

Narrative Tenses (All Past Tenses) – Exercise Sheet 2 – ANSWERS

Exercise 1: Conversation (More Challenging) – Fill in the Blanks with Correct Narrative Tense (Answers)

Emma: Hey Tom, did you hear about what happened to Olivia last weekend?

Tom: No, what happened?

Emma: Well, she **had planned** to go to the airport early, but by the time she **left** the house, she **realized** she **had forgotten** her passport! ✓ (Past Perfect for planning and forgetting before leaving; Past Simple for realization.)

Tom: Oh no! So, did she go back to get it?

Emma: Yes, but while she **was searching** for it at home, her taxi driver **was waiting** outside, and she **did not notice**. ✓ (Past Continuous for background actions; Past Simple for the moment of realization.)

Tom: That sounds stressful! Did she make it in time?

Emma: Just barely! By the time she **arrived** at the airport, they **had already closed** the boarding gate! ✓ (Past Simple for arrival; Past Perfect for the gate closing earlier.)

Tom: Wow! That's terrible!

Emma: Yeah, and to make things worse, she **had not slept** well the night before because she **had been packing** all night. ✓ (Past Perfect for lack of sleep before another past event; Past Perfect Continuous for ongoing packing.)

Exercise 2: News Report (More Challenging) – Fill in the Blanks with Correct Narrative Tense (Answers)

Massive Traffic Jam on the Highway

Commuters **experienced** major delays yesterday morning after an accident **caused** a massive traffic jam on the city's main highway. ✓ (Past Simple for completed past events.)

The crash **happened** around 7 AM while many drivers **were heading** to work. ✓ (Past Simple for the sudden event; Past Continuous for background action.)

By the time the police **arrived** at the scene, several vehicles **had already blocked** the road. ✓ (Past Simple for arrival; Past Perfect for blocking that happened before it.)



Witnesses reported that the driver **had lost** control of his car because he **had not been paying** attention to the road. ✓ (Past Perfect for the completed action of losing control; Past Perfect Continuous for the ongoing inattention before the accident.)

Some drivers **had been sitting** in their cars for over an hour before authorities **cleared** the scene. ✓ (Past Perfect Continuous for a long ongoing action; Past Simple for the later event.)

One commuter said she **was trying** to call her office, but her phone battery **had died** while she **was waiting**. ✓ (Past Continuous for background action; Past Perfect for the earlier completed action of the phone dying.)

The situation finally **improved** after emergency teams **removed** the damaged vehicles from the road. ✓ (Past Simple for completed past actions.)

Key Takeaways

✓ Past Simple

- ✓ Used for **completed past events** (*A fire broke out.*)
- ✓ Used for **sequences of events** (*She left, then realized she had forgotten something.*)
- ✓ Used with **specific time markers** (*Yesterday, last week, in 2010, etc.*)

✓ Past Continuous

- ✓ Used for **background actions** (*People were relaxing at home when they heard a noise.*)
- ✓ Used for **interrupted actions** (*She was watching TV when she noticed the smoke.*)
- ✓ Used with **"while" and "when"** (*While I was walking, it started raining.*)

✓ Past Perfect

- ✓ Used to show that **one past action happened before another past event** (*By the time we arrived, the train had left.*)
- ✓ Used with **"by the time," "already," "before," etc.** (*She had already escaped before the firefighters arrived.*)

✓ Past Perfect Continuous

- ✓ Used for **long ongoing actions leading up to another past event** (*She was exhausted because she had been working all day.*)
- ✓ Used with **"for," "since," "how long," etc.** (*They had been waiting for an hour before the bus arrived.*)
- ✓ Often used for **causes of past states** (*The road was wet because it had been raining.*)