



# Understanding Past, Present and Future Tense

KS2 ENGLISH

GRAMMAR

Ages 8-11  3 min read

## What Are Verb Tenses?

**Tenses** are ways we change words to show **when** something happens. Every time you speak or write, you're using tenses without even thinking about it! They help other people understand if you're talking about something that already happened, something happening right now, or something that will happen later.

The **verb** is the action word in a sentence—the thing someone is doing. By changing the verb slightly, we can shift the time we're talking about.

## Past Tense: What Already Happened

**Past tense** tells us about things that have already finished. It's like looking in a mirror at something behind you. When we use past tense, we often add **'-ed'** to the end of a verb, or use an irregular verb that changes completely.

Examples: "I **walked** to school." "She **ate** her lunch." "We **played** football yesterday."

Think of it like watching a video recording. The moment has already happened, and you're watching what occurred in the past.

## Present Tense: What's Happening Now

**Present tense** describes things that are happening right at this moment or things that happen regularly. It's the easiest to recognize because the verb often stays the same or just adds an **'-s'** at the end.

Examples: "I **walk** to school." "She **eats** her lunch." "We **play** football on Saturdays."

Think of it like live television. It's happening right now, in real time, as you watch it.

## Future Tense: What Will Happen

**Future tense** talks about things that haven't happened yet—they're still to come. We usually add the word **'will'** before the verb, or sometimes use **'going to.'**

Examples: "I **will walk** to school tomorrow." "She **is going to eat** her lunch soon."  
"We **will play** football next week."

Think of it like a weather forecast. It hasn't happened yet, but you're predicting what will come.

## **Why Does This Matter?**

Using the correct tense helps people understand exactly when things are happening. Without tenses, sentences become confusing! When you write stories or tell someone about your day, using tenses correctly makes your meaning crystal clear.