# 12 English Tenses - Formula - Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Signal words</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Examples affirmative</th>
<th>Examples negative</th>
<th>Examples interrogative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simple Present</strong></td>
<td>every day</td>
<td>something happens repeatedly</td>
<td>infinitive</td>
<td>I work.</td>
<td>I don't work.</td>
<td>Do I work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>how often something happens</td>
<td></td>
<td>He works.</td>
<td>He doesn't work.</td>
<td>Does he work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>always</td>
<td>one action follows another</td>
<td>he/she/it:</td>
<td>I go.</td>
<td>I don't go.</td>
<td>Do I go?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>often</td>
<td>things in general</td>
<td>infinitive + s</td>
<td>He goes.</td>
<td>He doesn't go.</td>
<td>Does he go?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usually</td>
<td>with verbs like (to love, to hate, to think, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>future meaning: timetables, programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>never</td>
<td>• something is happening at the same time of speaking or around it</td>
<td>be (am/are/is) +</td>
<td>I'm working.</td>
<td>I'm not working.</td>
<td>Am I working?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>first ... then</td>
<td>future meaning: when you have already decided and arranged to do it (a fixed plan, date)</td>
<td>infinitive + ing</td>
<td>He's working.</td>
<td>He isn't working.</td>
<td>Is he working?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present Progressive</strong></td>
<td>now</td>
<td>• something is happening at the same time of speaking or around it</td>
<td></td>
<td>I'm going.</td>
<td>I'm not going.</td>
<td>Am I going?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>at the moment</td>
<td>future meaning: when you have already decided and arranged to do it (a fixed plan, date)</td>
<td>be (am/are/is) +</td>
<td>He's going.</td>
<td>He isn't going.</td>
<td>Is he going?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look!</td>
<td>• something is happening at the same time of speaking or around it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listen!</td>
<td>• something is happening at the same time of speaking or around it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simple Past</strong></td>
<td>last ...</td>
<td>action took place in the past, mostly connected with an expression of time (no connection to the present)</td>
<td>regular:</td>
<td>I worked.</td>
<td>I didn't work.</td>
<td>Did I work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... ago</td>
<td></td>
<td>infinitive + ed</td>
<td>He worked.</td>
<td>He didn't work.</td>
<td>Did he work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in 1990</td>
<td></td>
<td>irregular:</td>
<td>I went.</td>
<td>I didn't go.</td>
<td>Did I go?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yesterday</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2nd column of table of irregular verbs)</td>
<td>He went.</td>
<td>He didn't go.</td>
<td>Did he go?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Past Progressive** | while | • an action happened in the middle of another action  
• someone was doing sth. at a certain time (in the past) - you don’t know whether it was finished or not  
| **was/ were + infinitive + ing** | I was working.  
He was working.  
I was going.  
He was going.  
| I wasn't working.  
He wasn't working.  
I wasn't going.  
He wasn't going.  
| Was I working?  
Was he working?  
Was I going?  
Was he going?  
| **Simple Present** | just  
yet  
ever  
ever  
already  
so far,  
up to now,  
since  
for  
recently | • you say that sth. has happened or is finished in the past and it has a connection to the present  
• action started in the past and continues up to the present  
| **have/ has + past participle**  
*(infinitive + ed) or (3rd column of table of irregular verbs)* | I have worked.  
He has worked.  
I have gone.  
He has gone.  
| I haven't worked.  
He hasn't worked.  
I haven't gone.  
He hasn't gone.  
| Have I worked?  
Has he worked?  
Have I gone?  
Has he gone?  
| **Present Perfect Progressive** | all day  
the whole day  
how long  
since  
for  | • action began in the past and has just stopped  
• how long the action has been happening  
| **have/ has + been + infinitive + ing** | I have been working.  
He has been working.  
I have been going.  
He has been going.  
| I haven't been working.  
He hasn't been working.  
I haven't been going.  
He hasn’t been going.  
| Have I been working?  
Has he been working?  
Have I been going?  
Has he been going?  |
| Simple Past Perfect | alreadymi | just
never | mostly when two actions in a story are related to each other: the action which had already happened is put into Past Perfect, the other action into Simple Past • the past of the Present Perfect |
| Past Perfect Progressive | how longsince for | how long something had been happening before something else happened |
| will - future | predictions about the future (you think that sth will happen) • you decide to do sth. spontaneously at the time of speaking • main clause in type I of the Conditional sentences |
| going to - future | when you have already decided to do sth. in the future • what you think sth. will happen |
| **Future Progressive** | • An action will be in progress at a certain time in the future. This action has begun before the certain time. • Something happens because it normally happens. | will + be + infinitive + ing | I'll be working. | I won't be working. | Will I be working?  
He'll be working. | He won't be working. | Will he be working?  
I'll be going. | I won't be going. | Will I be going?  
He'll be going. | He won't be going. | Will he be going? |
| **Future Perfect Simple** | sth. will already have happened before a certain time in the future | will + have + past participle*  
*(infinitive + ed) or (3rd column of table of irregular verbs) | I'll have worked. | I won't have worked. | Will I have worked?  
He'll have worked. | He won't have worked. | Will he have worked?  
I'll have gone. | I won't have gone. | Will I have gone?  
He'll have gone. | He won't have gone. | Will he have gone? |
| **Future Perfect Progressive** | sth. will already have happened before a certain time in the future  
emphasis: length of time of an action | will + have + been + infinitive + ing | I'll have been working. | I won't have been working. | Will I have been working?  
He'll have been working. | He won't have been working. | Will he have been working?  
I'll have been going. | I won't have been going. | Will I have been going?  
He'll have been going. | He won't have been going. | Will he have been going? |
| **Conditional Simple** | • sth. that might happen  
• main clause in type II of the Conditional sentences | would + infinitive | I would work. | I wouldn't work. | Would I work?  
He would work. | He wouldn't work. | Would he work?  
I would go. | I wouldn't go. | Would I go?  
He would go. | He wouldn't go. | Would he go? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditional Progressive</th>
<th>sth. that might happen emphasis: length of time of an action</th>
<th>would + be + infinitive + ing</th>
<th>I would be working.</th>
<th>He would be working.</th>
<th>I wouldn't be working.</th>
<th>Would I be working?</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conditional Perfect</strong></td>
<td>sth. that might have happened in the past main clause in type III of the Conditional sentences</td>
<td>would + have + past participle*</td>
<td>I would have worked.</td>
<td>He would have worked.</td>
<td>I wouldn't have worked.</td>
<td>Would I have worked?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*(infinitive + ed) or (3rd column of table of irregular verbs)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditional Perfect Progressive</strong></td>
<td>sth. that might have happened in the past emphasis: length of time of an action</td>
<td>would + have + been + infinitive + ing</td>
<td>I would have been working.</td>
<td>He would have been working.</td>
<td>I wouldn't have been working.</td>
<td>Would I have been working?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I would have been working.</td>
<td>He would have been working.</td>
<td>I wouldn't have been working.</td>
<td>Would I have been working?</td>
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<td>I would have been working.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I would have been working.</td>
<td>He would have been working.</td>
<td>I wouldn't have been working.</td>
<td>Would I have been working?</td>
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We sometimes use **Continuous** instead of **Progressive**. Some signal words can be found in more tenses. We have not listed signal words in the future. Always remember what action is described.

*Used colours:*
- blue → infinitive
- dark green → auxiliary
- orange → ending
- grey → irregular verbs in the Simple Past
- purple → past participle
- light green → signal word
- red → negation