

## Past Simple and Past Continuous

(**past continuous**) is the long action often interrupted / broken by a short action  
(**past simple**)

[-----X ----->  
I was having a shower when the phone rang

[-----X ----->  
I was walking to school when I saw the accident

**What is the long action and what is the short action in these sentences?**

The alarm went off when the burglar was trying to break in to the house.

The man was sleeping when the doorbell rang.

She was cleaning the kitchen when the window broke.

The computer switched off when he was typing up his project.

**Finish these sentences with a suitable verb:  
(One in the past simple & one in the past continuous)**

The cat was \_\_\_\_\_ when the mouse \_\_\_\_\_ into the kitchen.

The woman \_\_\_\_\_ when the aeroplane was \_\_\_\_\_ off.

He was \_\_\_\_\_ online when the electricity \_\_\_\_\_.

The window \_\_\_\_\_ when he was \_\_\_\_\_ a movie.

She was \_\_\_\_\_ when the bird \_\_\_\_\_ into the kitchen.

He was \_\_\_\_\_ English when the teacher \_\_\_\_\_.

The man \_\_\_\_\_ when his friend was \_\_\_\_\_ on the phone.

She was \_\_\_\_\_ for her friend when the bus \_\_\_\_\_.

**Can you write these correctly?**

when / the / having / a shower / She / phone / was / rang

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when / the doorbell / He / rang / was / sleeping

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reading / She / heard / the noise / was / she / when

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They / standing / when / happened / were / at the / the crash / bus stop

---

walking / when / fell over / He / was / he / to school

---

went off / doing / the alarm / She / an exam / was / when

---

painting / He / fell off / his ladder / when / was / his wall / he

---

playing / They / when / it / were / football / to snow / started

---

shopping / He / saw / his ex-girlfriend / was / in Tesco / he / when

---

lying / on the beach / They / when / started / were / to rain / it

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**Insert the correct verb form.**

were playing	were sleeping	were walking	was driving		
was running	was making	were doing	was typing	was cleaning	
were dancing	broke	broke in	smashed	attacked	
heard	broke down	crashed	went off	fell over	found

1. They \_\_\_\_\_ when the thief \_\_\_\_\_.
2. He \_\_\_\_\_ in the park when a dog \_\_\_\_\_ him.
3. She \_\_\_\_\_ some bread when the bowl \_\_\_\_\_.
4. They \_\_\_\_\_ their homework when they \_\_\_\_\_ the noise.
5. He \_\_\_\_\_ when his computer \_\_\_\_\_.
6. They \_\_\_\_\_ at the disco when the alarm \_\_\_\_\_.
7. She \_\_\_\_\_ the house when she \_\_\_\_\_ the ring.
8. He \_\_\_\_\_ when the car \_\_\_\_\_.
9. They \_\_\_\_\_ basketball when the referee \_\_\_\_\_.
10. They \_\_\_\_\_ in the park when she fell and \_\_\_\_\_ her leg.

## Past simple and Past continuous

was walking	saw	crashed	was driving	rang
was painting	was running	fell off	were chatting	started
were studying	called	were having	told	were dancing
stopped	were cleaning	was raining	found	slipped

<b>Past Continuous</b> ←-----→ <b>long action</b>	<b>Past Simple</b> ←-----→ <b>short action</b>

- I \_\_\_\_\_ down the street when I \_\_\_\_\_ the accident.
- They \_\_\_\_\_ at the disco when the music \_\_\_\_\_.
- They \_\_\_\_\_ online when the phone \_\_\_\_\_.
- She \_\_\_\_\_ in the park when it \_\_\_\_\_ to rain.
- They \_\_\_\_\_ the apartment when they \_\_\_\_\_ the necklace.

6. We \_\_\_\_\_ for the exam when our friend \_\_\_\_\_ at the door.
7. We \_\_\_\_\_ a coffee when she \_\_\_\_\_ me her secret.
8. It \_\_\_\_\_ in the city when I \_\_\_\_\_ on the street.
9. He \_\_\_\_\_ very fast when he \_\_\_\_\_ his car.
10. He \_\_\_\_\_ his house when he \_\_\_\_\_ the ladder.

### **Error Correction. Right or wrong?**

1. They were studying English when the phone ring.
2. I were relaxing on the sofa when the lights went out.
3. We were dancing at the party when the police arrived.
4. The alarm went in when he was cleaning the windows.
5. The boy tell her his news while they were having coffee.
6. The engine stoped working when the plane was taking off.
7. The woman screamed while she was watching the horror movie.
8. The dentist was cleaning my teeth when the doorbell rang.
9. It started to rain while I was relaxing in the beach.
10. The couple were travelling to Cork when the accident happened.
11. The thief stole the bicycle while they was watching the movie.
12. I was cycling in work when the tree fell up.