

# Past Simple or Past Continuous

## Past Simple

Use the Simple Past to express the idea that an action started and finished at a specific time in the past.

The company made 100 people redundant last year.  
We use the Simple Past to list a series of completed actions in the past.

I finished work, walked to the beach, and found a nice place to swim.  
The Simple Past can also be used to describe a habit which stopped in the past. I studied French when I was a child.

## Past Continuous

Use the Past Continuous to indicate that a longer action in the past was interrupted.

I was watching TV when she called.

However, you can also use a specific time as an interruption.

Last night at 6 PM, I was eating dinner.

We use it to express the idea that both actions were happening at the same time. The actions are parallel.

I was studying while he was making dinner.

## Exercise

- ❖ I \_\_\_\_\_ (study) while he \_\_\_\_\_ (make) dinner.
- ❖ I \_\_\_\_\_ (not see) a play yesterday.
- ❖ Bianca (live) \_\_\_\_\_ in Florida.
- ❖ While we \_\_\_\_\_ (have) the picnic, it \_\_\_\_\_ (start) to rain.
- ❖ Martin (like) \_\_\_\_\_ chocolate.
- ❖ At midnight, we \_\_\_\_\_ (still drive) through the desert.
- ❖ He \_\_\_\_\_ (not like) tomatoes before.
- ❖ She \_\_\_\_\_ (work) at the movie theater after school.
- ❖ He \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive) from the airport at 8:00, \_\_\_\_\_ (check) into the hotel at 9:00, and \_\_\_\_\_ (meet) the others at 10:00.
- ❖ While I \_\_\_\_\_ (study), she called.