Área Académica: Licenciatura en Turismo.

Tema: Past progressive/continuous

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Periodo: Julio-Diciembre 2013.
Tema: Past progressive/continuous

Abstract

Students need to know grammar structures in order to communicate well.

This is a basic tense.

Keywords: Past progressive/continuous, interrupted actions
Past Progressive – Diagram

We use the Past Progressive when we talk about something which was happening around a period of time in the past.

We use the Past Progressive (blue) together with the Simple Past (pink). The Past Progressive is used for the action in the past which was in progress when a new action (Simple Past) happened.
Two actions which were in progress in the past do not influence each other.
Affirmative sentences:

I/he/she/it was playing football.
We/you/they were playing football.

NOTE: Use was with I, he, she, it - and were with all other pronouns.
In affirmative sentences we do not use short forms in the Past Progressive.

Negative sentences:

I/he/she/it was not playing football.
We/you/they were not playing football.
We use short forms in the Past Progressive in negative sentences:
I/he/she/it wasn't playing football.
We/you/they weren't playing football.
Questions:

In the Past Progressive we put the auxiliary (was or were) before the subject (Auxiliary - Subject - Verb - Rest). see: Questions in Past Progressive

Was I/he/she/it **playing** football?
Were we/you/they **playing** football?
**Short and Long Form**

*Long forms and short forms in the Past Progressive*

We use short forms of the auxiliaries. The Past Progressive is formed with the auxiliary to be (was, were), so short forms are only possible in negative sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>affirmative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>long form</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I <em>was reading</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he, she, it:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he <em>was reading</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we, you, they:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we <em>were reading</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
negative (not after to be)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>long form</th>
<th>short form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was not reading</td>
<td>I wasn't reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he, she, it:</td>
<td>he, she, it:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he was not reading</td>
<td>he wasn't reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we, you, they:</td>
<td>we, you, they:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we were not reading</td>
<td>we weren't reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Past Progressive/Continuous - Signal words

Signal words tell you what tense you have to use. In the Past Progressive we often use a period of time. A typical signal word is while. The Past Progressive is frequently used in sentences together with the Simple Past.

while (In this part of the sentence we usually use Past Progressive.)

While we were watching TV, Andy was surfing the internet.

when (In this part of the sentence we usually use Simple Past. The Past Progressive is used in the other part of the sentence.)

The ladies were talking when the accident happened.
Past Progressive – Spelling

Be careful with some words when adding -ing to the infinitive.

• 1) consonant after a short, stressed vowel at the end of the word

Double the consonant.

sit – he was sitting
put - he was putting

If the consonant is not stressed, we do not double it:
benefit - benefiting (Here we stress the first 'e', not the 'i'.)
In British English we double one -l at the end of the word:
travel – travelling

• 2) one -e at the end of the word

Leave out the -e.

write – he was writing
take – he was taking

BUT:
double –e: add -ing
see – he was seeing
• 3) verbs ending in -ie
   Change 'ie' to 'y'.
   lie - he was lying

• 4) verbs ending in -c
   Change 'c' to 'ck'.
   picnic - he was picnicking
### SPECIAL VERBS

1) have as a full verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>negative sentence</th>
<th>question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>affirmative sentence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was having a bath.</td>
<td>I was not having a bath.</td>
<td>Was I having a bath?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>he, she, it:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He was having a bath.</td>
<td>He was not having a bath.</td>
<td>Was he having a bath?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>we, you, they:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You were having a bath.</td>
<td>We were not having a bath.</td>
<td>Were we having a bath?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) do as a full verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>affirmative sentence</th>
<th>negative sentence</th>
<th>question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was doing an exercise.</td>
<td>I was not doing an exercise.</td>
<td>Was I doing an exercise?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

he, she, it:

| He was doing an exercise. | He was not doing an exercise. | Was he doing an exercise? |

we, you, they:

| We were doing an exercise. | We were not doing an exercise. | Were we doing an exercise? |
Past Progressive – Use

• 1) actions were in progress at special time in the past
   Peter was reading a book yesterday evening.

• 2) two actions were happening at the same time (the actions do not influence each other)
   Anne was writing a letter while Steve was reading the New York Times.

• 3) together with the Simple Past
   While we were sitting at the breakfast table, the telephone rang.

• 4) repeated actions irritating the speaker (with always, constantly, forever)
   Andrew was always coming late.
### Past Progressive - Signal words

While

### Past Progressive - Form

to be (was, were) + infinitive + -ing

### Past Progressive - Examples

Affirmative sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I was playing football.</th>
<th>You were playing football.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Negative sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I was not playing football. I wasn't playing football.</th>
<th>You were not playing football. You weren't playing football.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Questions:

| Was I playing football? | Were you playing football? |
Past Progressive/Continuous – Use

The Past Progressive is used when we talk about something which was happening at a special time in the past. It is also called Past Continuous. Have a look at the following examples:

• 1) action was in progress at special time in the past
   Peter was reading a book yesterday evening.
   She was listening to the radio.

• 2) two actions were happening at the same time (the actions do not influence each other)
   Anne was writing a letter while Steve was reading the New York Times.

• 3) together with the Simple Past
   While we were sitting at the breakfast table, the telephone rang.

Note:
Past Progressive: were sitting at the table
Simple Past: the telephone rang.
The action in the Simple Past interrupted the action in the Past Progressive.

• 4) repeated actions irritating the speaker (with always, constantly, forever)

Andrew **was** always **coming** late. *(I don't like it.)*

**Simple Past:**
Andrew always **came** late. *(Here I don't give a comment.)*
Taken from:

• http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/grammar/past_progressive_diagram.htm