

PAST TENSES

PAST SIMPLE

PAST CONTINUOUS

PAST PERFECT

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

We use **past simple**

- for an action that happened at a definite time (stated or implied) in the past



They graduated from university last year.

We use **past simple**

- for actions that happened immediately one after the other in the past



Henry closed the front door and locked it.

We use **past continuous**

- for an action which was in progress when another action interrupted it.



Ann was cooking dinner when her phone rang.

We use **past continuous**

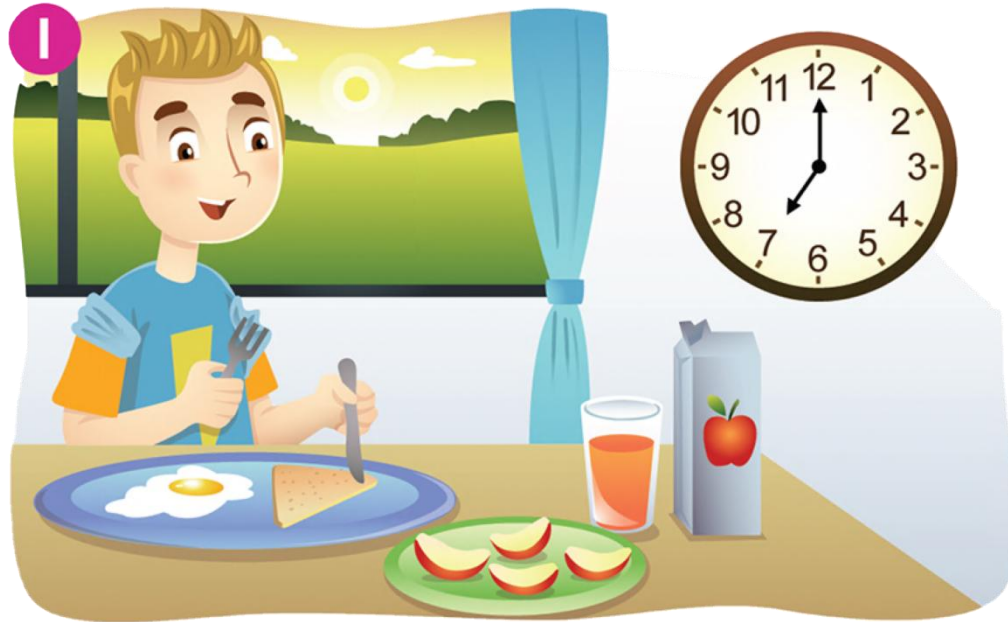
- for two or more simultaneous actions in the past.



James was chopping the peppers while his dad was cooking.

We use **past continuous**

- for an action which was in progress at a stated time in the past.



At 7 o'clock this morning, John was having breakfast.

We use **past continuous**

- to describe the atmosphere, setting, etc. and to give background information about a story.



The wind was blowing and the rain was pouring. Jenny was walking home, totally soaked.

We use **past perfect**

- for an action which happened before another action in the past or before a stated time in the past.



Kate had finished her homework by the time her friend arrived.

We use **past perfect**

- for an action which finished in the past and whose result was visible at a later point in the past.



She had broken her ankle a few months earlier and was still in plaster.

We use **past perfect continuous**

- to put emphasis on the duration of an action which started and finished in the past, before another action or stated time in the past, usually with *for* or *since*.



Jonathan had been studying *for* about four hours when he realised there was still a lot more to do.

We use **past perfect continuous**

- for an action which lasted for some time in the past and whose result was visible in the past.



Tina had been exercising and was sweating heavily.

