

**Present tense** is used to convey something that is presently occurring. Simply put, it is happening in the present (regardless of whether it has also happened in the past or will continue to happen in the future). For example:

I am happy that the Spurs won.  
She goes to work at 8 o'clock every morning.  
The stars are beautiful tonight.

**Past tense** is used when talking about something that has already occurred and is no longer occurring. The action being described must no longer be happening. For example:

She bought a new laptop.  
I went fishing this weekend.

**Future tense** signifies that something is yet to occur. The simple form of a verb is usually used in combination with *will* or *shall* or with *am*, *is*, or *are* followed by *going to*. The tense of the verb can also be defined by the use of an adverb such as "tomorrow." For example:

I will probably have a sandwich for lunch.  
I am going to go to the gym.  
Would you like to go to a movie later?

**Present progressive tense** is used to describe something that is continuing to occur at the time it is being written about. This tense combines *am*, *is*, or *are* with a verb ending in *ing*. For example:

I am eating potato chips.  
Are you going to the store?

**Past progressive tense** conveys something that happened at the same time during which something else was happening. Just like with regular past tense, the subject matter being discussed must have already ended. Past progressive tense combines *was* or *were* with a verb ending in *ing*.

I was taking a nap when you called me.  
They were all smiling when I took the picture.

**Future progressive tense** addresses something that will happen in the future and will continue to happen. It combines *will be* or *shall be* with *ing*. For example:

We will be going to South Padre for Spring Break.  
They will be serving cake and ice cream at the party.

**Present perfect tense** combines *has* or *have* with the past participle form of a verb to convey something that has already begun but is ongoing. For example:

She has traveled all over the world.

We have eaten lunch there every Sunday for the past month.

**Past perfect tense** conveys the occurrence of something that happened before something else. Both events must have already happened and concluded. It combines *had* with a past participle. For example:

When I arrived downtown, the parade had already passed through.

**Future perfect tense** addresses something that is going to happen before something else that is also going to happen. Future perfect tense combines *will have* with a past participle. For example:

When we finally get to the party, everyone will have already been there for a few hours.

**Present perfect progressive tense** addresses something that has already begun, is still happening, and will continue to happen. It combines *has* or *have been* with a present participle. For example:

I have been wanting to check out that new restaurant.

**Past perfect progressive tense** is used when writing about an ongoing past action that occurred before another past action. It uses *had been* in conjunction with the present perfect form of a verb. For example:

Before you came over, I had been listening to music for a few hours.

**Future perfect progressive tense** addresses an ongoing future occurrence that will happen before a certain point in time. It combines *will have* with a present participle form of a verb. For example:

As of next week, I will have been dating him for two years.