

Exercises

Tenses Exercise 1

Choose the most **appropriate tense** for the following sentences. Why is your choice the best one? **Choices: a) present simple, b) past simple, c) present perfect.**

Example: Assume

a) Unfortunately, this course assumes prior knowledge. You must pass a mathematics topic before you can enrol.

b) Unfortunately, this course assumed prior knowledge. You must pass a mathematics topic before you can enrol.

c) Unfortunately, this course has assumed prior knowledge. You must pass a mathematics topic before you can enrol.

Answer: a) Unfortunately, this course assumes prior knowledge. You must pass a mathematics topic before you can enrol.

Answer: a) present simple – a fact in the present

1. Constitute

a) International students constitute 30% of the university's enrolments at present.

b) International students constituted 30% of the university's enrolments at present.

c) International students have constituted 30% of the university's enrolments at present.

2. Create

a) A clever web designer recently creates this user-friendly website.

b) A clever web designer recently created this user-friendly website.

c) A clever web designer has recently created this user-friendly website.

3. Doubt

a) The lecturer later doubts the integrity of the writing and gave it a 'fail' mark.

b) The lecturer later doubted the integrity of the writing and gave it a 'fail' mark.

c) The lecturer has later doubted the integrity of the writing and gave it a 'fail' mark.

4. Estimate

a) The students estimate how much time the task had taken.

b) The students estimated how much time the task had taken.

c) The students have estimated how much time the task had taken.

5. Export

a) Australia exports goods to other countries since the nineteenth century.

b) Australia exported goods to other countries since the nineteenth century.

c) Australia has exported goods to other countries since the nineteenth century.

6. Formulate

a) Now we formulate our ideas it is easier to write about them.

b) Now we formulated our ideas it is easier to write about them.

c) Now we have formulated our ideas it is easier to write about them.

7. Hate

a) People nowadays often hate the effort required to write an essay.

b) People nowadays often hated the effort required to write an essay.

c) People nowadays often have hated the effort required to write an essay.

8. Indicate

a) Signposts are very helpful because they indicate the direction to take.

b) Signposts are very helpful because they indicated the direction to take.

c) Signposts are very helpful because they have indicated the direction to take.

9. Involve

a) Academic writing, even today, still involves hours of researching and reading before the actual writing.

b) Academic writing, even today, still involved hours of researching and reading before the

actual writing.

c) Academic writing, even today, has still involved hours of researching and reading before the actual writing.

10. Like

a) Research indicates that everyone likes to receive high marks when they submit an essay.

b) Research indicates that everyone liked to receive high marks when they submit an essay.

c) Research indicates that everyone has liked to receive high marks when they submit an essay.

11. Realise

a) The lecturer quickly realises her mistake and so she corrected it.

b) The lecturer quickly realised her mistake and so she corrected it.

c) The lecturer has quickly realised her mistake and so she corrected it.

12. Respond

a) Yesterday, students respond unwillingly to questions in class.

b) Yesterday, students responded unwillingly to questions in class.

c) Yesterday, students have often responded unwillingly to questions in class.

13. Want

a) Students want better university transport since last year.

b) Students wanted better university transport since last year.

c) Students have wanted better university transport since last year.

Tenses Exercise 2

What tense would you use to describe:

1. a general principle 2. what happened in an experiment 3. ideas that were held in the past 4. something that has changed over time 5. someone's opinion 6. the results of an experiment 7.

a habitual action in the present 8. recent research and its present impact 9. a theory 10. a claim

11. a fact

Tenses Exercise 3

Can you explain why each of the following sentences was written in a particular tense?

Choose your reasons from this list:

1. a general principle 2. what happened in an experiment 3. ideas that were held in the past

4. something that has changed over time 5. someone's opinion 6. the results of an experiment

7. a habitual action in the present 8. recent research and its present impact 9. a theory

10. a claim 11. a fact

Example: Smith and Jones think this is unlikely. Answer: present simple – someone's opinion

1. The charcoal was ground and put in a container.

2. These findings indicate the danger of mixing potassium nitrate, charcoal and sulphur.

3. General relativity is a theory of great significance.

4. Advertisers work on the principle that most people like chocolate.

5. Recent surveys have shown that most people prefer milk chocolate to white chocolate.

6. Many people eat chocolate every day, as it is a good source of antioxidants.

7. Many people have gained weight quickly because of eating increasing amounts of chocolate.

8. It was thought that chocolate would replace alcohol as a beverage.

9. Chocolate is made from cocoa beans.

10. Smith maintains that white chocolate is not really chocolate.

11. The experiment indicates that chocolate consumption may boost serotonin levels.

Tenses Exercise 4

Does the highlighted verb in each of these sentences refer to a habitual action, a completed action or an action occurring before another action? Here are some guidelines to help you:

Present simple: a habitual action

Past simple: a completed action

Past perfect: an action occurring before another action

1. The committee agreed yesterday to pass the amendment.
2. The committee had agreed prior to the final meeting to pass the amendment.
3. The Federal government normally finances Health, Education and Transport.
4. An organisation was established to identify a research project.
5. His first report included an executive summary.
6. An organisation had been established earlier to identify a research project.
7. He researched very thoroughly into the history of the town.
8. Reports usually include executive summaries

Tenses Exercise 5

Which is the correct verb form – singular or plural?

Example The details for my credit card is/are at the bottom of the form.

Answer: The details for my credit card is/are at the bottom of the form.

Reason: The subject is details, which is a plural noun.

1. The newest book on the library shelf is/are green.
2. The computers in the library is/are always available.
3. There was/were a large increase in enrolments for the course this year.
4. The number of new students is/are declining annually.
5. Recent graduates has/have found employment in many different areas.
6. A number of essays was/were very well written.
7. The recent power cuts in the library has/have led to a review of the electrical system.
8. The changes in our article indicates/indicate that we have made many improvements to it.
9. There is/are several things you can do to strengthen your argument.
10. The final date for submission of all your assignments is/are 31 May.

Tenses Exercise 6 : Fill the gaps with the correct tenses.

1. I (learn) English for seven years now.
2. But last year I (not / work) hard enough for English, that's why my marks (not / be) really that good then.
3. As I (pass / want) my English exam successfully next year, I (study) harder this term.
4. During my last summer holidays, my parents (send) me on a language course to London.
5. It (be) great and I (think) I (learn) a lot.
6. Before I (go) to London, I (not / enjoy) learning English.
7. But while I (do) the language course, I (meet) lots of young people from all over the world.
8. There I (notice) how important it (be) to speak foreign languages nowadays.
9. Now I (have) much more fun learning English than I (have) before the course.
10. At the moment I (revise) English grammar.

11. And I (begin / already) to read the texts in my English textbooks again.
12. I (think) I (do) one unit every week.
13. My exam (be) on 15 May, so there (not / be) any time to be lost.
14. If I (pass) my exams successfully, I (start) an apprenticeship in September.
15. And after my apprenticeship, maybe I (go) back to London to work there for a while.

Tenses Exercise 7: Fill the gaps with the correct tenses.

1. They (build) a new power station at the moment.
2. When I was buying the stamps somebody (call) my name.
3. 'What time (Kevin come) ?' 'An hour ago.'
4. I (not go) to the cinema last night. I was too tired.
5. Carol invited us to the party but we (not go) . We had other things to do.
6. I saw Bridget at the museum when I was going to the restaurant but she (not see) me.
7. 'Where (your parents live) ?' 'In a village near London. They have always lived there.'
8. She speaks English but she (not speak) French.
9. Jeff is from London. He (live) there all his life.
10. My favourite country is Canada. I (be) there four times.
11. I (never eat) bananas.
12. 'How long (you study) Photography?' 'For one year.'
13. 'Where are you going on holiday?' 'I don't know. We (not decide) yet.'
14. Who (invent) the washing machine?
15. 'Where's Jill?' 'She (have) lunch at the moment.'
16. (Terry work) ? No, he is on holiday.
17. Somebody (steal) my sunglasses at the swimming pool last week.
18. (she wear) the nice jacket when you saw her?
19. Where (be) you yesterday?
20. As you (see / can) , I (become) a real London fan already.

Answers

Answers to Tenses Exercise 1

1 Example: Assume

a) Unfortunately, this course **assumes** prior knowledge. You must pass a mathematics topic before you can enrol.

Answer: **present simple** – a fact in the present

1. Constitute

a) International students constitute 30% of the university's enrolments at present.

Answer: present simple – a fact in the present

2. Create

c) A clever web designer has recently created this user-friendly website. Answer: present perfect – something that happened recently

3. Doubt

b) The lecturer later doubted the integrity of the writing and gave it a 'fail' mark.

Answer: past simple – a completed action in the past. 'Later' and 'gave' also put the sentence into the past simple.

4. Estimate

b) The students estimated how much time the task had taken.

Answer: past simple – a completed action in the past. The past perfect, 'had taken', shows that something (i.e. the action of doing the task) happened before another event in the past.

5. Export

c) Australia has exported goods to other countries since the nineteenth century.

Answer: present perfect with 'since', indicating a period of time from the past to the present. This period of time is not yet complete and could continue in the future.

6. Formulate

c) Now we have formulated our ideas it is easier to write about them.

Answer: present perfect – something which started in the past and has an ongoing impact

7. Hate

a) People nowadays often hate the effort required to write an essay.

Answer: present simple – a fact in the present. The present is shown by the word 'nowadays'.

8. Indicate a) Signposts are very helpful because they indicate the direction to take.

Answer: present simple – a fact in the present. The other verb in the sentence, 'are', is also in the present simple, which is a clue that the whole sentence is probably in the present tense.

9. Involve

a) Academic writing, even today, still involves hours of researching and reading before the actual writing.

Answer: present simple – a fact in the present. The present is indicated by the words 'still' and 'today'.

10. Like a) Research indicates that everyone likes to receive high marks when they submit an essay.

Answer: present simple – a fact in the present. 'indicates' is in the present simple, so we know that 'likes' is in the present simple too.

11. Realise

b) The lecturer quickly realised her mistake and so she corrected it.

Answer: past simple – a completed action in the past. 'corrected' also puts the sentence into the past simple.

12. Respond

b) Yesterday, students responded unwillingly to questions in class.

Answer: past simple – a completed action in the past. ‘yesterday’ tells us that the action was in the past.

13. Want c) Students have wanted better university transport since last year.

Answer: present perfect with ‘since’, indicating a period of time from the past to the present. This period of time is not yet complete and could continue in the future.

Answers to Tenses Exercise 2

1. Present simple 2. Past simple 3. Past simple 4. Present perfect 5. Present simple 6. Present simple 7. Present simple 8. Present perfect 9. Present simple 10. Present simple 11. Present simple

Answers to Tenses Exercise 3

1. The charcoal was ground and put in a container.

Answer: past simple – what happened in an experiment

2. These findings indicate the danger of mixing potassium nitrate, charcoal and sulphur.

Answer: present simple – the results of an experiment

3. General relativity is a theory of great significance.

Answer: present simple – a theory

4. Advertisers work on the principle that most people like chocolate.

Answer: present simple – a general principle

5. Recent surveys have shown that most people prefer milk chocolate to white chocolate.

Answer: present perfect – recent research and its present impact

6. Many people eat chocolate every day, as it is a good source of antioxidants.

Answer: present simple – a habitual action in the present

7. Many people have gained weight quickly because of eating increasing amounts of chocolate.

Answer: present perfect – something that has changed over time

8. It was thought that chocolate would replace alcohol as a beverage.

Answer: past simple (passive) – an idea that was held in the past

9. Chocolate is made from cocoa beans.

Answer: present simple (passive) – a fact

10. Smith maintains that white chocolate is not really chocolate.

Answer: present simple – a claim

11. The experiment indicates that chocolate consumption may boost serotonin levels

Answers to Tenses Exercise 4

1. The committee agreed yesterday to pass the amendment.

(a completed action / a habitual action / an action occurring before another action)

Reason: The word ‘yesterday’ indicates that this is a completed action in the past.

2. The committee had agreed prior to the final meeting to pass the amendment.

(a completed action / a habitual action / an action occurring before another action)

Reason: The words ‘prior to the final meeting’ indicate that one event occurred before another event.

3. The Federal government normally finances Health, Education and Transport.

(a completed action / a habitual action / an action occurring before another action)

Reason: The present tense and the word ‘normally’ indicate that this is a habitual action.

4. An organisation was established to identify a research project.

(a completed action / a habitual action / an action occurring before another action)

Reason: The past simple indicates that this is a completed action in the past.

5. His first report included an executive summary.

(a completed action / a habitual action / an action occurring before another action)

Reason: The past simple indicates that this is a completed action in the past.

6. An organisation had been established earlier to identify a research project.

(a completed action / a habitual action / an action occurring before another action)

Reason: The word 'earlier' indicates that one event occurred before another event.

7. He researched very thoroughly into the history of the town.

(a completed action / a habitual action / an action occurring before another action)

Reason: The past simple indicates that this is a completed action in the past.

8. Reports usually include executive summaries.

(a completed action / a habitual action / an action occurring before another action)

Reason: The present tense and the word 'usually' indicate that this is a habitual action

answer: present simple – the results of an experiment

Answers to Tenses Exercise 5

1. The newest book on the library shelf is/are green.

Reason: The subject is book, which is a singular noun.

2. The computers in the library is/are always available.

Reason: The subject is computers, which is a plural noun.

3. There was/were a large increase in enrolments for the course this year.

Reason: The subject is increase, which is a singular noun.

4. The number of new students is/are declining annually.

Reason: The subject is number, which is a singular noun.

5. Recent graduates has/have found employment in many different areas.

Reason: The subject is graduates, which is a plural noun.

6. A number of essays was/were very well written.

Reason: The subject is essays, which is a plural noun.

7. The recent power cuts in the library has/have led to a review of the electrical system.

Reason: The subject is power cuts, which is a plural noun.

8. The changes in our article indicates/indicate that we have made many improvements to it.

Reason: The subject is changes, which is a plural noun.

9. There is/are several things you can do to strengthen your argument.

Reason: The subject is things, which is a plural noun.

10. The final date for submission of all your assignments is/are 31 May.

Reason: The subject is date, which is a singular noun.

16.

Answers to Exercise 6

- I have been learning [action that started in the past and is still going on now, emphasis is put on the duration \(signal word: for seven years\) - Present Perfect Progressive](#) English for seven years now.
- But last year I was not working hard enough for English, that's why my marks were not **1st verb:** [you can either use past progressive or simple past.](#)
 - [Past Progressive: puts emphasis on the duration](#)
 - [Simple Past: puts emphasis on the fact](#)**2nd verb:** [a fact in the past - Simple Past.](#) really that good then.

3. As I want to pass my English exam successfully next year, I am going to study 1st verb: situation in the present - Simple Present (after 'want' use 'to' + infinitive)
2nd verb: decision made for the future - Future I going to. harder this term.
4. During my last summer holidays, my parents sent completed action in the past - Simple Past me on a language course to London.
5. It was great and I think I have learned 1st verb: fact in the past - Simple Past
2nd verb: situation in the present - Simple Present
3rd verb: finished action that has an influence on the present. emphasis is on the result - Present Perfect Simple a lot.
6. Before I went to London, I had not enjoyed 1st verb: action in the past - Simple Past
2nd verb: action taking place before that certain time in the past (signal word: before) - Past Perfect. learning English.
7. But while I was doing the language course, I met 1st verb: action taking place only for a certain period in the past - Past Progressive
2nd verb: short actions in the past taking place in the middle of another action - Simple Past. lots of young people from all over the world.
8. There I noticed how important it is 1st verb: observation in the past - Simple Past
2nd verb: general fact that is true for the present - Simple Present to speak foreign languages nowadays.
9. Now I have much more fun learning English than I had 1st verb: situation in the present - Simple Present
2nd verb: situation in the past - Simple Past before the course.
10. At the moment I am revising action happening around now (signal word: at the moment) - Present Progressive English grammar.
11. And I have already begun action that has just started (signal word: already), emphasis is put on the fact (not the duration) - Present Perfect Simple to read the texts in my English textbooks again.
12. I think I will do 1st verb: feeling in the present - Simple Present
2nd verb: assumption with regard to the future (signal word: I think) - Future I will one unit every week.
13. My exam is on 15 May, so there is not 1st verb: the exact date for the exam is already scheduled - Simple Present. 2nd verb: idiomatic expression any time to be lost.
14. If I pass my exams successfully, I will start conditional sentence type I: if + Simple Present, Future I will an apprenticeship in September.
15. And after my apprenticeship, maybe I will go assumption / dream for the future ermutung - Future I mit will. back to London to work there for a while.

Answers to Exercise 7

1. They (build) **ARE BUILDING** a new power station at the moment.
2. When I was buying the stamps somebody (call) **CALLED** my name.
3. 'What time (Kevin come) **DID KEVIN COME** ?' 'An hour ago.'
4. I (not go) **DID NOT GO** to the cinema last night. I was too tired.
5. Carol invited us to the party but we (not go) **DID NOT GO** . We had other things to do.
6. I saw Bridget at the museum when I was going to the restaurant but she (not see) **DID NOT SEE** me.
7. 'Where (your parents live) **DO YOUR PARENTS LIVE** ?' 'In a village near London. They have always lived there.'
8. She speaks English but she (not speak) **DOES NOT SPEAK** French.
9. Jeff is from London. He (live) **HAS LIVED** there all his life.
10. My favourite country is Canada. I (be) **HAVE BEEN** there four times.

11. I (never eat) **HAVE NEVER EATEN** bananas.
12. 'How long (you study) **HAVE YOU BEEN STUDYING** Photography?' 'For one year.'
13. 'Where are you going on holiday?' 'I don't know. We (not decide) **HAVE NOT DECIDED** yet.'
14. Who (invent) **INVENTED** the washing machine?
15. 'Where's Jill?' 'She (have) **IS HAVING** lunch at the moment.'
16. (Terry work) **IS TERRY WORKING** ? No, he is on holiday.
17. Somebody (steal) **STOLE** my sunglasses at the swimming pool last week.
18. (she wear) **WAS SHE WEARING** the nice jacket when you saw her?
19. Where (be) **WERE** you yesterday?
20. As you can see, I have become 1st verb: situation in the present - Simple Present (after 'can' use the infinitive without 'to')
2nd verb: situation from the past to the present, emphasis is put on the fact - Present Perfect Simple 🗨️ a real London fan already.