

Summary of Tenses - I

1. Present Simple tense :

When to use:

- 1 . to express an action that happens again and again, a habit:
e.g. I wash my hair twice a week.
- 2 . to express a fact that is always true:
e.g. My sister has brown eyes.
e.g. The sun rises in the east.
- 3 . to express a fact which stays the same for a long time:
e.g. He works in a bank .
e.g. I want a cup of tea . (now – action verb)
e.g. The food smells good . (now - state verb)

	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
+	S + V1 + (s – es – ies) + O	O + am/is/are + V3 + (by S)
-	S + do/does + not + V1 + O	O + am/is/are + not + V3 + (by S)
?	(Wh-) + do/does + S + V1 + O ?	(Wh-) + am/is/are + O + V3 + (by S) ?

2. Present Continuous tense :

When to use:

1. to express an activity or situation that is happening now :
e.g. I'm watching T.V. now .
2. to express an activity or situation that is true now, but is not necessarily happening at the moment of speaking :
e.g. He's reading a novel .
e.g. I'm learning English this year .
3. to express a temporarily activity :
e.g. Peter is working as a barman during the holidays .
4. to express a PLANNED FUTURE arrangement :
e.g. We're meeting with John tomorrow evening .

	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
+	S + am/is/are + V1 + ing + O	O + am/is/are + being + V3 + (by S)
-	S + am/is/are + not + V1 + ing + O	O + am/is/are + not + being + V3 + (by S)
?	(Wh-) am/is/are + S + V1 + ing + O ?	(Wh-) + am/is/are + O + being + V3 + (by S) ?

3. Past Simple tense :

When to use:

- 1 . to express a FINISHED action in the past :
e.g. I went to Manchester last week.
e.g. We met in 1987 .
- 2 . to express actions which follow each other in a story :
e.g. Mary walked into the room and stopped . She listened carefully ...
- 3 . to express a past situation or habit :
e.g. When I was a child, we lived in a small house by the sea.



	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
+	S + V2 + O	O + was/were + V3 + (by S)
-	S + did + not + V1 + O	O + was/were + not + V3 + (by S)
?	(Wh-) did + S + V1 + O ?	(Wh-) was/were + O + V3 + (by S) ?

4. “be going to” Future Tense:

When to use:

- to talk about a near future activity or occurrence.
e.g. He is lacing his boots. He is going to leave home soon.
- to make a prediction for future when something is very likely to happen, or some evidences of the future
e.g. Look at those boys playing football ! They're going to break the window.
- to talk about our future plans and arrangements, which also express our intentions:
e.g. We are going to throw a party next week. Will you come?

	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
+	S + am/is/are + going to + V1 + O	O + am/is/are + going to + be + V3 + (by S)
-	S + am/is/are + not + going to + V1 + O	O + am/is/are + not + going to + be + V3 + (by S)
?	(Wh-) am/is/are + S + going to + V1 + O ?	(Wh-) am/is/are + O + going to + be + V3 + (by S) ?

5. Future Simple Tense:

When to use:

- to express a sudden decision or plan made at the moment of speaking.
e.g. You look tired. Wait! I will help you carry these bags.
- to make a guess for future: (esp. with words such as “think, guess, assume...”)
e.g. I don't think he will come today.
- to give a promise:
e.g. I'll call you when I get home.
e.g. She'll help you finish the work, don't worry.
- to make a request
e.g. Will you bring some more water please?
- to make a suggestion
e.g. Shall we get this book for you?

	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
+	S + will/shall + V1 + O	O + will/shall + be + V3 + (by S)
-	S + will/shall + not + V1 + O	O + will/shall + not + be + V3 + (by S)
?	(Wh-) will/shall + S + V1 + O ?	(Wh-) will/shall + O + be + V3 + (by S) ?

6. Past Continuous tense :

When to use:

- to express an activity in progress before , and probably after , a particular time in the PAST:
e.g. What were you doing ?
e.g. At 7 :00 in the morning , I was having breakfast .
- to describe a situation or activity during a period in the PAST:
e.g. Jan looked lovely.
e.g. She was wearing a green cotton dress .
e.g. Her eyes were shining .



3. to express an INTERRUPTED PAST activity :
e.g. When the phone rang , I was studying .
4. to express an incomplete activity in the past :
e.g. I was reading a book during the flight . (I didn't finish it – incomplete)
I watched a film during the flight . (the whole film – complete)
5. to express a REPEATED habit in the past (A longer setting for something) :
e.g. I was going out with Jack when I first met Harry.

	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
+	S + was/were + V1 + ing + O	O + was/were + being + V3 + (by S)
-	S + was/were + not + V1 + ing + O	O + was/were + not + being + V3 + (by S)
?	(Wh-) was/were + S + V1 + ing + O ?	(Wh-) was/were + O + being + V3 + (by S) ?

7. Present Perfect Tense :

It's a Present Tense , but it expresses the EFFECT of past actions and activities in the present. It doesn't express when the action is happened . Exact time is not important . It's the intersection of Present and Past .

When to use:

1. to express an action which began in the past and still continues :
e.g. He has worked as a teacher since 1991 .
e.g. Have you ever been to Italy ?
2. to express an experience that happened at some time in one's time . The action is in the PAST and FINISHED , but the effects of the action is still felt . Time is not important :
e.g. Have you ever had an operation ? (At any time in your life up to now)
e.g. She's written poetry , children's stories and biographies . (In her writing career)
3. to express a past action that has a present result . The action is usually in the recent past :
e.g. I've lost my wallet . (I haven't got it now)
e.g. The taxi hasn't arrived . (We're still waiting for it)

Other examples :

- e.g. I've lived in Paris for six years . (I still live there)
- e.g. I lived in Paris for six years . (Now I live somewhere else)
- e.g. Shakespeare wrote thirty plays . (He can't write any more)
- e.g. I've written several books . (I can still write some more)
- e.g. Have you seen Billy this morning ? (It's still morning)
- e.g. Did you see Billy this morning ? (It's afternoon or evening)

	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
+	S + have/has + V3 + O	O + have/has + been + V3 + (by S)
-	S + have/has + not + V3 + O	O + have/has + not + been + V3 + (by S)
?	(Wh-) have/has + S + V3 + O ?	(Wh-) have/has + O + been + V3 + (by S) ?

7. Past Perfect Tense :

When to use:

1. to look back in a time in the past and refer to an action that happened before then :
e.g. I had finished my work when the doctor came .
e.g. She hadn't understood the subject before I explained it .
e.g. When I got to the party , Peter went home . (= After I arrived , Peter left)
e.g. When I got to the party , Peter had gone home . (=Before I arrived , Peter left)



	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
+	S + had + V3 + O	O + had + been + V3 + (by S)
-	S + had + not + V3 + O	O + had + not + been + V3 + (by S)
?	(Wh-) had + S + V3 + O ?	(Wh-) had + O + been + V3 + (by S) ?

Time chart for the first eight tenses in English

