Past continuous (I was doing)

A

В

D

Study this example situation:



Yesterday Karen and Jim played tennis. They started at 10 o'clock and finished at 11.30.

So, at 10.30 they were playing tennis.

They were playing = they were in the middle of playing. They had not finished playing.

Was/were -ing is the past continuous:

I/he/she/it was we/you/they were playing doing working etc.

I was doing something = I was in the middle of doing something at a certain time. The action or situation had already started before this time, but had not finished:

I started doing	I was doing	I finished doing	
○ What were you	ar I was living in Brazil. doing at 10 o'clock last , but she wasn't lookir	night?	now

Compare the past continuous (I was doing) and past simple (I did):

Past continuous (in the middle of an action)

I was walking home when I met Dan.
(in the middle of walking home)

Kate was watching TV when we

Past simple (complete action)

- I walked home after the party last night.(= all the way, completely)
- Kate watched television a lot when she was ill last year.

We often use the past simple and the past continuous together to say that something happened in the middle of something else:

- Matt phoned while we were having dinner.
- It was raining when I got up.

arrived.

- I saw you in the park yesterday. You were sitting on the grass and reading a book.
- ☐ I hurt my back while I was working in the garden.

But we use the past simple to say that one thing happened after another:

I was walking along the road when I saw Dan. So I stopped, and we had a chat.

Compare:

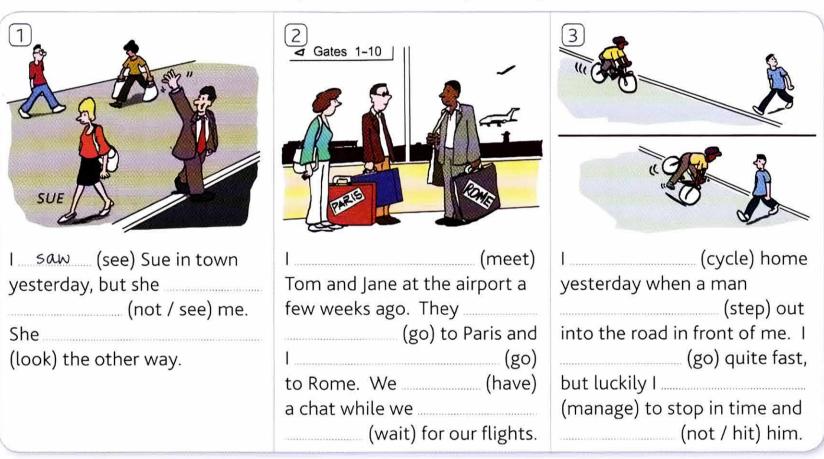
- When Karen arrived, we were having dinner. (= we had already started before she arrived)
- When Karen arrived, we had dinner.
 (= Karen arrived, and then we had dinner)

Some verbs (for example, **know** and **want**) are not normally used in the continuous (see Unit 4A):

- We were good friends. We **knew** each other well. (not We were knowing)
- I was enjoying the party, but Chris wanted to go home. (not was wanting)

Exercises

6.1	What were you doing at these to is not always necessary (see the	imes? Write sentences as in the essecond example).	examples. The past continuous
		g) I was having dinner.	
	2 (at 5 o'clock last Monday)	I was on a bus on my way how	me.
	3 (at 10.15 yesterday morning)		•••••
	4 (at 4.30 this morning)		
	6 (half an hour ago)		
6.2	 Matt phoned while we were The doorbell rang while I The car began to make a stran Jessica fell asleep while she 	e the sentences. Use the past cor having dinner ge noise when we	
6.2	 Matt phoned while we were The doorbell rang while I The car began to make a stran Jessica fell asleep while she 	having dinner ge noise when we	
6.2	1 Matt phoned while we were 2 The doorbell rang while I 3 The car began to make a stran 4 Jessica fell asleep while she 5 The television was on, but not	having dinner ge noise when we	



Put the verb into the correct form, past continuous or past simple.

1 Jenny was waiting (wait) for mowhon! arrived (arrive)

Į,	Jenny was watting (wai	t) for me when I wrive (arrive).	
2	'What	(you / do) at this time yesterday?'	'I was asleep.'
3	·	(you / go) out last night?' 'No, I was too	tired.'
		(you / drive) when the acc	
	(happen)?		
5	Sam	(take) a picture of me while I	
	(not / look).		
6	We were in a very difficult po	osition. We	(not / know) what to do.
7	I haven't seen Alan for ages.	When I last (see)) him, he
	(try	, ,	
8		(walk) along the street when suddenly I	
	(hear) footsteps behind me.	Somebody	(follow) me. I was
	scared and I		
9	When I was young, I	(want) to be a pilot.	
10	Last night I	(drop) a plate when I	(do) the
	washing-up. Fortunately it	(not / break).	

UNIT 6

6.1

Example answers:

- 3 I was working.
- 4 I was in bed asleep.
- 5 I was getting ready to go out.
- 6 I was watching TV at home.

6.2

Example answers:

- 2 was having a shower
- 3 were driving home
- 4 was reading the paper
- 5 was watching it

6.3

- 1 didn't see ... was looking
- 2 met ... were going ... was going ... had ... were waiting / waited
- 3 was cycling ... stepped ... was going ... managed ... didn't hit

6.4

- 2 were you doing
- 3 Did you go
- 4 were you driving ... happened
- 5 took ... wasn't looking
- 6 didn't know
- 7 saw ... was trying
- 8 was walking ... heard ... was following ... started
- 9 wanted
- 10 dropped ... was doing ... didn't break