

CLASS: JSS 3

SUBJECT: ENGLISH STUDIES

ASPECT: GRAMMAR

TOPIC: Verb Tenses

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After this lesson, students should be able to:

- define Verb Tenses
- mention the types of Verb Tenses
- give examples of the types of verb Tenses
- use Verb Tenses correctly in speech and writing
- demonstrate understanding of verb Tenses.

What Are Verb Tenses?

The tense of a verb tells you when a person did something or when something existed or happened. In English, there are three main tenses: the present, the past, and the future.

The present:

The present tense (e.g. *I am, she works, we swim, they believe*) is also called the **present simple** or **simple present**. It's mainly used in the following ways:

1. To describe things that are currently happening or that are currently or always the case (*I **love** chocolate ice cream; my parents **are** in New York this week; he **has** fair hair and blue eyes; some birds eat worms and insects*).
2. To talk about something that exists or happens regularly (*she **goes** out every Saturday night; it always **rains** here in winter; I **start** work at 7.30 a.m.*).
3. To refer to a future situation in certain cases and in some subordinate clauses (*the bus **arrives** in London at 6 p.m.; I'll make us some coffee when we **get** home*).

The past:

The past tense (e.g. *I was, he talked, we had, they worked*) is also called the **past simple** or **simple past**. As its description implies, it's used to talk about things or situations which happened in the past, that is, before the present time of speaking. Its main uses are as follows:

1. To refer to an event or situation which happened once and is now finished (*I **met** Lisa yesterday; we **ate** a huge breakfast this morning; they **walked** ten miles that day; you told me that before*).

2. To describe a situation that lasted for a longer time in the past but is now finished (*he **went** to college for four years; my family **lived** in Oxford in the 1980s; I **loved** her for ages but never **told** her*).
3. To talk about an event that happened regularly or repeatedly but is now over (*she **called** for help over and over again; we **ate** out every night last week; I **phoned** him three times today*).

The future:

The future tense (e.g. *I shall [or will] go; he will talk; we shall [or will] have; they will work*) is used to refer to things that haven't yet happened at the present time of speaking, but which are due, expected, or likely to occur in the future. Here are the main situations in which the future is used:

1. To give or ask for information about the future (*you **will be** in California tomorrow; how long **will** the journey **take**?; OK, I'll **write** that report on Thursday*).
2. To talk about things that we think are likely or possible to happen in the future, but which aren't completely certain (*I think she'll **retire** soon; he **won't** [will not] **stay** married to her for long; you'll never **lose** weight, you like food too much*).
3. To refer to conditional situations, namely things that will or may happen if something else occurs (*if it's hot I'll **go** swimming later; you'll **get** stressed out if you work all the time*).
4. To make promises or threats, or to state decisions at the time of speaking (*Fine, I'll **call** you soon; Are you going into town? We'll **give** you a lift; I'll never **speak** to you again*).

The future tense is formed with *will (or shall)* and the infinitive of the verb without 'to'. **Learn more about when to use will or shall.**

Continuous and perfect tenses

There are two further types of tense: the **continuous** and the **perfect**. These tenses are sometimes referred to as **aspects** rather than tenses. The term **aspect** is used in grammar to talk about the form of a verb that shows, for example, whether the action happens once or repeatedly, is completed or still continuing.

Continuous:

These tenses (also called **progressive** tenses) are used to talk about actions that continue for a period of time. They are formed with the relevant tense of the **auxiliary verb** to be and the **present participle** of the main verb. There are three main continuous tenses:

1. The **present continuous** (I am working)
2. The **past continuous** (I was working)
3. The **future continuous** (I will be working)

Perfect

Perfect tenses are typically used to talk about actions that are completed by the present or a particular point in the past or future. They are formed with the relevant tense of the auxiliary verb *to have* and the **past participle** of the main verb. There are three main perfect tenses:

1. The **present perfect** (I have worked)
2. the **past perfect** (I had worked)
3. The **future perfect** (I will have worked)

Perfect continuous

There is a final set of tenses which combine features of the perfect and continuous tenses. They are formed and used as follows:

1. The **present perfect continuous** (I have been working): used to talk about how long something has continued up till now (I have been working there for a week).
2. The **past perfect continuous** (I had been working): used to talk about something which continued up to a particular moment in the past but is now completed (I had been working there for a week before I resigned)
3. The **future perfect continuous** (I will have been working): used to talk about something which is expected to end by a particular time in the future (By December, I will have been working there for 6 months)

ASSIGNMENT: 1. Explain the term, “verb tenses” in your own words.

2. Write out five sentences each, of the following verb tenses: present, past and future tense.

3. In a tabular form, write ten examples each, of the present continuous tense and the present perfect tense.

TEACHER: Mrs Oloyede Ethel O.