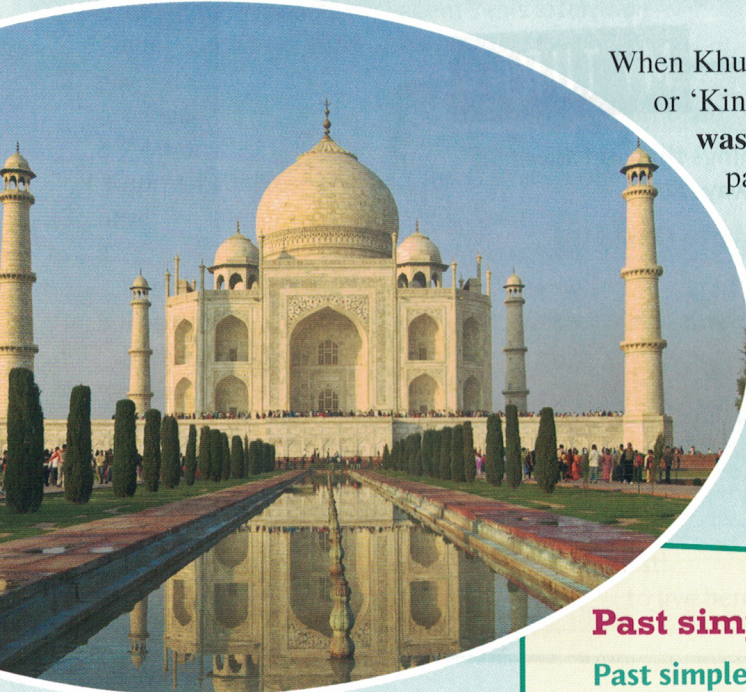


2

Past simple and past continuous; used to and would

Musicians sang and threw flowers.

Arjumand Banu Begam **was working** in her shop when Prince Khurram **saw** her for the first time as he **was walking** through the market. He immediately **decided** this was the woman he **wanted** to marry. Indian princes, however, **didn't use to marry** for love but for political reasons, so marriage between Khurram and Arjumand **was** impossible. It **was** six years before the prince **could** marry the woman he **loved**, but when it finally **happened** the wedding **was magnificent**. A long **procession** **travelled** to Arjumand's house, and musicians **sang** and **threw** flowers to the hundreds of people who **were watching**. At the wedding, the prince's father **gave** Arjumand the name of Mumtaz, or 'Chosen One', as a present.



When Khurram's father **died**, he **became** Emperor Shah Jahan, or 'King of the World'. He **had** many responsibilities and **was frequently leading** his army off to fight in different parts of the empire. Mumtaz **would always travel** with him and sometimes she even **used to go** with him into battle. Sadly, while her husband **was fighting** one of these battles, Mumtaz **fell** ill. As she **was dying**, Shah Jahan **promised** to build a beautiful **monument** in her memory. After Mumtaz **died**, Shah Jahan quickly **began** to turn his promise into reality, and twenty years later the Taj Mahal, perhaps the greatest symbol of love the world has ever seen, **was** finally completed.

Past simple and past continuous; used to and would

Past simple

- 1 We usually use the past simple to refer to events or states in the past, or to repeated past actions.

*He **had** many responsibilities.*

*I **went** to the cinema three times last week.*

Past continuous

- 2 We use the past continuous to refer to events which were unfinished or in progress at or around a definite time in the past.

*At 7 o'clock this morning I **was having** a shower.*

- 3 We often use the past continuous to refer to background activities or situations in a story.

*He looked through the window. Rain **was falling** steadily on the city's streets.*



- 1 Why was it difficult for Prince Khurram to marry Arjumand at first?
- 2 What did Shah Jahan decide to do in memory of his wife?

Answers: 1 Because she wasn't an important person. 2 Build a beautiful monument.

TIP

Don't use the past continuous to refer to general habits and routines in the past.

Every summer my grandparents **came** to stay with us. NOT ...*were coming to stay with us*.

TIP

The past simple is much more common than the past continuous when we refer to the past, and it is the best form to use if you are not sure.

- 4 We sometimes use the past continuous with words like *always*, *constantly* and *forever* to refer to repeated past actions if we want to emphasise or criticise.

*When my dad worked in a bakery he **was always bringing** home cakes and biscuits.*

*My old neighbours **were forever having** parties and **playing** loud music.*

- 5 We sometimes use the past continuous instead of the present continuous with *hope*, *plan*, *think about* (+ -ing), and *wonder about* (+ -ing) to show uncertainty.

*Sally and I **were hoping** to meet up this afternoon. If we do, would you like to come too? (less definite than We're hoping to ...)*

TIP

We can use the past continuous with *wonder* to make very polite suggestions and requests.

*I **was wondering** if you could help me.*

Past simple or past continuous

- 6 We often use the past simple and the past continuous to talk about two events or situations which happened at or around the same time.

The past continuous shows that two continuing activities were in progress at the same time.

*Arjumand **was working** in her shop as the prince **was walking** through the market.*

The past simple shows that two or more events happened at or around the same time.

*A long procession **travelled** to Mumtaz's house, and musicians **sang** and **threw** flowers.*

Use the past simple to refer to events which happened during a longer activity, shown by the past continuous.

*Musicians **sang** and **threw** flowers to people who **were watching**.*

- 7 We sometimes use the past simple or the past continuous with verbs like *hope*, *mean*, *plan*, *think about* (+ -ing) and *want* to refer to things we intended to do but didn't or can't.

*I **hoped** / **was hoping** to get there on time but the traffic is really heavy, so I'm going to be late.*

Used to and would

- 8 We often use *used to* (+ infinitive) instead of the past simple to refer to past habits, routines and states, especially when the habit or routine does not happen any more or when the state is no longer true.

*She even **used to go** with him into battle.*

*Jackie **used to have** three rabbits, but one died.*

- 9 The negative and question forms are usually *didn't use to* and *Did ... use to ...?*

*Indian princes, however, **didn't use to marry** for love but for political reasons.*

Nowadays we often form the negative and question forms with *used* instead of *use*.

*Amanda **didn't used to like** school, but now she loves it. OR Amanda **didn't use to like** ...*

- 10 We sometimes use *would* (+ infinitive) instead of *used to* to refer to past habits or routines if the time reference is clear.

*Mumtaz **would always travel** with him.*

OR *Mumtaz always **used to travel** with him.*

We don't use *would* to refer to past states or if the time reference is not clear.

*I **used to love** dance music. NOT ~~I would love dance music.~~*

*I **used to go** to the cinema a lot. NOT ~~I would go to the cinema a lot.~~*

TIP

Be / Get used to (+ noun or -ing) is not connected with *used to* (+ infinitive). *Used to* (+ noun or -ing) means *accustomed to*.

*I don't really like the food here. I'm not **used to eating** so much meat.*

The past simple, used to and would

- 11 Use the past simple, not *used to* or *would* (+ infinitive), to say exactly how many times something happened in total. Note the difference:

*I **read** six books last month!*

*I **read** / **used to read** / **would read** a lot when I was a child.*

Practice

A Underline the correct option. Sometimes both options are possible.

- The police arrested three men who robbed / were robbing a bank in the High Street.
- They planned / were planning to get up early, but they overslept.
- I saw Jon in the park today – he read / was reading a book.
- When she ate / was eating her sandwich, the sun came out.
- After the film finished / was finishing, I turned the TV off and went to bed.
- Vanessa's really shy because everyone constantly criticised / was constantly criticising her when she was a child.
- Do you like my watch? My wife gave / was giving it to me for my birthday.
- My sister's really happy – she passed / was passing all her exams.

B Complete the sentences with the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

- Did you see that film on TV last night? (you / see)
- A: What was that terrible noise last night?
B: Sorry, it was me. I my singing. (practise)
- I in the bath last night when suddenly there was a loud bang in the kitchen. (lie)
- James to visit me every single day when I was in hospital. (came)
- A: How was the game? B: Terrible! We 6–0. (lose)
- After he, my dad took up golf as a hobby. (retire)
- I, why don't you come round for dinner at the weekend? (think)
- The kids when I left for work this morning. (still / sleep)
- A: What happened to you? Did you cut yourself?
B: Yes, when I in the garden this morning. (work)
- Simon got a job in a factory when he school last year. (leave)

C Circle the TWO correct options. All the sentences are about the past.

- In the past, people ... married at a younger age than they do now.
a are used to getting b would get
c used to get d were getting
- I ... playing computer games when I was younger, but now I love them.
a wasn't liking b didn't use to like c wouldn't like d didn't like
- In the past, my friends and I ... each other much more regularly than we do now.
a saw b used to seeing c used to see d were seeing
- I think I know you. ... in Forest Lane?
a Didn't you use to live b Wouldn't you live
c Weren't you living d Didn't you live
- When I first moved to London, I ... in a big city.
a didn't use to live b wasn't used to living
c didn't live d quickly got used to living
- Dave ... to work every day until he had an accident.
a use to cycle b was cycling c used to cycle d cycled
- I ... a lot more when I was younger.
a read b was used to read c was reading d used to read
- My next-door neighbours ... in South Africa.
a were living b lived c used to live d would live

D Complete the sentences by putting the words and phrases in the correct order.

- as / flowers and rice / they / came out of / threw / at the bride and groom
People threw flowers and rice at the bride and groom as they came out of the church.
- to invite us / were / they / meaning / but
They kept forgetting.
- when he / about / stories / was always / was / telling us
Our grandfather a boy.
- was / eat / when I / anything / would
I a child.
- side of the road / to / isn't / to drive on the other / getting / but / strange / I'm / used
It's it.
- thinking about / having a barbecue / were / at the weekend / the weather's / if
We nice.
- from the south of / was constantly / by armies / invaded / being
The city the country.
- was / your plates / while / one of / she / doing / dropped
Suzie the washing up.
- heard / as soon as / phoned / I / her
I the news.
- what I said / listening / hear / know you / didn't / because / you weren't
I to me.

E Complete another famous love story using the past simple, the past continuous, *used to* or *would* with the verbs in brackets. Sometimes more than one form may be possible.

Victoria was born in 1819, and became Queen in 1837, at the age of 18. In 1840 she

1 married (marry)

her cousin, Albert of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, and for the next 20 years they

2 (be)

inseparable. Around that time, Britain 3

(change) into a constitutional monarchy, in which the monarch had very little real power, but Victoria 4

afraid to express her views about political matters. However, she

5 (always ask) Albert for his

opinion first. When Albert died of typhoid in 1861, Victoria was

devastated. Although she 6 (reign) for another 40

years she never recovered from her husband's death and

7 (wear) black for the rest of her life as a sign of

her grief. The British Empire 8

(still expand) at that time, and in 1877 Victoria acquired the title of

Empress of India as well as Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, but

while people across the Empire 9

(celebrate) her Golden and Diamond Jubilees (in 1877 and 1897), she

10 (remain) largely in the background, and was

even too upset to speak at the opening of the Royal Albert Hall, the London concert hall which carries her husband's name.



MY TURN!

How much do you remember about your life's 'magic moments'? Choose two events and write what you remember about them, using the past simple, the past continuous, and *used to* or *would* when appropriate.

- 1 Your earliest memory
- 2 The day you met your best friend
- 3 Your first day at school
- 4 The first time you travelled in a plane
- 5 Your first holiday
- 6 The first time you went to a party
- 7 Your first visit to a different country
- 8 Your first English lesson

Example: *I was about six when I went to my first party. I was staying with my cousin and ...*

MY TEST!

Circle the correct option.

- 1 When I was younger, I romantic stories, but now I love them.
a didn't use to like b wasn't liking c wouldn't like
- 2 When I reading about Shah Jahan and Mumtaz, I wanted to see the Taj Mahal for myself.
a was finishing b used to finish c finished
- 3 It was a dark, stormy night. The wind and the moon was hidden behind clouds.
a was blowing b used to blow c would blow
- 4 Excuse me. I if you might have a spare ticket. I've lost mine.
a would wonder b was wondering c used to wonder
- 5 That's strange ... she so friendly. Is she trying to trick us, perhaps?
a isn't used to being b didn't use to be c doesn't use to be