PRATIK DERS

Past Simple vs Past Continuous

Ders kategorisi: Mësimet në gjuhë angleze

> Separate completed past events from actions that were in progress. Learn how the two tenses work together in storytelling, how when and while behave, and why the choice can change the meaning of a sentence.

Past Simple vs Past Continuous

These two tenses are partners rather than rivals. The **past continuous** sets the scene and describes what was already going on; the **past simple** reports the events that happened. Most narratives use both in the same sentence.

Learning objectives

- Decide which tense a past sentence needs.
- Combine both tenses correctly with *when* and *while*.
- Explain how the choice changes the meaning.
- Use both tenses naturally in a story.

The core contrast

	Past simple	Past continuous
Form	verb + -ed / irregular	was/were + -ing
Meaning	completed event	action in progress
Role in a story	the events	the background
Length	shorter, finished	longer, unfinished
Typical words	yesterday, then, at 8 o'clock	while, as, at that moment

The interruption pattern

This is the most common combination. The long action takes the continuous; the interrupting event takes the simple.

- *I **was walking** home when it **started** to rain.*
- *She **was cooking** when the doorbell **rang**.*
- *While they **were talking**, the lights **went** out.*

Two actions together

Pattern	Example	Meaning

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continuous + continuous	*She **was reading** while he **was cooking**.*	both in progress at once
simple + simple	*She **read** the letter and **put** it away.*	one after the other
continuous + simple	*He **was leaving** when I **arrived**.*	the second interrupts the first

How the choice changes the meaning

Sentence	Meaning
*When I arrived, she **was making** dinner.*	She started before I arrived; it was already in progress.
*When I arrived, she **made** dinner.*	She started after I arrived.
*He **was reading** the report.*	Perhaps he did not finish it.
*He **read** the report.*	He finished it.

This pair is worth memorising: the tense, not the words, carries the difference.

A story using both

*It **was** nearly midnight. The rain **was falling** and the street **was** empty. Ana **was walking** quickly towards the bus stop when she **heard** footsteps behind her. She **turned** round, but nobody **was** there. While she **was looking** for her keys, a car **stopped** beside her.*

Notice the pattern: continuous forms build the scene, simple forms move the story forward.

Signal words

Past simple	Past continuous
yesterday, last week, in 2019, then, after that, suddenly	while, as, at that moment, all morning, at 8 o'clock

Common mistakes

Mistake	Correct	Why
While I cooked, the phone rang.	**While I was cooking, the phone rang.**	*while* takes the longer action
I was going to school every day.	**I went to school every day.**	a repeated habit takes the simple
When she was arriving, we ate.	**When she arrived, we ate.**	a short event takes the simple
I was knowing the answer.	**I knew the answer.**	stative verb
Yesterday I was watching a film and I was liking it.	**Yesterday I watched a film and I liked it.**	completed events, stative verb

Learning tips

1. Ask: was the action *already happening*, or did it *happen*? The first is continuous, the second simple.
2. Write three interruption sentences about your own week using *when* and *while*.

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3. Retell a short story you know, deliberately marking scene and event.

Summary checklist

- Background or scene → past continuous.
- Completed event or sequence → past simple.
- *While* + continuous, *when* + simple.
- Stative verb → past simple only.

Shpjegim në gjuhën shqipe

Rregulli i anglishtes, i shpjeguar në shqip

Këto dy kohë nuk janë rivale, por bashkëpunëtore. Koha e shkuar e **vazhduar** ndërton skenën dhe tregon çfarë ishte tashmë duke ndodhur; koha e shkuar e **thjeshtë** tregon ngjarjet që ndodhën dhe që e çojnë rrëfimin përpara.

Modeli më i shpeshtë është ai i **ndërprerjes**: veprimi i gjatë merr formën e vazhduar, kurse veprimi i shkurtër që e ndërpret merr formën e thjeshtë — *I was walking home **when** it started to rain.*

Kur dy veprime zhvilloheshin njëkohësisht, të dyja marrin formën e vazhduar, zakonisht me *while*. Kur ngjarjet ndodhin njëra pas tjetrës, të dyja marrin formën e thjeshtë.

Zgjedhja mund ta **ndryshojë kuptimin** e fjalisë: *When I arrived, she was making dinner* do të thotë se kishte filluar më parë; *When I arrived, she made dinner* do të thotë se filloi pasi mbërrita.

Ekuivalenti në gjuhën shqipe

Ky është një nga rastet më të favorshme për folësit e shqipes, sepse **shqipja e bën pikërisht të njëjtin dallim**: e kryera e thjeshtë kundrejt së pakryerës.

Anglisht	Shqip	Kuptimi
past simple	e kryera e thjeshtë	ngjarje e mbyllur
past continuous	e pakryera	veprim në zhvillim, sfond
I was walking when it started to rain.	**Po ecja** kur **filloi** të binte shi.	ndërprerje
She was reading while he was cooking.	Ajo **lexonte** ndërsa ai **gatuante**.	njëkohësi
She read the letter and put it away.	Ajo **e lexoi** letrën dhe **e vuri** mënjanë.	ngjarje të njëpasnjëshme

Prandaj rregulli praktik është i thjeshtë: **nëse në shqip do të thoshit të pakryerën, në anglisht përdorni formën e vazhduar.**

Ku ndryshojnë dy gjuhët

- **Lidhëzat.** Anglishtja e ndan qartë punën midis *when* dhe *while*; shqipja përdor *kur* dhe *ndërsa* me kufij më të lirë.
- **Zakoni.** Këtu përputhja prishet: shqipja e shpreh zakonin me të pakryerën, kurse anglishtja me kohën e thjeshtë. Prandaj *Çdo verë shkoja në det* nuk përkthehet me *I was going*.
- **Foljet e gjendjes.** Shqipja i lejon në të pakryerën (*e dija*), anglishtja nuk i lejon në formën e vazhduar (*I knew*, jo *I was knowing*).

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Gabime të zakonshme të folësve të shqipes

Gabimi	E saktë	Pse
While I cooked, the phone rang.	**While I was cooking, ...**	*while* merr veprimin e gjatë
I was going to school every day.	**I went to school every day.**	zakon i përsëritur
When she was arriving, we ate.	**When she arrived, we ate.**	ngjarje e shkurtër
I was liking the film.	**I liked the film.**	folje gjendjeje

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