

# VERB TENSE SUMMARY

Academic Skills Center 1501 Shoreline Community College

## PRESENT

### **A. Simple Present**

1. Formation: base form of the verb  
examples: (1) The school is close to your home. (2) We study English every day.
2. Uses
  - a. general statements of fact
  - b. habitual activity
3. Special uses
  - a. time clause  
examples: (1) When Bob comes, we will eat.  
(2) As soon as it arrives, we will leave for the airport.
  - b. future meaning if it is a planned event or a definite action  
examples: (1) Classes end June 15. (3) His plane arrives at 6 p.m. next Monday.  
(2) The museum opens at 10:00 a.m. tomorrow.

### **B. Present Progressive**

1. Formation: be verb + ing form of the main verb  
examples: (1) John is sleeping. (3) She is writing another book this year.  
(2) I am teaching English.
2. Uses
  - a. an activity in progress at the moment of speaking
  - b. an activity generally in progress this week, month, or year
3. Special use
  - a. future meaning for a planned event or a definite action  
examples: (1) She is seeing the doctor on Tuesday.  
(2) He is leaving at noon tomorrow.

### **C. Present Perfect**

1. Formation: have/has + past participle of the main verb  
examples (1) We have driven this car to 100 cities in America.  
(2) I have lived in Seattle for one year.  
(3) I have seen many movies.
2. Uses
  - a. An action which took place at an indefinite time in the past. The emphasis is on the completion of the action rather than the time of the action.
  - b. An action that was repeated before now. The exact time of each repetition is not important.
  - c. An activity that began in the past and continues to the present.

### **D. Present Perfect Progressive**

1. Formation: present perfect + ing form of the main verb  
examples: (1) Jennifer has been living in Yakima since 1980.  
(2) Miguel and Alexandra have been working at Cosco for two years.  
(3) I have been thinking about looking for a new job.  
(4) He has been sitting at his computer for three hours, so he is tired.
2. Uses
  - a. Shows the duration of an action that began in the past and continues to the present.
  - b. Shows a general activity in progress recently without a specific mention of time.

## PAST

### **A. Simple Past**

1. Formation: for regular verbs = base form of the verb + ed ending.  
examples: (1) I walked to the park yesterday. (2) I went to the grocery store.
2. Use: an activity that began and ended in the past.

### **B. Past Progressive**

1. Formation: was/were + ing form of the main verb  
examples: (1) I was walking in the park when I saw a hawk.  
(2) At 3:00 last Saturday Mai and Tuan were gardening.
2. Uses
  - a. One act was in progress when another act occurred.
  - b. An action that was in progress at a certain time and that probably continued.

### **C. Past Perfect**

1. Formation: had + past participle of the main verb  
examples: (1) Bob had already taught his class before he took his son to the game.  
(2) Until yesterday, I had never heard that word.
2. Use: An activity that was completed before another activity or another time in the past.

### **D. Past Perfect Progressive**

1. Formation: have/had + been + ing form of the main verb  
examples: (1) I had been studying for two hours before I took a walk.  
(2) Maria finally arrived. Jose had been waiting for her since 4:00.  
(3) Her hair was wet because she had been running in the rain.
2. Uses
  - a. Shows duration of an activity that was in progress before another event in the past.
  - b. An activity in progress that is recent to another time or activity in the past.

## **FUTURE**

### **A. Simple Future**

1. Formation: will or is going to + simple base form of the main verb  
examples: (1) He will go to college next fall. (3) The phone is ringing. I will get it.  
(2) Jill is going to visit Paris on her vacation.
2. Uses
  - a. To predict the future.
  - b. To plan for the future.
  - c. To express willingness to do something
3. Special use in time clauses: Use the simple present in a time clause.  
examples: (1) After I get home, I will cook dinner. (2) The baby will go to sleep after she eats.

### **B. Future Progressive**

1. Formation: will + be + ing form of the main verb  
examples: (1) I will be studying when you arrive.  
(2) Tomorrow you will be sitting in your ESL class.  
(3) Mieke is going to be eating lunch at noon.  
(4) Don't worry. Jamey will be home soon.
2. Use: An activity that will be in progress at a time in the future.

### **C. Future Perfect**

1. Formation: will + perfect tense + past participle  
examples: (1) On Friday we will have studied verb tenses for three weeks.  
(2) I will have reviewed my notes before I go to the lecture tonight.
2. Use: An activity that will be completed before another time or event in the future.

### **D. Future Perfect Progressive**

1. Formation: will + perfect tense + ing form of main verb  
examples: (1) If I arrive in Oregon at 6:00, and my friend gets there at 9:00, I will have been waiting for her for three hours when she arrives.  
(2) Next September I will have been attending Shoreline CC for two years.
2. Use: The duration of an activity that will be in progress before another time or event in the future.