

# Past simple and past continuous

<b>Past simple</b>
<p>We use the past simple to talk about a finished action in the past.  <i>Mark <b>went</b> to the cinema last night.</i></p>
<b>Past continuous</b>
<p>We use the past continuous to talk about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an action which was in progress at a particular time in the past.  <i>They <b>were watching</b> TV at nine o'clock last night.</i></li> <li>an action in the past that is interrupted by another action  <i>I <b>was walking</b> along the street when someone stole my bag.</i></li> </ul>

### 1 Choose the correct tenses.

It was one o'clock in the morning and I <sup>1</sup> **was lying / lay** awake in bed. The wind <sup>2</sup> **was blowing / blew** outside and it <sup>3</sup> **rained / was raining**. Suddenly I <sup>4</sup> **heard / was hearing** a loud crash. It <sup>5</sup> **came / was coming** from downstairs. I <sup>6</sup> **got up / was getting up** and <sup>7</sup> **switched on / was switching on** the light. Everything was quiet and still. Only the clock in the hallway <sup>8</sup> **was ticking / ticked**. I <sup>9</sup> **walked / was walking** down the stairs when I <sup>10</sup> **noticed / was noticing** something strange. The front door was wide open.

### 2 Complete the sentences. Use the correct form of the past simple or the past continuous.

- Peter ..... (**drive**) home when he ..... (**see**) the accident.
- I ..... (**watch**) TV when the phone ..... (**ring**).
- He ..... (**wear**) sunglasses when I ..... (**meet**) him.
- She ..... (**fall**) asleep while she ..... (**do**) her homework.
- The pop star ..... (**sing**) when the lights ..... (**go out**).
- It ..... (**start**) to rain when we ..... (**walk**) on the beach.

### 3 Complete the text. Use the correct form of the past simple or the past continuous.

At midnight last night rescue teams <sup>1</sup> ..... (**search**) for victims after a giant tornado <sup>2</sup> ..... (**hit**) Oklahoma and Kansas. The storm flattened more than 5,000 homes and <sup>3</sup> ..... (**injure**) more than 700 people.

Robert Hensley <sup>4</sup> ..... (**hide**) in his cellar when the tornado <sup>5</sup> ..... (**destroy**) his home. 'I <sup>6</sup> ..... (**not come out**) until two hours later,' he said, 'My house was gone and I <sup>7</sup> ..... (**not recognize**) the street.'

Mary Richardson <sup>8</sup> ..... (**have**) a bath when she <sup>9</sup> ..... (**hear**) the tornado. She quickly <sup>10</sup> ..... (**put on**) a coat and <sup>11</sup> ..... (**escape**) to the local high school. 'I <sup>12</sup> ..... (**run**) to the school when the tornado <sup>13</sup> ..... (**strike**) my house,' she said. 'It <sup>14</sup> ..... (**be**) a very frightening experience.'

### 4 Write the questions. Use the past simple or the past continuous.

- What / the rescue teams / do at midnight?  
 .....
- How many / homes / the storm / destroy?  
 .....
- Where / Robert Hensley / hide / when the tornado hit his home?  
 .....
- When / he / come out?  
 .....
- Who / have a bath / when the tornado arrived?  
 .....