SHSAT Summer 2021

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VERB TENSES: THE WHOLE STORY

1. Present Time

Present Tense

Formation: Stem/base; adds –s for third person singular

Function: Expresses usual, normal, habitual actions and present conditions

Examples: Class begins at 10:45 every Monday through Thursday.

I eat breakfast at 8 AM.

How tall are you?

I feel tired today.

Present Progressive Tense

Formation: Present tense of “to be” plus present participle (-“ing”) of main verb

Function: Expresses an action which is going on right now

Examples: We are learning about verbs today.

Johnny is not paying attention to the lesson.

They are playing ball in the park.

1. Past time

Past Tense (simple past)

Formation: Add –d or –ed to stem (regular verbs); various irregular forms

Function: Expresses an action which began and ended in the past (“over and done”)

Examples: I woke up at 7 AM this morning.

You signed in when we started class.

She went home early because she felt sick.

Past Progressive Tense

Formation: Past tense of “to be” plus present participle (-ing) of main verb

Function: An ongoing action in the past, usually accompanied or interrupted by another past action or event

Examples: I was sleeping when the phone rang.

The baby was crying because he was hungry.

Who was speaking before we were interrupted?

Present Perfect Tense (the “have” tense”)

Formation: Present tense of “to have” plus past participle of main verb (-ed for regular verbs)

Function: Expresses a past action which is repeated or continues into the present

Examples: She has visited California several times.

“How many times have I told you not to do that?” (angry parent)

I have taught English for over thirty years. (and still do it)

I haven’t seen the book you lost. (Implied: “yet,”)

The bell has rung! (implying you should do something about it now,

like be quiet or leave the classroom)

Present Perfect Progressive Tense  
Formation: Present tense of “to have,” past participle of “to be” (“been”), plus present

participle (-ing form) of main verb

Function: Expresses an action that began in the past and is still going on

Examples: My cat has been sleeping since 8 o’clock.

This class has been meeting for two weeks.

Where have you been? We have been waiting for you all morning!

Past Perfect Tense (the “had” tense)

Formation: past tense of “to have” plus past participle of main verb

Function: To express an action in the past that occurred before another psat action or event

Examples: I forgot where I had put the new shoes.

The teacher said that we had finished that chapter.

They came home from vacation and realized they had been robbed.

Past Perfect Progressive Tense

Formation: past tense of “to have” plus past participle of “to be” (“been’) plus

present participle –ing) of main verb

Function: to express an ongoing action in the past that was occurring at the time of

another action or event

Examples: She had been keeping up with her work until she got sick.

They had been planning to go to France but had to cancel those plans.

1. Future Time

Future Tense

Formation: will (or shall) plus the stem

Function: to express an action that will occur in the future

Examples: We will not have class on Friday.

Tomorrow is her birthday; she will be fourteen.

The screen will break if you drop the phone.

Future Progressive Tense

Formation: Future of “to be” plus present participle (-ing) of main verb

Function: To express an action in progress at a future time

Examples: What will you be doing at this time tomorrow?

Don’t call him at 3 AM; he will be sleeping!

We will be studying verbs for a few days.

Future Perfect Tense

Formation: Future of “to have” plus past participate of main verb

Function: to express an action in the future from the perspective of a time later in the future

Examples: By August 15, we will have finished most of the lessons.

By the time Jim wakes up, the rest of the family will have eaten breakfast.

By the time he makes up his work, the class will have moved on to the

next unit.

Future Perfect Progressive Tense

Formation: Future of “to have” plus past participle of “to be” (“been”) plus present participle (-ing) of main verb

Function: to express an action that will be in progress as another future action or event happens or begins

Examples: By September, we will have been trying to control covid-19 for six

months.

As of next month, she will have been living at her present address for a

year.

**PRACTICE EXERCISE:** Write an additional example (in a sentence) for each tense.

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