

Regular verb tenses

This table shows how the different tenses of English verbs are formed. It also shows in brackets how the negative form of each tense is used. The words 'continuous' and 'progressive' are both used for the names of tenses because both words mean the same.

In all the examples below, the regular verb **help** is used for all tenses so that you can compare the endings.

Simple tenses

Present Simple

used for actions in the present, for things that are always true or that happen regularly, and for opinions and beliefs

I/we/you/they help (**do not help**)
he/she/it helps (**does not help**)

Past Simple

used for completed actions and events in the past

I/we/you/they helped (**did not help**)
he/she/it helped (**did not help**)

Future Simple

used for actions and events in the future

I/we/you/they **will help** (**will not help**)
he/she/it **will help** (**will not help**)

Continuous/Progressive tenses

Present Continuous/Progressive

used for actions or events that are happening or developing now, for future plans, or to show that an event is repeated

I **am helping** (**am not helping**)
we/you/they **are helping** (**are not helping**)
he/she/it **is helping** (**is not helping**)

Past Continuous/Progressive

used for actions or events in the past that were not yet finished or that were interrupted

I **was helping** (**was not helping**)
we/you/they **were helping**
(**were not helping**)
he/she/it **was helping** (**was not helping**)

Future Continuous/Progressive

used for actions or events in the future that will continue into the future

I/we/you/they **will be helping**
(**will not be helping**)
he/she/it **will be helping**
(**will not be helping**)

Simple tenses**Present Perfect**

used to show that an event happened or an action was completed at some time before the present

I/we/you/they **have helped**
(**have not helped**)

he/she/it **has helped**
(**has not helped**)

Past Perfect (or 'Pluperfect')

usually used to show that an event happened or an action was completed before a particular time in the past

I/we/you/they **had helped**
(**had not helped**)

he/she/it **had helped**
(**had not helped**)

Future Perfect

used to show that something will be completed before a particular time in the future

I/we/you/they **will have helped**
(**will not have helped**)

he/she/it **will have helped**
(**will not have helped**)

Continuous/Progressive tenses**Present Perfect****Continuous/Progressive**

used for actions or events that started in the past but are still happening now, or for past actions that only finished recently and whose effects are seen now

I/we/you/they **have been helping**
(**have not been helping**)

he/she/it **has been helping**
(**has not been helping**)

Present Continuous/Progressive

used for actions or events that happened for a period of time but were completed before a particular time in the past

I/we/you/they **had been helping**
(**had not been helping**)

he/she/it **had been helping**
(**had not been helping**)

Future Perfect**Continuous/Progressive**

used for actions or events that will already be happening at particular time in the future

I/we/you/they **will have been helping**
(**will not have been helping**)

he/she/it **will have been helping**
(**will not have been helping**)