

GRAMMAR PRACTICE B2

NARRATIVE TENSES

Exercise 1

Complete the story with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

The Forgotten Passport

I _____ (1. wake) up feeling relaxed because I _____ (2. plan) to leave for my holiday later that morning. While I _____ (3. pack) my suitcase, my friend called to ask if I was already at the airport. I couldn't believe it — my flight _____ (4. leave) two hours earlier than I remembered!

I quickly called a taxi, but the driver _____ (5. already wait) for another passenger. When I finally arrived at the airport, the plane _____ (6. just take off). I sat down and realized I _____ (7. forget) my passport at home anyway. It really wasn't my day.

Exercise 2

Circle the correct tense form in each sentence.

1. When I arrived / had arrived at the party, everyone had left / was leaving.
2. She was cooking / cooked dinner when the lights went / were going out.
3. By the time we got / had got there, the movie had started / started.
4. I had been studying / studied for three hours when my friend called / had called.
5. He had never seen / never saw snow before he moved to Canada.

Exercise 3

Match the beginnings (A) with the correct endings (B).

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. I was reading quietly | a. when the storm finally ended. |
| 2. By the time the rescue team arrived, | b. when the phone rang. |
| 3. We had been walking for hours | c. I realized I had left my wallet at home. |
| 4. I had just sat down | d. when I heard a strange noise outside. |
| 5. As soon as I entered the shop, | e. the hikers had already found shelter. |

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Exercise 4

Write the tense and explain its function.

Example: I had been waiting for hours. → Past Perfect Continuous – ongoing action before another past event

1. While she was driving, it started to rain.
2. He had forgotten her name before they met again.
3. They were laughing when the teacher came in.
4. We had been studying all night before the exam.
5. The concert started at 8 p.m.

Exercise 5

Each sentence has one tense error. Correct them.

1. When I was arrived, everyone was dancing.
2. She had cooking when the guests came.
3. We missed the train because we left too late.
4. He was being tired because he worked all night.
5. I had meet her before at university.

Exercise 6

Put the sentences in the correct order to form a logical story.

- a. When I reached the platform, the train had already left.
- b. It was raining heavily, and I was running to the station.
- c. I had been waiting for this interview for weeks.
- d. I missed the bus that morning.
- e. Luckily, the manager called and offered me a new interview slot.
- f. I arrived home completely soaked but strangely relieved.

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Exercise 7

Use the correct narrative tense to complete the sentences.

1. She _____ (cry) when I _____ (see) her in the park.
2. They _____ (already eat) when we arrived.
3. I _____ (not finish) my homework when the teacher collected it.
4. He _____ (drive) home when he _____ (notice) the lights in his rear-view mirror.
5. We _____ (study) for two hours before we _____ (decide) to take a break.

Exercise 8

Read the paragraph and answer the questions.

A Strange Encounter

I had just finished work when something unusual happened. I was walking down the empty street when I heard footsteps behind me. When I turned around, no one was there. I walked faster, but the sound continued. Later, I discovered it was my friend, who had been trying to catch up with me for ten minutes!

Questions:

1. What was the background action in the story?
2. Which action happened first?
3. Which tense shows the earlier past?
4. What had the friend been doing before the main event?

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Exercise 9

Rewrite each sentence using the verb in brackets and the correct narrative tense.

- I saw the film once. (already / see)
• → _____
- He waited for hours before the shop opened. (wait / long)
• → _____
- She lost her phone, then found it in her bag. (already / lose)
• → _____
- I cleaned the house; then my guests arrived. (finish / clean)
• → _____
- We played football all afternoon. (be / play)
• → _____

Exercise 10

 Write your own short story (180–200 words) titled:

"The Mistake That Changed My Life."

Include all four narrative tenses at least once.

Hints:

- Start with a background: It was raining that morning...
- Add a main event: I missed an important call...
- Include an earlier event: I had forgotten to check my messages.
- Add a duration: I had been waiting for hours before I realized the mistake.

✓ Checklist:

- Past Simple → main story actions
- Past Continuous → background description
- Past Perfect → earlier event
- Past Perfect Continuous → longer ongoing action