

PRACTICAL LESSON

Past Continuous

Lesson category: Mësimet në gjuhë angleze

Form was or were plus verb-ing for actions in progress in the past, background scenes, interruptions and simultaneous events.
Covers when versus while, the -ing spelling rules and the usual learner mistakes.

Past Continuous

The past continuous describes an action that was **in progress** at a moment in the past. It is formed with **was / were + verb-ing**. Its most typical job is to set the scene: it provides the background against which shorter, completed events happen.

Learning objectives

- Form the past continuous for all subjects.
- Use it for background, interruptions and simultaneous actions.
- Use **when** and **while** correctly.
- Apply the **-ing** spelling rules.

Meaning and usage

Use	Example
Action in progress at a past moment	<i>At eight o'clock I was having dinner.</i>
Background to a story	<i>The sun was shining and the birds were singing.</i>
An interrupted action	<i>I was reading when the phone rang.</i>
Two simultaneous actions	<i>She was cooking while he was working.</i>
Temporary past situation	<i>That summer I was living with my grandparents.</i>
Repeated irritating action	<i>He was always losing his phone.</i>

The form

Subject	Affirmative	Negative	Question
I / he / she / it	was working	wasn't working	Was he working?
you / we / they	were working	weren't working	Were they working?

Short answers: Yes, I **was**. / No, they **weren't**. No *did* is used, because *be* is the auxiliary.

Spelling rules for -ing

Ending	Rule	Examples
most verbs	add -ing	<i>watch</i> → <i>watching</i>
silent -e	drop the e	<i>write</i> → <i>writing</i> ; <i>drive</i> → <i>driving</i>
one vowel + one consonant, stressed	double the consonant	<i>sit</i> → <i>sitting</i> ; <i>run</i> → <i>running</i>
-ie	ie → y	<i>lie</i> → <i>lying</i>

When and while

Word	Usually followed by	Example
while	the longer action (continuous)	While I was cooking, the phone rang.
when	the shorter action (past simple)	I was cooking when the phone rang.
as	simultaneous actions	As we were leaving, it started to rain.

When the clause comes first, it is followed by a comma: *While I was cooking, the phone rang.*

Stative verbs

As in the present, stative verbs avoid the continuous. Use the past simple instead: *I **knew** the answer*, not *I was knowing*.

A comparison with the past simple

Past continuous	Past simple
action in progress, unfinished	complete action
<i>I was watching TV at nine.</i>	<i>I watched TV at nine.</i>
background	main event
<i>It was raining.</i>	<i>It rained for two hours.</i>

Common mistakes

Mistake	Correct	Why
<i>I was read a book.</i>	I was reading a book.	the -ing form is required
<i>Did you were sleeping?</i>	Were you sleeping?	no <i>did</i> with <i>be</i>
<i>You was working.</i>	You were working.	<i>you</i> takes <i>were</i>
<i>While I cooked, the phone was ringing.</i>	While I was cooking, the phone rang.	the longer action takes the continuous
<i>I was knowing him.</i>	I knew him.	stative verb

Mistake	Correct	Why
He was writting.	He was writing.	drop the e, no doubling

Learning tips

1. Picture a film: the past continuous is the scenery, the past simple is the action.
2. Remember the pairing: *while* + continuous, *when* + simple.
3. Describe what you were doing at three fixed times yesterday. It produces the tense naturally.

Summary checklist

- Is it **was/were** + **-ing**?
- Is *was* with singular and *were* with plural and *you*?
- Did I avoid *did*?
- Is the verb dynamic, not stative?

Shpjegim në gjuhën shqipe

Rregulli i anglishtes, i shpjeguar në shqip

Kjo kohë ndërtohet me **was** ose **were** plus foljen me mbaresën **-ing**. Folja ndihmëse është *be*, prandaj pyetja bëhet me përmbyse dhe mohimi me *not*; *did* nuk përdoret kurrë.

Ajo tregon një veprim **në zhvillim** në një çast të së shkuarës. Përdorimet kryesore janë katër: veprim që po ndodhte në një orë të caktuar; sfond i një rrëfimi; veprim i gjatë i ndërprerë nga një veprim i shkurtër; dhe dy veprime që zhvilloheshin njëkohësisht.

Lidhëzat **when** dhe **while** ndajnë punën midis tyre: *while* shoqëron zakonisht veprimin e gjatë në formën e vazhduar, kurse *when* shoqëron veprimin e shkurtër në kohën e shkuar të thjeshtë.

Rregullat e drejtshkrimit të **-ing** janë të njëjta si te koha e tashme e vazhduar. Foljet e gjendjes nuk e marrin këtë formë.

Ekuivalenti në gjuhën shqipe

Ekuivalenti më i afërt në gjuhën shqipe është **e pakryera**: *lexoja*, *punoja*, *flisja*. Kur theksohet vetë çasti, shqipja shton edhe pjesëzën **po**: *po lexoja*.

Anglisht	Shqip
At eight I was having dinner.	Në orën tetë po haja darkë.
The sun was shining.	Dielli shkëlqente .
I was reading when the phone rang.	Po lexoja kur ra telefoni.
She was cooking while he was working.	Ajo gatuante ndërsa ai punonte .
He was always losing his keys.	Ai i humbte gjithmonë çelësat.

Ku ndryshojnë dy gjuhët

- **Forma.** Anglishtja e ndërton me dy fjalë (*was reading*); shqipja me një të vetme (*lexoja*), të cilës mund t'i shtohet *po*.
- **Detyrueshmëria.** Në anglisht forma e vazhduar është e detyrueshme për veprimin sfond. Shqipja e lejon të pakryerën edhe pa *po*, prandaj folësit e shqipes shpesh përdorin gabimisht të shkuarën e thjeshtë angleze.
- **Zakoni.** Shqipja e shpreh zakonin e së shkuarës me të pakryerën: *Çdo ditë shkoja në shkollë*. Anglishtja këtu **nuk** përdor formën e vazhduar, por *I went* ose *I used to go*.

Gabime të zakonshme të folësve të shqipes

Gabimi	E saktë	Pse
<i>I was read a book.</i>	I was reading a book.	kërkohej forma me <i>-ing</i>
<i>Did you were sleeping?</i>	Were you sleeping?	ndihmësja është <i>be</i>
<i>You was working.</i>	You were working.	<i>you</i> merr <i>were</i>
<i>I was going there every day.</i>	I went there every day.	zakoni nuk merr formën e vazhduar
<i>I was knowing him.</i>	I knew him.	folje gjendjeje