

REVIEW OF TENSES

Source: Emmerson – Business Grammar Builder

I. Present Simple x Present Continuous – Přítomný prostý x Přítomný průběhový

⇒ TASK Match sentences 1-5 with their uses a)-e).

- a) permanent facts
- b) habits and repeated actions
- c) actions in progress at the moment of speaking
- d) temporary actions happening "around now"
- e) current trends and changing situations

- 1 These days we´re selling more and more of our products abroad.
- 2 Look! They´re selling malt whisky at 20% discount in duty free!
- 3 We´re selling the new model, but we don´t have any in stock right now.
- 4 We usually sell around 40% of our annual total at Christmas time.
- 5 We sell a full range of consumer electronics, from TVs to cameras.

1e 2c 3d 4b 5a

⇒ TASK Complete the newspaper article about the Brazilian company Gerdau by using the words from the list below. Each set of words fills two spaces.

~~is becoming / companies~~ ~~is making / flexible~~ ~~is attracting / attention~~
~~is approaching / market share~~ ~~is getting / right~~ ~~is raising / plants~~
~~is beginning / expectations~~ ~~is modernising / law~~

Gerdau: a Brazilian success story

Gerdau, the Brazilian steel maker, **(1a) is becoming** one of Latin America´s most successful **(1b) companies**. It **(2a)** _____ productivity in its **(2b)** _____; it **(3a)** _____ the price and timing of its takeovers of smaller companies **(3b)** _____; and, most important, it **(4a)** _____ to understand investors´ **(4b)** _____ . Investors want a firm that´s focused and transparent, with a simple share structure, and that´s exactly what Gerdau gives them.

The only problem in the short term is a problem of success. Gerdau (5a) _____ a 50% (5b) _____ in its domestic market, and so it (6a) _____ the (6b) _____ of Cade, the monopolies authority.

These days it´s much easier to do business in Brazil. The government is simplifying the company-tax structure, it **(7a)** _____ the labour market more **(7b)** _____ by changing the restrictive labour laws, and it **(8a)** _____ company **(8b)** _____ in general.

2 is raising / plants
3 is getting / right
4 beginning / expectations

5 is approaching / market share
6 is attracting / attention
7 is making / flexible
8 is modernising / law

📖 THEORY

State verbs:

Some verbs describe states, not actions. Verbs like this are not normally used in the continuous form of any tense.

I **notice** that you've moved your desk. (NOT ~~I'm noticing~~)

Sorry, I **don't understand**. (NOT ~~I'm not understanding~~)

How much **does** it **cost**? (NOT ~~is it costing~~)

It **weighs** 4kg with the packaging. (NOT ~~It is weighing~~)

These examples are in the present simple though we are talking about temporary situations.

State verbs include:

- the senses: *appear, hear, look, like, notice, see, seem, smell, sound, taste (=to have a flavour)*
- feelings: *dislike, fear, hate, like, love, prefer, want, wish*
- thinking: *agree, believe, doubt, expect (=believe), feel (=believe), forget, imagine, know, realise, recognise, suppose, suspect, think (=believe), understand*
- possession: *belong to, contain, have (=possess), include, own, possess*
- being: *be, consist of, exist*
- other verbs: *cost, depend on, fit, involve, matter, measure (=have length), mean, need, satisfy, surprise, weigh*

Analysts **expect** that shares in the demerged P&O Princess Cruises will trade initially at about 400p a share, which **means** that P&O is currently undervalued. However, some analysts **think** that the arrival of new cruise ships on the market will produce a fall in profits.

Some of the verbs mentioned in the previous list can have a "state" meaning and an "action" meaning. Examples include **be, have, taste, think**.

- **Our suppliers are** usually very helpful. (state)
- **Our suppliers are being** very helpful at the moment. (action)
- **I have** two sisters. (state)
- **I'm having** problems with my computer. (action)
- This soup **tastes** salty. (state)
- I **'m tasting** the soup to see if it needs more salt. (action)
- **I think** you're right. (state)
- **I'm thinking** about changing my job. (action)

⇒ TASK Complete this article about the magazine TIME OUT by using words from the list below. Decide whether to put the verbs into the present simple or present continuous.

own; look for; move; investigate; rely; want; provide; try to

Time Out: time to expand

Time Out, the London entertainment magazine, has plans for expansion. It already **(1) owns** the monthly magazine *Paris Passion*, and now it **(2) _____** beyond France to other markets such as Argentina and Japan. Tony Elliott, *Time Out*'s founder, says he **(3) _____** local people to initiate and run the magazine, as *Time Out*'s London office doesn't have the cash or management time. Elliott also has plans for the website, *Timeout.com*, which was launched in 1995 and **(4) _____** information about more than 30 cities. It **(5) _____** on advertising revenue and a small amount of money from ticket sales to survive. But as *Time Out* changes and expands, Tony Elliott **(6) _____** persuade advertisers in the printed version to take more space on the Internet site. Also, he **(7) _____** the possibility of charging visitors to the site for access to some information. Despite these expansion plans, Elliott says a flotation on the stock market is out of the question. He **(8) _____** to keep control of the business he has built up.

2 is moving 3 is looking for 4 provides 5 relies 6 is trying to 7 is investigating 8 wants

⇒ TASK Complete these texts with one of these set of verbs, using each verb once only. Choose either the present simple or present continuous for all the missing verbs in each text. (Hewings, *Advance grammar in use*)

**say/tell/ do talk/threaten/negotiate recommend/warn/apologise
spend/recover/find suggest/hope/promise**

1 She **is** only just **recovering** from the operation and **is** still **finding** it difficult to move about. At the moment she **is spending** most of her time in bed.

2 What I _____ is that you _____ well in your job. Really! I _____ you the truth.

3 I _____ I'll do everything I can to help you to find a flat, although I _____ that you also advertise in the local newspaper. It can be difficult to find accommodation, but I _____ it won't be too long before you've got somewhere.

4 The fishing unions _____ with their employers for a pay rise. If there is no agreement by next week, they _____ to strike and even _____ about blockading ports around the country.

5 I _____ for the delay in replying to your letter. To place an order for the book you require, I _____ that you phone Mrs Jones in our sales department. I _____ you, however, that delivery time is likely to be about six weeks.

2 I'm saying, are doing, I'm telling

3 promise, suggest, hope

4 are negotiating, are threatening, are even talking

5 apologise, recommend, warn

⇒ TASK Complete the sentences by putting each verb into a form of the present simple or present continuous. In each sentence the verbs may be in the same or different tenses.

1 Each time inflation _____ /go up/, people _____ /demand/ higher wages.

2 Inflation _____ /fall/ quite quickly, which _____ /mean/ that the government can keep interest rates low.

3 _____ /you, wait/ for Victoria Chambers? I _____ /not, think/ she'll be long.

4 What exactly _____ /our customers /want/? Nobody around here _____ /seem/ to know.

5 Carlo doesn't have much experience of this situation. I _____ /hope/ he _____ /know/ what he _____ /do/.

6 What exactly _____ /you, mean/? I _____ /not, understand/.

7 What exactly _____ /you, say/? _____ /you, want/ to renegotiate the whole contract?

8 _____ /your chicken, taste/ OK? The food here is usually very good, but of course it all _____ /depend/ on which particular chef _____ /work/ in the kitchen on that day.

1 goes up/demand 2 is falling/means 3 Are you waiting/don't think 4 do our customers want/seems 5 hope/knows/is doing 6 do you mean/don't understand 7 are you saying/Do you want 8 Does your chicken taste/depends/ is working

II. Past Simple x Past Continuous = Minulý prostý x Minulý průběhový

📖 THEORY

PAST CONTINUOUS - USES

- The past continuous is used to describe a situation in progress in the past.

I was waiting in the departure lounge for more than two hours.

- There can be several situations in progress, happening at the same time:

The early 1970s was a time when IBM was beginning to lose its way and many skilled people were leaving to set up their own businesses. Computing was entering a new age.

- The past continuous is used to give information about the background situation. The separate, completed actions that happen during or after this period are in the past simple.

I came in to Oracle as it was recovering from the recession of the early 1990s. The business unit I joined had an ageing product line that was declining by 30% a year in sales. Within a year we completely turned that unit round.

- If we do not mention the background situation then the separate actions are in the past simple in the normal way:

When I arrived I registered at reception and went straight to the conference hall.

PAST CONTINUOUS – TIME EXPRESSIONS

- We can use *when*, *while* or *as* with the past continuous to mean “during the time that something was happening”:

While Plattner and Dietmar Hopp *were developing* the first real-time order processing at SAP, Claus Wellenreuther *was writing* the financial software.

PAST SIMPLE OR PAST CONTINUOUS??

- Sometimes the past simple or past continuous can be used. The past simple suggests a separate, complete action or event. The past continuous emphasizes the duration of the action.

We discussed the report and agreed that Peter should prepare some detailed figures before the next meeting.

We were discussing the report for over an hour. Eventually we agreed that Peter should prepare some detailed figures before the next meeting.

⇒ TASK Complete the sentences by putting the verbs in brackets into either the past simple or past continuous. Sometimes the same tense is used twice; sometimes different tenses are used.

1 What did **you eat** (eat) when you **went** (go) to Paris?

2 While I **was negotiating** (negotiate) the contract, my boss **phoned** (phone) me to say that he wanted completely different conditions.

3 The last time something like this _____ (happen), she _____ (call) a press conference immediately.

4 **Anne** _____ (**explain**) **her proposal when Pedro** _____ (**interrupt**) **her**.

5 We never got the chance to interview him. While we _____ (investigate) the incident, he _____ (resign).

6 **When he** _____ (**finish**) **reading the article, he** _____ (**give**) **it to me**.

7 Everyone _____ (wait) for the meeting to begin when he _____ (call) to say that he was stuck in a traffic jam.

8 When I _____ (clean) the piece I _____ (drop) it by mistake.

9 I _____ (find) the missing file while I _____ (look) for some other documents.

10 When Tim _____ (arrive), we _____ (tell) him what had happened.

3 happened/called 4 was explaining/interrupted 5 were investigating/resigned
6 finished/gave 7 was waiting/called 8 was cleaning/dropped
9 found/was looking 10 arrived/told

III. Past Perfect Simple and Continuous– Předminulý čas prostý a průběhový

⇒ TASK Complete the sentences with the proper forms of the verbs given (Past Perfect Simple, Past Perfect Continuous, **Past Simple**)

1 David **knew** he **had seen** her somewhere before, but he couldn't remember where. (KNOW, SEE)

2 **When I got to the office I realised I had left all my papers behind. (REALISE, LEAVE)**

3 **Ellen was sure they hadn't received the invoice, but she checked one more time. (RECEIVE, CHECK)**

4 I thought we **had already chosen** the name for the new product. (CHOOSE)

5 Around 1993 Korean corporations **started** turning to Park to acquire companies in the US or Europe. By this time, he **had built up** sufficient contacts to help them. (START, BUILD UP)

6 I **'d been working** on the project for two months before they decided to cancel it. (WORK)

7 I **hadn't been sleeping** well, so I was quite tired. (SLEEP)

8 How long **had you been working** on the project before they cancelled it? (you, WORK)

9 Before he **left** IBM he **had been putting** together a software package for the UK-based chemical company ICI. He **had been working** on this project during 1971 and 1972. (LEAVE, PUT, WORK)

10 I **had already decided** what to do before he called me. (already, DECIDE)

11 At the time I still **hadn't decided** what to do. (not DECIDE)

12 At the time I still **didn't know** what to do. (not KNOW)

13 We arrived at Sue's office after she **left / had left**. (LEAVE)

14 When we arrived at Sue's office, she **had left / was leaving**. (LEAVE)

15 The economic situation was quite healthy. The central bank **had lowered** interest rates because inflation **had been falling** steadily for several years. (LOWER, FALL)

16 By 1997 the national debt **had doubled** and the British economy was once again at risk of repeating the pattern of inflation followed by recession. (DOUBLE)

📄 THEORY

USED TO/ WOULD + infinitive

Used to describes a habit or state in the past. There is no present form (for present habits we use present simple).

*"Price dictates what motorists put into their petrol tanks. Lots of people who **used to have** their doubts about diesel from biological sources are now regular users", says D. Enders, who owns an independent filling station in Germany.*

Used to normally suggests that the action or situation is no longer true and so makes a contrast with the present:

I used to work in marketing. (= but now I work in another area).

He used to be really enthusiastic about his job. (= but now he isn't)

I didn't use to work in marketing.

Would is used in the same way as used to, but it only describes repeated actions in the past, not states.

In the old days we used to / would make three copies of all documents for the files.

Our company used to belong to an American multinational. (NOT would belong)

⇒ TASK Alan is talking about his first job. Complete what he says with the best form of the verb in brackets. Choose between the past simple, past continuous or past perfect.

Interviewer: So, Alan why did you quit your last job?

Alan: Well, at the time I (1) **was working** (work) as a financial officer for an International Accountancy firm in London. I (2) _____ (be) in the same company for three years.

I: How (3) _____ (you/get) the job?

A: Just after I (4) _____ (finish) university I (5) _____ (go) to a job fair. I still (6) _____ (decide) what I wanted to do and I was interested to see what kind of jobs there (7) _____ (be) at the fair. While I (8) _____ (look) at information on one of the stands for a large international accountancy firm, someone (9) _____ (give) me an application form to fill in. I thought this might be a good career opportunity for me as I (10) _____ (already, take) some accountancy exams for my degree. So I (11) _____ (complete) the form and (12) _____ (send) it off. They (13) _____ (interview) me the following week and I got the job. At first, I (14) _____ (feel) satisfied with the job, but as time went by, things (15) _____ change and I began to hate working there.

I: So what (16) _____ (go) wrong?

A: Well, the situation was this. (17) _____ (work) for a person who was very difficult, er...very demanding....never satisfied. What's more, my job (18) _____ (become) too repetitive and I really wanted to do something more creative. So, that's why I resigned... I (19) _____ (not have) another job to go to, but I knew I (20) _____ (have) to make a change.

2 had been 3 did you get 4 finished/had finished 5 went 6 hadn't decided 7 were 8 was looking 9 gave 10 had already taken 11 completed 12 sent 13 interviewed 14 felt 15 changed 16 went 17 was working 18 was becoming / had become 19 didn't have 20 had

IV. Present Perfect Simple x Present Perfect Continuous = Předpřítomný čas prostý x Předpřítomný čas průběhový

⇒ TASK Complete the sentences with the correct forms of the verbs in brackets.

1 Have you **ever spoken** in front of a large audience? (ever, SPEAK)

2 We have been in business for 37 years, so the Internet to us is just another way of collecting orders. (BE)

3 UPS became a worldwide Olympics sponsor in 1994, and since then it **has handled** the Atlanta games in 1996 and the 1998 Japan winter games. (HANDLE)

4 This is the first time I **have been interviewed** for a job with a multinational company. (INTERVIEW)

5 She **'s been** to visit our suppliers. She says everything seems to be OK. (BE)

6 She **'s gone** to visit our suppliers. I hope she will say everything is OK there. (GO)

7 I **have been writing** the whole morning. I **have written** one new chapter of my diploma thesis. (WRITE, WRITE)

8 Why are you so tired? I **have been revising** for the exam. I **have revised** almost everything. (REVISE, REVISE)

9 I **have been working/ have worked** on this project since December. (WORK)

10 We **'ve had** this new boss for 3 months now. (HAVE)

11 Since she left, we **have been having** wonderful time. (HAVE)

12 She's lost her temper with the boss. It's the second time, it **has happened**. (HAPPEN)

13 He is new to my colleagues but I **have known** him for ages. We **'ve been** friends since we **left** grammar school. (KNOW, BE, LEAVE)

14 I **have lived** in Brno for 6 years. (LIVE)

⇒ TASK Look at the paired sentences below. Match each one with situation a) or b).

1 Inflation has fallen by 1%.	a. Two years ago it was 4%. Last year it was 3%.
2 Inflation fell by 1%.	b. Last month it was 4%. This month it is 3%.
3 I think I've lost the file.	a. I can't find the file. I wonder where I put it?
4 Sorry, I lost the file.	b. The file has gone and I'll never find it.
5 Has Jane called this morning?	a. Jane promised to call this morning. It's 11 a.m.
6 Did Jane call this morning?	b. Jane promised to call this morning. It's 2 p.m.
7 Sales improved.	a. Last year sales were poor. This year they are better.
8 Sales have improved.	b. Sales were poor initially. A year later they were better.
9 How long have you worked here?	a. In 1999.
10 When did you start working here?	b. Since 1999.

1B2A 3A4B 5A6B 7B8A 9B10A

⇒ TASK Match the sentences and their explanations.

1 I've been waiting for an hour. Why are you so late. 2 I've been waiting for an hour and he hasn't arrived yet.	a. I will continue waiting. b. the waiting is finished.
1 I've written the report. 2 I've been writing the report.	a. the finished report is in my mind b. the act of writing is in my mind

1B 2A 1A 2B

⇒ TASK Complete the text with the correct forms of the verbs given in brackets.

The technology-heavy Nasdaq index **has been falling** (FALL) for three weeks, and **is** (BE) now 34% lower than its March peak. Shares of companies announcing poor results **have fallen** (FALL) by a third or a half after profit warnings.