

Le past continuous (I was doing, you were working...)

Cours sur le **Past Continuous anglais**, aussi appelé prétérit progressif ou past progressive.

Le *présent simple* (I do) a son *présent continu* (I am doing).

Le *passé simple* (I did) a donc son *passé continu* (I was doing).

Dans cette leçon on va s'intéresser au *passé continu* (ou *past continuous* en anglais). Il est parfois appelé *passé progressif* (*past progressive*), *prétérit continu* ou *prétérit progressif* mais ne vous méprenez pas, c'est exactement la même chose !

1/ Formation du past continuous en anglais:

'to be' au past simple (WAS / WERE) + base verbale + ING

- I / he / she / it **was** *playing, having, moving...*
- we / you / they **were** *doing, reading, writing...*

2/ C'est quoi la différence entre le past simple et le past continuous ?

Regardez l'exemple suivant:

- **Past simple:** *I had lunch at noon yesterday* => J'ai déjeuné à midi hier.
- **Past continuous:** *I was having lunch at noon yesterday* => J'étais en train de déjeuner à midi hier.

3/ A quoi sert le past continuous anglais ?

En français on peut le traduire par 'être en train de...' (au passé)

>> On l'utilise pour parler **d'une action en cours à un moment passé**:

- *We were waiting at the café.*

>> Pour dire qu'une action en cours a été interrompue (on trouve alors du *past simple* dans la phrase):

- *I was drinking at the bar when she called me.*
- *I hurt my leg while I was running in the park.*
- *He phoned me when we were having lunch.*
- *It was snowing when I went out.*

>> Quand **deux actions se sont passées au même moment**, sans avoir d'influence l'une envers l'autre (on utilise souvent 'while'):

- *John was watching TV while Linda was reading a book.*
- *I was studying while he was making dinner.*
- *While Dave was sleeping last night, someone stole his car.*
- *What were you doing while you were waiting?*
- *They were drinking beer, talking about life, and having fun.*

>> Des actions passées qui **irritent** la personne qui parle:

- *Bob was always complaining.*
- *She was constantly repeating the same story.*

>> Des actions passées qui se répétaient souvent:

- *He was jogging around the lake every day.*

>> Pour **décrire une personne** au passé:

- *When I saw him he was wearing a hat.*
- *The thief was wearing a black hood.*

4/ Le past continuous dans les phrases négatives:

- *I was not talking to you* (= I wasn't talking football)
- *You were not playing football* (= You weren't playing football)
- *They were not dancing at the party* (= They weren't dancing at the party)

5/ Poser des questions au past continuous:

- *Was I playing football ?*
- *Why were you not watching football ?*
- *What were they doing when the show started?*

6/ forme active / passive

- *The thief was stealing the diamond when the police arrived* (Active)
- *The diamond was being stolen by the thief when the police arrived* (Passive)

Certains verbes ne s'utilisent normalement pas au past continuous (au présent continu non plus d'ailleurs) sauf à quelques exception.

La liste n'est pas complète mais voici les principaux:

love / like / know / want / need / seem / mean / prefer / belong / understand / consist / suppose / remember / realise / forget / notice...

- *I needed to go to the doctor* (et pas 'I was needing...')
- *I loved this movie !* (et pas 'I was loving this movie')
- *We wanted to go out but it was raining* (et pas 'we were wanting...')