

# 12 English Tenses Through Stories

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Understanding the [12 English tenses](#) is essential for mastering English grammar and communication. To help you grasp these tenses effectively, we've created engaging stories that showcase each tense in real-life scenarios. Whether you're learning English for the first time or looking to improve your skills, these stories will provide practical examples and context to make each tense easier to understand.

In addition to the stories, we've included exercises to reinforce your learning and an answer key to check your understanding. For your convenience, you can download these stories and exercises as a free PDF.

## 12 English Tenses Through Stories

### Story 1: Simple Present & Present Continuous

Lisa **wants** a new job, so she **decides** to apply for a position at a local company. She **works** as a cashier right now, but she **hopes** to get an office job. Every day, she **checks** job listings online and **sends** her resume to different companies. She **feels** confident that she **will find** something soon.

Today, Lisa **is getting ready** for an interview. She **is wearing** a formal suit, and she **is practicing** her answers in front of the mirror. "I **am preparing** for this job interview," she **says** to herself. The company **is looking** for someone with strong communication skills, and she **believes** she **can do** well in the interview.

During the interview, Lisa **is answering** all the questions confidently. The interviewer **is asking** about her previous experience, and Lisa **is explaining** how she **has been working** as a cashier for three years. She **is hoping** the interviewer **will be impressed**. By the end of the interview, Lisa **is feeling** positive about her chances.

#### Exercises for Story 1:

1. Identify the sentences in the **simple present tense**.
2. Identify the sentences in the **present continuous tense**.
3. Write a sentence in the **present continuous tense** about what you are doing right now.

## Answer Key:

1. Simple present:
    - Lisa **wants** a new job.
    - She **decides** to apply for a position.
    - She **works** as a cashier.
    - She **hopes** to get an office job.
    - She **checks** job listings online.
    - She **sends** her resume.
    - She **feels** confident.
    - She **believes** she can do well.
  2. Present continuous:
    - Lisa **is getting ready** for an interview.
    - She **is wearing** a formal suit.
    - She **is practicing** her answers.
    - "I **am preparing** for this job interview."
    - The company **is looking** for someone.
    - She **is answering** confidently.
    - The interviewer **is asking** about her experience.
    - Lisa **is explaining** her work history.
    - She **is hoping** the interviewer **will be impressed**.
    - Lisa **is feeling** positive about her chances.
  3. Answers will vary (e.g., "I **am reading** a story.").
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## Story 2: Simple Past & Past Continuous

Last weekend, Sam and his friends **went** to the beach. They **had been planning** this trip for a long time, and finally, they **had the chance** to go. They **arrived** at the beach early in the morning, and the weather **was perfect**. The sun **was shining**, and the waves **were calm**. Sam **felt** happy and excited because he **loves** the beach.

While they **were setting up** their towels and umbrellas, Sam **noticed** a family who **was having** a picnic nearby. The kids **were playing** with a ball, and their dog **was running** around happily. Sam **thought** it was a perfect day to relax and enjoy the sunshine.

Later, while Sam **was swimming** in the ocean, his friends **were playing** volleyball on the shore. They **spent** the whole afternoon laughing, swimming, and enjoying their time together. By the time they **left**, the sun **had started** to set, and Sam **was already looking forward** to their next trip.

## Exercises for Story 2:

1. Identify the sentences in the **simple past tense**.
2. Identify the sentences in the **past continuous tense**.
3. Write three sentences in the **simple past** about what you did last weekend.

## Answer Key:

1. Simple past:
    - Sam and his friends **went** to the beach.
    - They **had been planning** this trip.
    - They **arrived** early.
    - The weather **was perfect**.
    - Sam **felt** happy.
    - Sam **noticed** a family.
    - They **spent** the afternoon laughing.
    - The sun **had started** to set.
  2. Past continuous:
    - The sun **was shining**.
    - The waves **were calm**.
    - While they **were setting up**, Sam **noticed** a family.
    - The kids **were playing**.
    - Their dog **was running** around.
    - Sam **was swimming**.
    - His friends **were playing** volleyball.
    - Sam **was already looking forward** to the next trip.
  3. Answers will vary (e.g., "I **visited** my grandparents.").
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## Story 3: Future Simple, Future Continuous, & Future Perfect

Next year, Maria **will graduate** from university. She **will have finished** her degree in business, and she **is planning** to start her own company. Maria **is excited** about the future and **is already making** plans. "In five years, I **will be running** my own business," she often **says**.

Maria **will start** working on her business plan next month. By the end of the year, she **will have completed** her market research. She **will be focusing** on opening an online store, and she **will sell** eco-friendly products. Her goal is to make her business successful within the next two years.

Maria **will not be doing** this alone. Her best friend, Tom, **will be helping** her with marketing. They **will have completed** their business plan by the end of this year. Together, they **are determined** to make their dream a reality. "This time next year, we **will be celebrating** the launch of our company," Maria **says** confidently.

### Exercises for Story 3:

1. Identify the sentences in the **future simple tense**.
2. Identify the sentences in the **future continuous tense**.
3. Identify the sentences in the **future perfect tense**.

### Answer Key:

1. Future simple:
  - Maria **will graduate** from university.
  - She **will have finished** her degree.
  - She **will start** working next month.
  - She **will sell** eco-friendly products.
2. Future continuous:
  - In five years, I **will be running** my own business.
  - Maria **will be focusing** on opening an online store.
  - Tom **will be helping** her with marketing.
  - This time next year, we **will be celebrating** the launch.
3. Future perfect:
  - She **will have finished** her degree.
  - She **will have completed** her market research.
  - They **will have completed** their business plan by the end of this year.

### Story 4: Present Perfect & Present Perfect Continuous

Anna **has always wanted** to learn how to cook. Over the past few months, she **has tried** different recipes, but cooking **has been** difficult for her. However, she **has been practicing** every weekend, and she **has improved** a lot. Now, she **feels** more confident in the kitchen.

Recently, Anna **has been following** a cooking blog that teaches simple recipes. She **has cooked** five different meals using the blog's instructions. Every time she **makes** a dish, she **feels** proud of herself. Her family **has noticed** that she **has become** a better cook, and they **enjoy** her meals more.

Anna **has been thinking** about taking a professional cooking class. She **hasn't decided** yet, but she **knows** that more practice **will help** her improve even further. If she **takes** the class, she **hopes** she **will be able to cook** for a big family event.

### Exercises for Story 4:

1. Identify the sentences in the **present perfect tense**.
2. Identify the sentences in the **present perfect continuous tense**.
3. Write two sentences using the **present perfect tense** about something you've done recently.

## Answer Key:

1. Present perfect:
    - Anna **has always wanted** to learn to cook.
    - She **has tried** different recipes.
    - Cooking **has been** difficult for her.
    - She **has improved** a lot.
    - She **has cooked** five meals.
    - Her family **has noticed** her improvement.
    - She **has become** a better cook.
  2. Present perfect continuous:
    - Anna **has been practicing** every weekend.
    - She **has been following** a cooking blog.
    - Anna **has been thinking** about taking a class.
  3. Answers will vary (e.g., "I **have read** two books this month.").
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## Story 5: Past Perfect & Past Perfect Continuous

Before Jenny **moved** to New York, she **had lived** in a small town for her entire life. She **had always dreamed** of living in a big city, but it **had been difficult** for her to leave her hometown. Before she **made** the move, she **had saved** money for two years, preparing for this big change.

Jenny **had been working** as a barista in her town while she **was planning** her move. For the last six months, she **had been researching** apartments and job opportunities in New York. By the time she **arrived**, she **had already arranged** a place to stay and a job interview.

Even though the move **had been stressful**, Jenny **felt** excited about her new life. She **had prepared** herself well, and now she **was ready** to take on new challenges. Looking back, she **was proud** of everything she **had accomplished** before moving.

### Exercises for Story 5:

1. Identify the sentences in the **past perfect tense**.
2. Identify the sentences in the **past perfect continuous tense**.
3. Write two sentences using the **past perfect tense** about something you had done before a big event.

## Answer Key:

1. Past perfect:
    - Jenny **had lived** in a small town.
    - She **had always dreamed** of living in a big city.
    - It **had been difficult** to leave her hometown.
    - She **had saved** money for two years.
    - By the time she **arrived**, she **had already arranged** a place to stay.
    - The move **had been stressful**.
    - She **had prepared** herself well.
    - She **had accomplished** a lot before moving.
  2. Past perfect continuous:
    - Jenny **had been working** as a barista.
    - She **had been researching** apartments and jobs.
  3. Answers will vary (e.g., "I **had studied** for weeks before my exam.").
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## Story 6: Future Perfect Continuous

By the time Sara **retires**, she **will have been working** as a nurse for 30 years. She **will have been helping** people her whole career, and she **is proud** of the impact she **will have made**. When she **looks** back at her life, she **will feel** satisfied with all that she **will have achieved**.

Sara **will have been saving** money for retirement for 20 years by the time she stops working. She **plans** to travel the world and volunteer in different countries. She **will have been contributing** to her retirement fund for many years, and she **believes** it **will be enough** to support her dreams.

When Sara **retires**, she **will have been pursuing** her passion for helping others for decades. Her goal is to use her experience to give back to communities in need. "By the time I retire, I **will have been working** to make the world a better place," she **says**.

### Exercises for Story 6:

1. Identify the sentences in the **future perfect continuous tense**.
2. Write a sentence in the **future perfect continuous tense** about something you will have been doing for a long time by the end of next year.

**Answer Key:**

1. Future perfect continuous:
  - Sara **will have been working** as a nurse for 30 years.
  - She **will have been helping** people her whole career.
  - She **will have been saving** money for retirement for 20 years.
  - She **will have been contributing** to her retirement fund for many years.
  - She **will have been pursuing** her passion for helping others for decades.
2. Answers will vary (e.g., "I **will have been studying** English for three years by the end of next year.").