

11 Past Continuous

El Past Continuous se forma con **be** en Past Simple + verbo en gerundio (-ing):

I was eating. (Estaba comiendo.) *They were singing.* (Estaban cantando.)

(Puedes consultar las normas de construcción del gerundio en la unidad sobre el Present Continuous, en la página 16.)

AFIRMATIVA	NEGATIVA	INTERROGATIVA
I was eating	I was not/wasn't eating	Was I eating?
You were eating	You were not/weren't eating	Were you eating?
He/she/it was eating	He/she/it was not/wasn't eating	Was he/she/it eating?
We were eating	We were not/weren't eating	Were we eating?
You were eating	You were not/weren't eating	Were you eating?
They were eating	They were not/weren't eating	Were they eating?

El Past Continuous se utiliza para expresar una acción que estaba ocurriendo en un momento concreto del pasado:

A: *What were you doing at 7 o'clock last night?* (¿Qué estabas haciendo/ hacías anoche a las 7 en punto?)

B: *I was driving home from work.* (Estaba volviendo/Volvía del trabajo en coche.)

En cambio, el Past Simple expresa una acción ya terminada:

I left work at 6.30 and I arrived home at 7.15. (Salí del trabajo a las 6:30 y llegué a casa a las 7:15.)

So you were driving home from work at 7 o'clock?

(Entonces, ¿estabas volviendo en coche a las 7 en punto?)

I lived in Japan from 1990 to 1993. (Viví en Japón desde 1990 a 1993.)

So you were living there in 1992? (Entonces, ¿vivías allí en 1992?)

A menudo los dos tiempos verbales aparecen relacionados en una frase:

When I arrived, Ann was writing postcards and Keanu was reading.

(Cuando llegué, Ann estaba leyendo y Keanu estaba leyendo.)

He phoned when I was having a shower. (Llamó cuando yo estaba tomando una ducha.)

While Ann was writing postcards, Keanu was reading.

(Ann escribía/estaba escribiendo postales mientras Keanu leía/estaba leyendo.)

Fíjate que en esos casos, la partícula **when** (*cuando*) suele aparecer con ambos tiempos verbales, pero la partícula **while** (*mientras que*) sólo puede introducir a un Past Continuous.

Ejercicios

A Describe lo que hacían las personas del dibujo cuando entró Rick en la habitación. Completa las frases con un verbo de la tabla en Past Continuous.

brush watch read listen write eat paint sit play

0 George *was reading* a book.

5 Barbara a letter.

1 Julie a sandwich.

6 Rita her hair.

2 Sue and Liz cards.

7 Alison to a CD.

- 3 Frank television. 8 Ann a picture.
 4 Caroline on the floor.

B Consulta la información de la tabla sobre Shirley y Kevin para completar las frases, utilizando Past Simple o Past Continuous.

Shirley		Kevin	
1980–86	lived in New York	1982–90	lived in Washington
1983–86	studied at university	1983–85	did a course in Computing
1986	left university	1985–90	worked as a computer operator
1986–90	worked as a translator	1989	met Shirley
1989	met Kevin	1990–95	ran his own company
1992	married Kevin	1992	married Shirley

- 0 In 1982 Shirley *was living* in New York.
 1 In 1984 Kevin in Washington.
 2 In 1984 Shirley at university.
 3 In 1984 Kevin a course in Computing.
 4 When Shirley university in 1986, Kevin as a computer operator.
 5 When Kevin met Shirley, she as a translator.
 6 While Shirley as a translator, she Kevin.
 7 In 1992 Kevin his own company.
 8 While he his own company, Kevin Shirley.

C Pon los verbos entre paréntesis en Past Continuous o Past Simple.

- 0 It *was snowing* (snow) when I left home this morning.
 1 It was a sunny afternoon and people (sit) on the grass in the park. Then suddenly it (start) to rain.
 2 A: I tried to explain my problem to her.
 B: (she/listen)?
 3 He (talk) on the phone when I arrived, but when he (see) me, he (finish) the call. Perhaps he thought that I (listen) to his conversation.
 4 I nearly had an accident today. A car (come) towards me, but I moved quickly out of the way and fortunately nothing (happen).
 5 A: Which hotel (you/stay) in when you lost your passport?
 B: I don't remember. I (visit) many places during my European tour and I (stayed) in many different hotels.
 6 I (move) to London in 1990. I (not/live) in London when I met them.
 7 (a lot of people/wait) for the 6:30 bus last night?