

# Tenses

## 10 Tenses

The word **Tense** is used to denote a characteristic of the verb in a sentence. The tense of a verb is used to depict the particular time in which a specific event takes place.

There are three main tenses and each is further classified into four different forms, which sum up to twelve forms of tenses in total. The three tenses in English are:

- Present Tense
- Past Tense
- Future Tense

### 10.1 Present Tense

The **Present Tense** refers to the action or event that takes place or is taking place in the present. It represents the current activity or the present state of being of the subject in the given context.

#### 10.1.1 Forms of the Present Tense

The present tense can be used in four different forms, namely,

- **Simple Present Tense** – used to indicate the current action or an action that takes place regularly.
- **Present Continuous Tense** – used to denote an action that is continuing at the present moment.
- **Present Perfect Tense** – used to indicate an action that has been completed and still has its effect on the subject or object in the sentence.
- **Present Perfect Continuous Tense** – used to represent an action that began in the recent past and is still continuing, along with some time frame, mentioned.

#### 10.1.2 Structure of the Present Tense

| Tense                           | Structure                                                                                                             | Example                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Simple Present Tense</b>     | Subject + <b>Verb in the base form/for the 3rd person singular</b><br>'s' or 'es' is added + the rest of the sentence | I <b>go</b> to school every day.<br>He <b>plays</b> cricket.                                     |
| <b>Present Continuous Tense</b> | Subject + <b>Helping Verb(am/is/are)</b><br>+ <b>Main verb+ing</b> + the rest of the sentence.                        | Tania <b>is watching</b> a movie.<br>They <b>are planning</b> a birthday party for their friend. |

|                                         |                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Present Perfect Tense</b>            | Subject + <b>Helping Verb (has/have)</b> + <b>Past participle of the main verb</b> + the rest of the sentence along with the time frame. | Tariq <b>has just left</b> the hall.<br>I <b>have just reached</b> home.                                                               |
| <b>Present Perfect Continuous Tense</b> | Subject + <b>Helping Verb (has/have)</b> + <b>Been</b> + <b>Verb + ing</b> + the rest of the sentence + time phrase (since/for).         | They <b>have been waiting</b> for you for a long time.<br>Anam <b>has been checking</b> her phone now and then since she reached here. |

The present tense changes its structure when used in the positive, negative, interrogative and negative interrogative sentences.

| Sentence Type                 | Structure                                            | Example                                                            |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Positive</b>               | Subject + Verb + .                                   | She <b>likes</b> pizzas.                                           |
| <b>Negative</b>               | Subject + Do not/Does not (Don't/Doesn't) + Verb + . | She <b>does not like</b> pizzas.<br>They <b>don't like</b> pizzas. |
| <b>Interrogative</b>          | Do/Does + Subject + Verb + ?                         | <b>Does she like</b> pizzas?<br><b>Do they like</b> pizzas?        |
| <b>Negative Interrogative</b> | Don't/Doesn't + Subject + Verb + ?                   | <b>Doesn't she like</b> pizzas?<br><b>Don't they like</b> pizzas?  |

## 10.2 Past Tense

The **Past Tense** refers to the action or event that took place or was taking place in the past.

### 10.2.1 Forms of the Past Tense

The **Past Tense** has four different forms to indicate the varied nature of actions that happened in the past. They are:

- **Simple Past Tense** – used to indicate an action or event that happened in the past.
- **Past Continuous Tense** – used to depict an action or event that was continuing in the past.
- **Past Perfect Tense** – used to represent an event or an action that happened in the past before another event or action that happened in the past.
- **Past Perfect Continuous Tense** – used to denote an action or event that had been taking place in the past until another action or event happened in the past along with some time frame.

### 10.2.2 Structure of the Past Tense

| Tense                        | Structure                                                                                  | Example                         |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Simple Past Tense</b>     | Subject + <b>Verb + ed / verb in the past tense</b> + the rest of the sentence.            | Nadia <b>met</b> me at in park. |
| <b>Past Continuous Tense</b> | Subject + <b>Helping Verb(was/were)</b> + <b>Main verb+ing</b> + the rest of the sentence. | It <b>was raining</b> .         |

|                                      |                                                                                                                              |                                                                |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Past Perfect Tense</b>            | Subject + <b>Helping Verb (had) + Past participle of the main verb</b> + the rest of the sentence along with the time frame. | Tahir <b>had eaten</b> his dinner before we reached the venue. |
| <b>Past Perfect Continuous Tense</b> | Subject + <b>Helping Verb (had) + Been + Verb+ing</b> + the rest of the sentence + time phrase (since/for).                  | Shams <b>had been practising</b> the guitar for three years.   |

The past tense changes its structure when used in the positive, negative, interrogative and negative interrogative sentences.

| Sentence Type                 | Structure                                              | Example                               |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Positive</b>               | Subject + Past tense form of the verb + .              | She <b>sang</b> a song.               |
| <b>Negative</b>               | Subject + Did not / Didn't + Base form of the verb + . | She <b>did not sing</b> a song.       |
| <b>Interrogative</b>          | Did + Subject + Base form of the verb + ?              | <b>Did</b> she <b>sing</b> a song?    |
| <b>Negative Interrogative</b> | Didn't + Subject + Base form of the verb + ?           | <b>Didn't</b> she <b>sing</b> a song? |

### 10.2.3 Past Tense Verbs with the Past and Past Participle Forms

| Base/forms of the Verbs | Past forms of the Verbs | Past Participle forms of the Verbs |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| check                   | checked                 | checked                            |
| reach                   | reached                 | reached                            |
| teach                   | taught                  | taught                             |
| sing                    | sang                    | sung                               |
| buy                     | bought                  | bought                             |
| throw                   | threw                   | thrown                             |
| sink                    | sank                    | sunk                               |
| fly                     | flew                    | flown                              |
| dance                   | danced                  | danced                             |
| drink                   | drank                   | drunk                              |

## 10.3 Future Tense

The **Future Tense** is the form of the verb that you use when talking about something that will happen or exist.

### 10.3.1 Forms of the Future Tense

The future tense can be used in four different forms in order to show how the actions in the future behave differently in various situations, and they are:

- **Simple Future Tense** – used to denote an action that will happen in the future.

- **Future Continuous Tense** – used to indicate an action that will be taking place in the future.
- **Future Perfect Tense** – used to represent an action that will have completed in the future.
- **Future Perfect Continuous Tense** – used to depict an action that will have been happening in the present and will complete at some point in the future along with some time frame.

### 10.3.2 Structure of the Future Tense

| Tense                                  | Structure                                                                                                                                            | Example                                                           |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Simple Future Tense</b>             | Subject + <b>Auxiliary verb (will/shall)</b> + <b>Base form of the main verb</b> + the rest of the sentence.                                         | Ajmal <b>will meet</b> me at the gym.                             |
| <b>Future Continuous Tense</b>         | Subject + <b>Helping Verb (will/shall)</b> + <b>Be</b> + <b>Main verb + ing</b> + the rest of the sentence.                                          | Ajmal <b>will be meeting</b> me at the gym.                       |
| <b>Future Perfect Tense</b>            | Subject + <b>Helping Verb (will/shall)</b> + <b>Have</b> + <b>Past participle form of the main verb</b> + the rest of the sentence.                  | Ajmal <b>will have met</b> me at the gym.                         |
| <b>Future Perfect Continuous Tense</b> | Subject + <b>Helping verb (will/shall)</b> + <b>Have</b> + <b>Been</b> + <b>Main verb + ing</b> + the rest of the sentence + time frame (since/for). | Ajmal <b>will have been meeting</b> me at the gym since tomorrow. |

The future tense changes its structure when used in the positive, negative, interrogative and negative interrogative sentences.

| Sentence Type                 | Structure                                            | Example                                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Positive</b>               | Subject + Will + Base form of the verb + .           | Sanam <b>will walk</b> to school tomorrow.           |
| <b>Negative</b>               | Subject + Will not/Won't + Base form of the verb + . | Sanam <b>will not/won't walk</b> to school tomorrow. |
| <b>Interrogative</b>          | Will + Subject + Base form of the verb + ?           | <b>Will</b> Sanam <b>walk</b> to school tomorrow?    |
| <b>Negative Interrogative</b> | Won't + Subject + Base form of the verb + ?          | <b>Won't</b> Sanam <b>walk</b> to school tomorrow?   |



### Grammar Exercise — 3

**1. Go through the sentences given below and identify the types of tenses.**

- a. Dawood drinks coffee every morning.
- b. The boy got up late and missed the bus.
- c. The team is playing very well.
- d. The school will be closed for winter break.
- e. Lubna graduated from this college last year.
- f. The baby has eaten all the chips.
- g. Have you read *Pride and Prejudice*?
- h. The train has just left the station.
- i. The sick child has been sleeping for three hours.
- j. They have known each other for a long time.
- k. Samia was going to school.
- l. When I went there, Bashir was playing video games.
- m. The workers have been working on the building for a long time.
- n. Pervez had done his homework when her parents came back.
- o. I will move to Sialkot soon.