

PAST SIMPLE VS PAST CONTINUOUS

We use past continuous to express long actions that were interrupted by shorter actions (past simple).

- Examples:
- I was playing football WHEN the rain started.
 - The lights went out WHILE she was watching TV.
 - WHILE my mum was reading a book, her friend arrived.
 - WHEN we saw the bird, we were cycling.

Connectors also help us !!

Generally, after **WHILE** we use **PAST CONTINUOUS**

After **WHEN** we use **PAST SIMPLE**.

1. Choose the correct option.

- 1 The plane **WAS FLYING** | **FLEW** to Paris when it crashed.
- 2 The students **WAITED** | **WERE WAITING** for the bus when it started to rain.
- 3 We were crossing when the traffic lights **TURNED** | **WAS TURNING** red.
- 4 When their mother called, the children **PLAYED** | **WERE PLAYING** games.
- 5 Sue **WAS WASHING** | **WASHED** the dishes when the phone rang.
- 6 My father **WERE COOKING** | **COOKED** lunch when I got home.
- 7 Jim **WAS BREAKING** | **BROKE** his leg when he was playing golf.

2. Complete the sentences with past simple and past continuous.

- a. While Helen _____ (walk) to school, she _____ (see) the old man.
- b. Mary _____ (fall) over, while she _____ (run) in the park.
- c. When Kate _____ (drop) the glass, she _____ (drink) milk.
- d. While I _____ (listen) to music, I _____ (hear) the doorbell.
- e. John and Sam _____ (watch) TV, when the lights _____ (go) out.

3. Complete with WHEN or WHILE

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| 1. The students were doing an exercise _____ the bell rang. | 5. _____ my mom came home, my sister was sleeping. |
| 2. I saw an accident _____ I was waiting at the bus stop. | 6. We found some old photographs _____ we were tidying our room. |
| 3. _____ she was writing an email, her computer turned off. | 7. _____ you called me last night, I was studying for the test. |
| 4. He fell down _____ he was climbing a tree. | 8. I had a bad dream _____ I was sleeping on the sofa. |