brackets into the past continuous.

A:	What 1)was happening (happen) at the time of the robbery?
B:	Well, I 2) (sit) in my office. I
	3) (talk) to an employee. Some of
	the staff 4) (put) food onto the
	shelves. Several customers 5)(do)
	their shopping and a cashier 6)
	(stand) behind the till.
A:	Can you tell me anything about the robbers?
B:	Yes. They 7) (wear) black masks
	and they 8) (hold) guns. They
	9) (shout).
A:	How did they get away?
B:	They drove off in a car which 10)

### Use

#### We use the past continuous:

 for an action which was in progress at a stated time in the past. We do not know when the action started or finished.



At three o'clock yesterday afternoon Mike and his son were washing the dog. (We do not know when they started or finished washing the dog.)

for a past action which was in progress when another action interrupted it. We use the past continuous for the action in progress (longer action) and the past simple for the action which interrupted it (shorter action).

He was reading a newspaper when his wife came. (was reading = longer action; came = shorter action)



for two or more actions which were happening at



the same time in the past (simultaneous actions).

The people were watching while the cowboy was riding the bull.

to give the background information in a story.

The sun was shining and the birds were singing. Tom was driving his old truck through the forest.



### Time Expressions

Time expressions used with the past continuous include:

while, when, as, all day/night/morning, etc.

when/while/as + past continuous (longer action) when + past simple (shorter action)



#### Match Column A with Column B.

#### Column A

#### Column B

a as he was chopping wood.

While they were talking,

- b he was sleeping in his bed.
- c while they were playing.
- d she slipped and fell.
- e I ran out of petrol.f the doorbell rang.
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Join the sentences using as, when or while, as in the example.

- 1 Tina was cooking. She burnt herself. ... As/When/While Tina was cooking, she burnt herself. ...
  - ... Tina was cooking when she burnt herself. ...
- 2 Laura was making some tea. She dropped the kettle.
- 3 Mrs Jason was sitting in the garden. It started raining.
- 4 Peter was driving his car. He got a flat tyre.
- 5 She was walking in the park. A dog attacked her.



Put the verbs in brackets into the past simple or past continuous. Which is the longer action in each sentence?

- 1 As I ...was doing... (do) the washing-up, I ...broke... (break) a glass. "Doing the washing-up is the longer action."
- 2 We ...... (walk) in the woods when the storm ...... (begin).

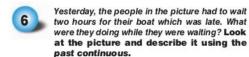
## UNIT 3 Past Continuous

3	John (repair) his motor bike when his mother (arrive).
4	I (eat) my lunch when
	the phone (ring).
5	He (ride) his bicycle to school
	when he (drop) his bag.
6	We (see) a bad accident
	as we (drive) to the airport.
7	Tom (watch) the match
	when the TV (break down).
8	We (talk) when she
	(come) into the room.

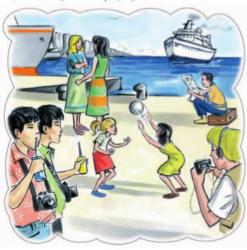
### Short Answers

e.g. Were you sleeping at eleven o'clock last night? Yes, I was.

Were you?	Yes, I was/we were.
	No, I wasn't/we weren't.
Was he/she/it?	Yes, he/she/it was.
TTGO TIG/OTIG/IT 1	No, he/she/it wasn't.
Were they?	Yes, they were.
Word andy	No, they weren't.



e.g. The two girls were playing with a ball.



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Look at the picture in ex. 6 again and, in pairs, ask and answer questions, as in the example.

ĺ	the two girls / play / tennis?  SA: Were the two girls playing tennis?
	SB: No, they weren't. They were playing volleyball.
•	the young man / listen to / music?
	the older man / read / a book?
ŀ	the women / knit?
i	the Japanese tourists / take / pictures?



## Put the verbs in brackets into the past continuous.

A	Yesterday, I went for a walk in the park. While I was there, I saw lots of children who 1)were playing. (play). There was a man who 2)

В	Harriet and Liam got married last weekend. It was a beautiful wedding. The bridesmaids 1)
	(weer) pink dresses and they 2)
	(all/carry) small bouquets of pink and white flowers.
	The photographer 3) (take)
e.	The photographer 3)
	photographs and the bride's mother 4)
	(cn/) because she was so nappy. The
l.	sun 5)
	Sull 3)
1	6) (smile) at everyone.



In pairs, ask and answer questions, as in the example.

- 1 at six o'clock yesterday evening?
  - SA: What were you doing at six o'clock yesterday evening?
  - SB: I was doing my English homework.
- 2 at two o'clock this morning?
- 3 at half past nine last Sunday evening?
- 4 an hour ago?
- 5 at noon last Saturday?

## Past Continuous versus Past Simple

#### Past Continuous

#### We use the past continuous for:

 an action which was in progress (was happening) at a stated time in the past. We do not know when the action started or



At nine o'clock yesterday morning, the plane was flying to Tahiti from New York. (We do not know when it left or reached its destination.)

finished.

 two actions which were happening at the same time in the past.



He was listening carefully while they were explaining the plan to him.

#### Past Simple

#### We use the past simple for:

a complete action at a stated time in the past.



The plane landed at the airport at eight o'clock yesterday morning. (The time is stated. The action is complete. The plane landed.)

 actions which happened immediately one after the other in the past.



First she **read** the advertisement and then she **called** the company.

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## Put the verbs in brackets into the past continuous or the past simple.

1	Wewent	(go)	swimming	every	week	when	we
	were young.						

- 2 Simon ...... (dance) when he fell and hurt his leg.
  3 Why ..... (you/laugh)
- all through your history lesson yesterday?
- 4 I ....................... (drink) a glass of milk every day when I was a child.
- 5 Todd often ...... (ride) horses when he was a boy.
- 6 Bill ...... (write) a letter when his mother came home.
- 7 It ...... (rain) while I was waiting for the bus. 8 I ......(play) the guitar when I was young,
- but I don't any more.

  9 Debbie ......(sing) in the school
- 10 Liz ...... (clean) the windows when I saw her.

choir many years ago.

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## Put the verbs in brackets into the past continuous or the past simple.

A	Steve i)naa (nave) an accident yesterday. He
	2) (drive) his car when a bird
	3) (fly) into the windscreen. He 4)
	(try) to stop quickly but he 5) (crash)
	into a wall. Luckily, he 6) (not/be) hurt.
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В	Last week, I 1) (go) to a talk by a famous writer.
	He 2) (talk) about his new book when I
	3) (give) such
	an interesting talk that I 5)(be)
	disappointed when it 6) (end).

Julie 1) (tidy) her bedroom last weekend.
While she 2) (tidy) it, she 3)
(find) some of the toys she 4) (have) when
she was a child. She 5) (not/want) to
throw them away, so she 6) (put) them in
a box and 7) (store) them in the attic.

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Put the verbs in brackets into the past continuous or the past simple. Then, put the pictures in the right order.







It 1)was (be) a beautiful spring morning when Emma and her father 2)
5)
7) (climb) the steps to the top of the tower. While they 8) (admire) the
view, they 9)
Emma 15) (examine) an old barrel when she 16) (hear) the door of the cellar close behind them. 'Dad,' she 17) (say), 'don't close the door!' 'But, I 18)
20) (see) a shadow on the wall. She 21) (know) then that the ghost of Seaton
Castle 22) (watch) them!



#### Put the verbs in brackets into the past simple or the past continuous.

#### Dear Rick,

> Best wishes, Kevin

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#### Correct the mistakes.

- 1 Philip was washing the car while the fire started.
- Neil was studying when his sister was listening to music.
- 3 Harriet was opening the door and walked into the house.
- 4 We were having lunch at a lovely restaurant every day when we were on holiday.
- 5 Brian drank tea at five o'clock yesterday afternoon.
- 6 Dad was repairing the TV while Mum cooked dinner.
- 7 I was going to the cinema last Saturday.
- 8 I was buying a new dress for my party yesterday.
- 9 While Jeff built the garden shed, he hurt himself.
- 10 While the teacher were speaking, the students were listening to him.





Put the verbs in brackets into the present continuous, present simple, past simple or past continuous.

1	Iwas cleaning (clean) the windows when the telephone (ring).
2	'What is that noise?' 'James (repair) his bike at the moment.'
3	He (read) a book when his mother (call) him.
4	'(be) you busy?' 'No, what(you/want) me to do?'
5	They(sing) while we(play) some music.
6	Susan is a nurse. She usually(work) at night.

1	Choose the correct answer.
1	The earth
2	Sarah a new car last week.  A is buying B buy C bought
3	I when suddenly the dog began to bark.  A study  B studied  C was studying
4	They hard at the moment.  A are working B were working C worked
5	Ihome from work when it began to snow.  A am walking B walk C was walking
6	Jane the receiver and dialled the number.  A lifts B was lifting C lifted
7	Walt Disney Mickey Mouse.  A was creating B creates C created
8	Helen to the gym every day, but now she doesn't.
	A used to go B didn't use to go C was going
9	We for a new house at the moment.  A are looking B look C looked

10 Ted ...... his father in the garden every Sunday.

11 The ferry to Calais ...... at 3 o'clock every day. B leaves

12 You ...... your music too loud! I can't stand it!

C is helping

C was leaving

B always play

A was helping B helps

A were always playing

C are always playing

A leave

Look at the picture. It shows what the people were doing/did when a bank robbery happened. In pairs, ask and answer questions using the prompts below as in the example.

e.g. SA: What was the manager doing?

SB: He was talking on the phone.

SA: What did he do when he saw the robbers?

SB: He stood up.

manager / talk on the phone / stand up cashier / count some money / put his hands up child / sit on a chair / start to cry old lady / wait in the queue / faint



OW	R	IT	1	N	o.	3
V.	Ac	tiv	ity		7	/

Imagine that one of the people who saw the robbery is writing a letter to a friend to tell him/her what was happening/happened on that day. Using the picture and your notes from the Oral Activity, complete the letter.

Dear	 (friend's name),

I'm writing to tell you what happened to me vesterday while I was depositing some money in the bank.

I was	standing	in the	queue	when	two bank
robbers	suddenly	appea	red at th	ne door	r



## Unit 20 – a) Prepositions of Place/Movement (Questions)

Divide the class into two teams. Give them the picture and ask them to look at it for 2 minutes. Then, Ss close their books and take turns to answer your questions. The winner is the team with the most correct answers.

.g. Teacher: Where is the woman with the groceries?

Team A S1: She is at the bus stop.



## b) Prepositions of Time (TV Programmes)

Give Ss a handout with programmes which are on TV at the weekend. One student chooses a programme without telling the others. The other Ss take turns to ask questions to find out what the programme is. The student who guesses correctly takes the next turn. Ss have to use *Prepositions of Time*.

	Saturday	Sunday 8:00 Sindy 9:00 The Smurfs		
morning	9:00 Bugs Bunny 11:00 Popeye			
afternoon	2:00 Detective Gadget 4:00 Tom and Jerry	3:00 The Dinosaurs 4:00 The Monsters		
evening	7:00 Power Rangers 9:00 The Disney Club	6:00 Pokemon 8:00 The Titanic		

e.g. (Student chooses The Titanic)

S1: Is it on Saturday?

S2: No, it isn't.

S3: Is it on Sunday?

S2: Yes, it is.

S4: Is it in the evening?

S2: Yes, it is.

S5: Is it at 8 o'clock?

S2: Yes, it is.

S6: It's the Titanic.