

# Tenses and the time adverbs used with them

The present perfect continuous tense

The present perfect continuous tense is commonly used with the time expressions since and for.

It has been raining since yesterday.

I have been working in this company for 3 years.

My sister has been preparing for the civil services exam for six months.

Simple past tense

The simple past tense is commonly used with time expressions referring to the past.

Examples are: *yesterday, last year, ago, in 2006* etc.

My father came here yesterday.

I saw him last week.

His father died two years ago.

The adverbs *never, always, seldom, often, frequently, occasionally, once, twice, thrice* etc., can also be used with the simple past tense.

He never invited me to his parties.

I met him once.

She seldom stepped out of her home.

She frequently changed jobs.

Past continuous tense

The past continuous tense is used to talk about actions and situations that were in progress at a particular point of time in the past. When we use the past continuous tense we usually also state when that particular activity was in progress. For this purpose, we use a time expression or a time clause.

The children were doing their homework when their dad returned home from work.

The light went off when I was reading.

# Tenses and the time adverbs used with them

The past perfect tense

The past perfect tense is not normally used alone. It is used to denote the earlier of two past actions. We use the simple past tense for the latter action.

He had finished his studies before he joined the army.  
They had signed the agreement before I knew about it.