

Verb Tenses

You are probably already familiar with the *past*, *present*, and *future*. However, we refer to many more specific time frames in our language. Think about how some actions start and finish in the past while other activities start in the past and may continue into the present or beyond. There are different verb tenses to help us communicate the exact time frame we are talking about.

Here is a chart of the verb tenses that occur in English. Make sure you understand the time frame indicated by each verb tense. If you are unsure of any of these, ask your LIA or an available Writing Center tutor.

Note that the progressive tenses are also known as *continuous* tenses.

<u>Tenses</u>	<u>Examples</u>
Present	Joe <i>walks</i> .
Past	Joe <i>walked</i> .
Future	Joe <i>will walk</i> .
Present Perfect	Joe <i>has walked</i> all day.
Past Perfect	Joe <i>had walked</i> five miles.
Future Perfect	Joe <i>will have walked</i> ten miles by tonight.
Present progressive	Joe <i>is walking</i> to raise money for AIDS.
Past progressive	Joe <i>was walking</i> with his girlfriend.
Future progressive	Joe <i>will be tired</i> by tonight.
Present perfect progressive	Joe and Jen <i>have not been walking</i> together before.
Past perfect progressive	They <i>had been hoping</i> not to argue while they walked.
Future perfect Progressive	By the end of the walk they <i>will have been arguing</i> for ten miles and five hours.

It is important to use the tenses correctly and to keep our verb tenses consistent. For instance, you will want to make sure you do not unintentionally jump around between time frames or you will confuse your reader. On the next page you will find practice correcting sentences with inconsistent verb tenses.

Correcting Shifted Tenses

Each of the following sentences shifts verb tenses instead of staying in the same time frame. Revise each sentence so that its tenses are consistent.

1. After Yuko complete English 290, she took English 100.

2. I had always liked living in Santa Cruz until the cost of housing becomes too high.

3. My class notes contain rules for English verb tenses, but they didn't give enough examples.

4. Whenever my brother doesn't have enough money, he came to me for help.

5. I have been saving money for five months, but I kept spending it on my family.

6. I have been waiting for you to enter my life since I am a little girl.

7. I had given my baby a bath that morning, but he has got dirty again.

8. Diego enjoyed playing football before he has his car accident.

9. The students have decided to buy their teacher a present because she had taught them so much.

10. I had been going to the plaza between classes, but now it had become too cold.
