EXERCISES

Past tenses

Answer key

1 Write the verb in the Past Simple or the Past Continuous.

1 I *was cooking* (cook) dinner when you called.

2 While we *were watching* (watch) TV, the power went out.

3 She *fell* (fall) asleep while she was reading.

4 When I got home, my kids *were playing* (play) video games.

5 He *broke* (break) his leg while he was skiing.

6 What *were* you *doing* (do) at eight last night?

7 I *saw* (see) an old friend while I was waiting for the bus.

8 It *was raining* (rain) when we left the restaurant.

9 The phone rang while I *was taking* (take) a shower.

10 We *met* (meet) when we were working at the same company.

2 Circle the correct word.

1 I _____ a shower when the doorbell rang.
was take / **was taking** / were taking

2 They _____ dinner when we arrived.
were having / was having / were have

3 While she was driving, she _____ a strange noise.
heard / was hear / hearing

4 _____ you sleeping when I called?
Did / **Were** / Was

5 We _____ watching the game. We were at work.
didn't / **weren't** / wasn't

6 What were you doing _____ the storm hit?
when / while / during

7 I met my husband _____ I was living in Chicago.
during / **while** / for

8 My laptop _____ while I was working on a big project.
was crash / crashing / **crashed**

3 Write the verb in the Past Perfect.

1 When we got to the station, the train *had already left* (already / leave).

2 By the time I arrived, the meeting *had started* (start).

3 She *had never seen* (never / see) the ocean before that trip.

4 I couldn't get in because I *had lost* (lose) my keys.

5 They *hadn't eaten* (not / eat) all day, so they were starving.

6 By the time the doctor came, the pain *had gone* (go) away.

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3 Write the verb in the Past Perfect.

7 He *had worked* (work) there for ten years before he quit.

8 *Had* you ever *tried* (try) sushi before that night?

9 I recognized her because we *had met* (meet) before.

4 Complete the story. Use the Past Simple, Past Continuous or Past Perfect.

1 Last summer we *flew* (fly) to Miami for a wedding.

2 When we *landed* (land), it was raining hard.

3 Our hotel was nice, but they *had given* (give) our room to someone else.

4 While we *were waiting* (wait) at the front desk, the manager came over.

5 He said he *had already found* (already / find) us a better room.

6 The next day, while my husband *was swimming* (swim), I read on the beach.

7 At the wedding we *met* (meet) people we *hadn't seen* (not / see) for years.

8 By the time we *got* (get) home, we were exhausted.

5 Put the words in order to make sentences.

1 arrived / I / the / was / cooking / when / guests / .

I was cooking when the guests arrived.

2 were / at / yesterday / doing / what / eight / you / ?

What were you doing at eight yesterday?

3 I / when / left / train / had / there / got / already / the / .

The train had already left when I got there.

4 to / been / before / I / never / had / York / that / trip / New / .

I had never been to New York before that trip.

5 while / asleep / the / she / she / watching / fell / movie / was / .

She fell asleep while she was watching the movie.

6 was / I / phone / while / my / jogging / lost / I / .

I lost my phone while I was jogging.

Past tenses

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5 Put the words in order to make sentences.

7 when / called / you / were / sleeping / I / ?

Were you sleeping when I called?

6 Find and correct the mistake in each sentence.

1 I was watch TV when you called.

I was watching TV when you called.

2 They was sleeping when the alarm went off.

They were sleeping when the alarm went off.

3 When I arrived, the movie has already started.

When I arrived, the movie had already started.

4 She had forgot her wallet at home.

She had forgotten her wallet at home.

5 What did you doing when the power went out?

What were you doing when the power went out?

6 He breaked his arm while he was skiing.

He broke his arm while he was skiing.

7 We had never meet before that party.

We had never met before that party.

8 While I was drove to work, I saw an accident.

While I was driving to work, I saw an accident.

YOUR LIFE

7 Write about a day you remember well.

I WAS... WHEN...

I HAD NEVER... BEFORE.

Answers will vary.