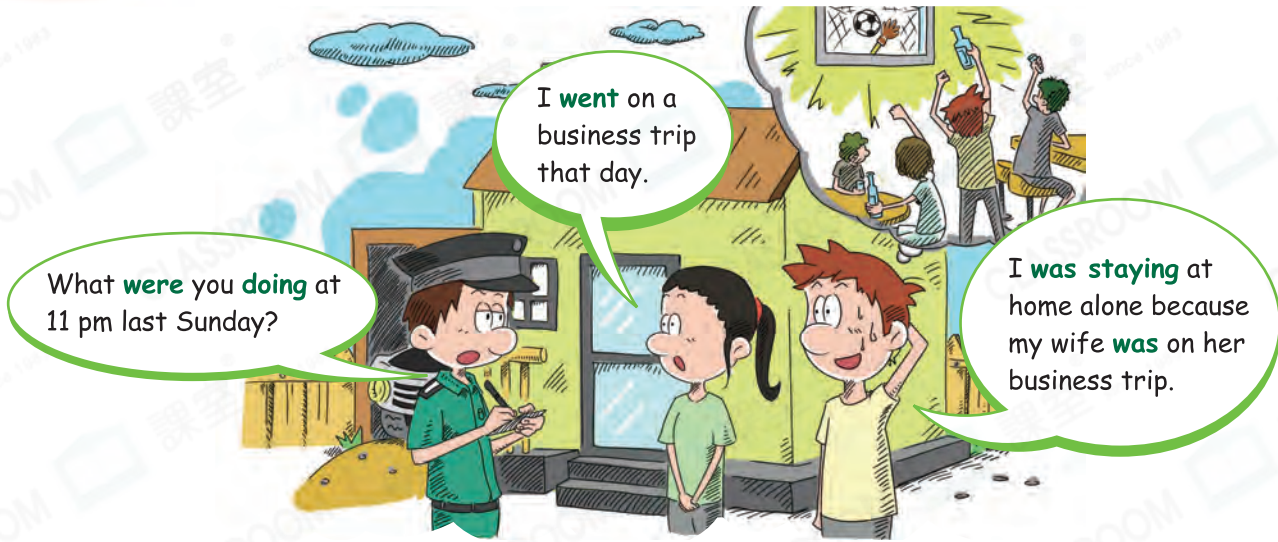


2

Talking about the past



Usage

We use the **simple past tense** to talk about things that happened and finished in the past.

- e.g.** A: What **did** Mr and Mrs Yim **do** last Sunday?
 B: They **sang** and **danced** together.



We use the **past continuous tense** to talk about actions that continued for a period of time in the past.

- e.g.** A: **Were you studying** at ten o'clock yesterday?
 B: No, I **wasn't**. I **was having** a party with my friends till midnight.



Educator's Tips

We use **used to** to talk about something that happened regularly in the past but no longer happens.

- e.g.** Mrs Lam **used to** cook yummy meals.
 (=Mrs Lam does not cook yummy meals now.)





Part 1 The Simple Past

We use the simple past tense to talk about things that happened at a definite time in the past and are now finished.

e.g. Eddy **did not go** to school yesterday because he **was** sick.

We usually use the simple past tense with the following time expressions: *five days ago, last night, this morning, yesterday, in 1984.*

Exercise 1.1

Complete the conversations with the correct form of the words in brackets or proper responses.

1. Mum: **(a)** *Did you sleep* _____ well last night? (you / sleep)

Ben: Yes, I **(b)** _____.

Mum: Oh, really? **(c)** _____ anything special on your bed? (you / see)

Ben: No, I didn't. Oh! **(d)** _____ my bed dirty? (be)

Mum: Well... No, it **(e)** _____ but I **(f)** _____ (find)
a dead spider on it this morning!

2. Jane: **(a)** _____ the phone bill a few days ago? (Mum / pay)

Dad: No, she **(b)** _____. I **(c)** _____ (pay) it
yesterday.

Jane: How much **(d)** _____? (it / be)

Dad: Oh, it **(e)** _____ (cost) nearly \$400. It must be Mum's fault.

Jane: Sorry, Dad. I **(f)** _____ (make) several phone calls to my overseas
friend last month but I **(g)** _____ (not tell) you.

3. Sam: Who **(a)** _____ (teach) you English last school term, Anna?

Anna: Miss Ho. She's kind. She **(b)** _____ (encourage) me to speak
English more often as I was not confident enough.





Sam: She was not that kind to me. She **(c)** _____ (call) my parents
whenever I **(d)** _____ (forget) to bring my English homework!



Educator's Tips



Don't mix up the simple past tense with the present perfect tense.

The simple past	The present perfect
<p>(a) an action that started and finished in the past</p> <p>I was sick but I'm fine now.</p>  <p>last week now</p>	<p>(a) an action that started in the past and is connected to or continues up to the present</p> <p>last week now</p>  <p>I've been sick for a week.</p>
<p>(b) an exact finish time for the action in the sentence</p> <p>e.g. Jimmy ate an apple <u>last night</u>.</p>  <p>last night</p>	<p>(b) no exact finish time for the action in the sentence</p> <p>e.g. Jimmy has eaten an apple. (When did he eat it? We do not know.)</p> 

Exercise 1.2

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs given. Each verb can be used **ONCE** only.

not make reply catch decide not know
faint be write lose move

- Vincent (a) has been a cook for years but he (b) _____ any French meals. Two weeks ago, he (c) _____ to cook a French dinner for his wife Laura. He (d) _____ where to buy snails so he (e) _____ some from a garden. When Laura got home and saw the snails, she (f) _____.
- Christina was once my best friend but we (a) _____ contact for several years. Her family (b) _____ to the US in 2008. I (c) _____ letters to her but she (d) _____ never _____.



Part 2 The Past Continuous

We use the past continuous tense in the following situations:

Situation	Example
Things that happened at a specific period of time in the past	The violinists were performing on stage <u>at 8 pm last night</u> .
Things that continued for a period of time in the past	The baby was crying loudly <u>the whole night</u> .
Two things that happened in the same period of time in the past; we use <i>while</i> in the sentence	The kid was not doing his homework <u>while</u> his mum was cooking .
Something that was happening when another action took place; we use <i>when</i> with the shorter action in the sentence	I was having a shower <u>when</u> the fire broke out.

Exercise 2

Fred is chatting in a chat room. Complete the conversation with the correct form of the verbs given. Each verb can be used **ONCE** only.

hear see watch chat be discuss eat not read study

Hong Kong College Chat Room

fred_01: Hi, everyone. This morning, while I was studying at the library, I
 (1) heard some noise. I looked up and
 (2) _____ two girls. They (3) _____
 any books. They (4) _____ loudly as if they were
 at home! (5) _____ you _____ at
 the library at recess this morning too?

heidi_chau: Yes, I was! And I heard the noise too. It (6) _____
 so annoying! I saw something similar while I
 (7) _____ a film in Tsing Yi. The schoolboys behind
 me (8) _____ the story plots while they
 (9) _____ popcorn loudly.

andyli_72: Sigh... the teenagers really didn't behave properly!

Online users

- andyli_722
- fred_01
- heidi_chau

Hidden users

- happybear
- Steven_Au

Unit Recap

Jenny is reading a newspaper article about night teens. There are some mistakes about tenses. Correct the underlined mistakes by writing the correct words above them.

B6

HONG KONG DAILY

17th October, 20XX

'Home is the warmest place,' say ex-night teens

Two former young **night drifters** (1) have met 100 secondary students at Bright Light Youth Centre yesterday to share their days of wandering around the streets.

They (2) have started staying out late at night two or three years ago but their lives (3) returned to normal already. Some of their friends who (4) were night drifters for more than five years are still staying out at night.

Chun, 18, (5) has spoken in a serious tone while she (6) talked to the students about her days as a night teen. 'I (7) have not liked staying at home as I thought my parents were annoying,' Chun said, 'I preferred hanging out with friends at night. We walked, (8) drinked and smoked as we liked. Then we went home to sleep during the daytime while our parents (9) worked. After two years, I **realised** that my life was empty and I missed my parents, so I (10) was quitting being a night teen last year.'



Chun recalled her days of being a night drifter.

Sam, 17, said, 'I was even driven out of school because of skipping too many classes. I nearly gave up my future, but my parents (11) never gave up on me.' He (12) has encouraged students to communicate more with their parents. 'Home is always the warmest place where you should stay every night,' he said.



Vocabulary:

night drifter (n.): someone who always stays out late at night
realise (v.): to become aware of something