

Verb Tenses to Convey Times, Sequences, and Conditions

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

Skilled writers pick the verb tense that matches the TIME, the SEQUENCE of events, or the CONDITION described. Use past perfect for an action before another past action. In if/when sentences about general truths, pair simple present with simple present ('If it rains, the field floods').

PRACTICE

Choose the sentence that uses verb tenses correctly.

- Which sentence shows the correct SEQUENCE of past events?
 - After Sofia had finished her homework, she walked the dog around the block.
 - After Sofia finishes her homework, she walked the dog around the block.
 - After Sofia had finished her homework, she walks the dog around the block.
 - After Sofia will finish her homework, she walked the dog around the block.
- Which sentence correctly expresses a GENERAL CONDITION?
 - If you mixed red and blue, you got purple.
 - If you mix red and blue, you will get purple tomorrow.
 - If you mix red and blue, you get purple.
 - If you will mix red and blue, you get purple.
- Which sentence uses verb tense correctly to show two SIMULTANEOUS past actions?
 - While the choir sings, the band had played a quiet melody.
 - While the choir had sung, the band plays a quiet melody.
 - While the choir will sing, the band played a quiet melody.
 - While the choir sang, the band played a quiet melody.
- Which sentence shows a future event that depends on another future event?
 - If it will snow tomorrow, school is canceled.
 - If it snows tomorrow, school will be canceled.
 - If it snowed tomorrow, school will be canceled.
 - If it had snowed tomorrow, school had been canceled.



5. Which sentence uses tenses correctly?
- A. By the time the alarm rang, Marcus had already eaten breakfast and was tying his shoes.
 - B. By the time the alarm rang, Marcus already eats breakfast and was tying his shoes.
 - C. By the time the alarm rang, Marcus had already eaten breakfast and is tying his shoes.
 - D. By the time the alarm will ring, Marcus had already eaten breakfast and was tying his shoes.
6. Which sentence shows the correct sequence?
- A. Lily realizes that she forgot her water bottle at school.
 - B. Lily realized that she forgets her water bottle at school.
 - C. Lily realized that she had forgotten her water bottle at school.
 - D. Lily realized that she will forget her water bottle at school.
7. Which is the BEST way to describe an ongoing action right now?
- A. The chef cooks the soup at this very moment.
 - B. The chef is cooking the soup at this very moment.
 - C. The chef cooked the soup at this very moment.
 - D. The chef has cooked the soup at this very moment.
8. Which sentence uses verb tense correctly to talk about a HABITUAL past action?
- A. Every Saturday last summer, Grandma was baked fresh bread.
 - B. Every Saturday last summer, Grandma has baked fresh bread.
 - C. Every Saturday last summer, Grandma will bake fresh bread.
 - D. Every Saturday last summer, Grandma baked fresh bread.
9. Choose the BEST sentence to show that one past action interrupted another past action.
- A. I read my book when the lights go out.
 - B. I had read my book when the lights had gone out.
 - C. I was reading my book when the lights went out.
 - D. I will be reading my book when the lights went out.
10. Rewrite this sentence so the verb tenses are consistent and the sequence is clear: 'Before the storm hits, the campers pack up their tents and ran to the car.'
- _____
- _____



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9 A B C D
- 10

Explanations

1. A	Two past actions in order: the earlier one in past perfect ('had finished'), the later one in simple past ('walked'). B uses present for the first action; C shifts the second action to present 'walks'; D uses future tense in a past-time sentence.
2. C	A general truth uses simple present in BOTH clauses ('If X, Y'). C follows that pattern. A uses past in both, suggesting it only happened once. B switches to future in the result clause. D uses 'will' inside the if-clause — never correct in a conditional 'if'.
3. D	Two past actions happening at the same time take simple past in BOTH clauses. D does that. A mixes present 'sings' with past perfect. B mixes past perfect with present 'plays'. C inserts future 'will sing' into a past sentence.
4. B	Real future condition: simple PRESENT in the if-clause + WILL in the result clause ('If X happens, Y will happen'). B follows the rule. A puts 'will' in the if-clause (never used). C puts past in the if-clause about tomorrow. D uses past perfect about a future day.
5. A	Sequence: earliest action in past perfect ('had eaten'), simultaneous past action in past progressive ('was tying'). A is consistent. B shifts to present 'eats'; C shifts to present 'is tying'; D mixes future 'will ring' into a past-time sentence.
6. C	The forgetting happened BEFORE the realizing (both past) — past perfect 'had forgotten' for the earlier action. A puts both in present. B mixes past 'realized' with present 'forgets'. D uses future for an action that already happened.
7. B	Action happening RIGHT NOW = present progressive 'is cooking'. Simple present in A describes a routine, not a moment. C is past. D is present perfect (the cooking is finished, not ongoing).
8. D	A repeated past habit takes SIMPLE PAST. D is correct. A uses passive 'was baked' (Grandma is the baker, not the thing baked). B uses present perfect (links to now). C uses future for a finished past summer.
9. C	Interrupted past action = past progressive ('was reading') + simple past ('went out'). C is the textbook pattern. A mixes simple past with present 'go'. B uses past perfect for both, losing the 'interruption' meaning. D uses future progressive in a past sentence.
10.	Answer: Before the storm hit, the campers had packed up their tents and ran to the car. (Or: Before the storm hits, the campers pack up their tents and run to the car.) Accept any version where ALL verbs use the same time frame and the sequence is logical. Past version: 'storm hit' + 'had packed' + 'ran'. Present version: 'storm hits' + 'pack' + 'run'. Mark wrong if the student leaves a mid-sentence shift (e.g., present 'pack' with past 'ran') or invents a future tense not in the original.

