

# Proficiency exam preparation course: Grammar and usage component

## Session 1(Lesson 1-2) Grammar Review 1: Tenses & Passive Voice I

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**BEFEKTETÉS A JÖVŐBE**

## Session 1 (Lesson 1-2)

### Grammar Review 1: Tenses & Passive Voice I

#### Tenses:

Simple Tenses: Present Simple and Past Simple

**To talk about habits, customs, routines, states, or schedules in the present or in the past.**

- **Typical adverbs used with present simple:** always, never, sometimes, usually, normally, generally, regularly, often, rarely, seldom, in regular, in general, as a rule
- **Typical adverbs used with past simple:** last week/year/Tuesday/weekend, yesterday, last night, yesterday evening, when I was 20/in Brussels, in my childhood, with dates: in 2020, in my childhood, ...ago (three years ago), long ago/a long time ago

Examples:

**Repeated actions or habits:**

She always/usually watches TV in the evening.

She always/usually watched TV in the evening. = She **would** watch TV in the evenings. or She **used to** watch TV in the evening. (She **didn't use to** watch TV in the evenings. **Did she use to** watch TV in the evening?)

**Describing a series of actions (telling a story):**

James Bond arrives at the crime scene, searches the room looking for the gun, and then leaves the place before the police arrives. (narrative present)

James Bond arrived at the crime scene, searched the room looking for the gun, and then left the place before the police arrived.

**Schedules:**

The film starts at 8 pm. The film started at 8 pm.

**General features:**

He has long hair and loves rock music. He had long hair and loved rock music.

**States:**

She looks happy. She looked happy.

They seem to be in trouble. They seemed to be in trouble.

Present Simple vs Present Continuous

**Talking about general things or talking about things happening now.**

He reads a lot. vs. He is currently reading a lot/two books.

**Factual description or making a reproach/expressing frustration.**

These students are always late for class. (It is a fact.) vs. These students are always being late for class. (I am frustrated by their behavior.)

Present, Past, and Future Simple and Continuous

**When a longer action (... continuous) is interrupted by a shorter action (... simple).**

She is reading a book	when her phone rings.
She was reading a book	when her phone rang.
She will be reading a book	when her phone rings.

She is going to be reading a book	when her phone rings.
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**When an action (...continuous) is interrupted by a time.**

They are learning English	now/this month/this year.
They were learning English	at 5 pm yesterday/ at the same time last week.
They will be learning English	at 5 tomorrow/this time tomorrow.
They are going to be learning English	at 5 tomorrow/ at the same time next week.

E.g. She had dinner at 6 pm. vs. She was having dinner at 6 pm.

**Expressing or emphasizing duration.**

She is currently preparing for an exam
She was preparing for an exam all weekend long/for two weeks.
She will be preparing for an exam for two weeks.
She is going to be preparing for an exam for two weeks.

E.g. She lived in New York for 5 years. vs. She was living in New York for 5 years.

**Describing parallel actions using while or whereas**

While/whereas I am waiting for her	I am looking at shop windows.
While/whereas I was waiting for her	I was looking at shop windows.
While/whereas I am waiting for her	I will be looking at shop windows.
While/whereas I am waiting for her	I am going to be looking at shop windows.

**Describing atmosphere**

When I enter the office	the secretary is busily typing, two customers are waiting to be helped, and the manager is talking on the phone.
When I entered the office	the secretary was busily typing, two customers were waiting to be helped, and the manager was talking on the phone.
When I enter the office	the secretary will be busily typing, two customers will be waiting to be helped, and the manager will be talking on the phone.
When I enter the office	the secretary is going to be busily typing, two customers are going to be waiting to be helped, and the manager is going to be talking on the phone.

Past Simple vs. Present Perfect

**Present Perfect: No reference is made to the past when the action was completed; it is not known or not important when the action was completed.**

**Past Simple: An action is completed in the past (often used with a time expression referring to the past.**

I have seen the latest Star Wars movie. vs. I saw the latest Star Wars movie when it came out/two weeks ago/last year.

**The consequences of an action that happened in the past are still seen or observed in the present.**

I broke a leg three years ago. vs. I have broken a leg, so I am unable to walk now.

**Talking about the achievements of a living vs of a dead person.**

My friend has written 5 plays. vs. Shakespeare wrote over 25 plays.

Present Perfect Simple vs. Present Perfect Continuous

**Present Perfect Simple: The consequences of an action that happened in the past are still seen or observed in the present.**

**Present Perfect Continuous: An action started in past and is still going on in the present and may continue in the future.**

I have watched two episodes of Supernatural. vs. I have been watching Supernatural episodes for two hours.

He has eaten two cakes. vs. He has been eating cakes since he came home.

Past Simple vs. Past Perfect Simple.

**An action was completed before another action in the past: Describing antecedence.**

He left before I had talked with him.

By the time the lecture ended, several students had fallen asleep.

**No sooner...than; Hardly/Scarcely... when:**

The match had **no sooner** started **than** it began to rain.

The match had **hardly/ scarcely** started **when** it began to rain.

**Inversion:** No sooner **had the match started** than it began.

Hardly/Scarcely **had the match started** when it began to rain.

Past simple vs. Past Perfect Continuous.

**Expressing/Emphasizing duration or continuity before another action in the past.**

I had been waiting for her for twenty minutes before she arrived complaining of car problems.

Perfect Simple and Perfect Continuous Tenses

**Emphasizing duration or continuity:**

She has been working here for 10 years.	
She had been working here 10 years	before she was dismissed.
She will have been working here for 10 years	by the time/when she retires.
She is going to have been working here for 10 years	by 2022/next year.

**Describing a cause-and-effect relationship:**

He is out-of-breath because	he has been running.
He was out-of-breath because	he had been running.
He will be out-of-breath when he gets home because	he will have been running.
He is going to be out-of-breath when he gets home because	he is going to have been running.

Passive Voices

The use of passive voice:

1. When the actor is unknown or irrelevant.  
E.g. This report was written two years ago.
2. When one wants to be vague about who is responsible for an activity.

- E.g. Mistakes have been made.
- When talking about a general truth.  
E.g. Rules are made to be broken.
  - An emphasis is placed NOT on the activity BUT on the person or the thing acted on.  
E.g. Vitamin C was discovered by a Hungarian researcher in the 1890s.  
I have always been interested in the truth. Instead of: The truth has always interested me.
  - When writing in a scientific genre that traditionally relies on passive voice.  
E.g. The substance was dissolved in water and then it was removed from the vial and placed in the fridge for five hours.

I. Simple Tenses Passive:

	<b>BE</b>	+	<b>V3</b>
(present simple)	am/is/are		
(past simple)	was/were		
(future simple)	will be/be going to be		

Active

Tom	writes	a letter (P1)	to Sarah (P2).
	wrote		
	will write		
	is going to write		

Passive 1 (P1)

A letter	is	written	to Sarah.
	was		
	will be		
	is going to be written		

Passive 2 (P2)

Sarah	is	written	a letter.
	was		
	will be		
	is going to be		

II. Continuous tenses

**Continuous (active): BE + Ving    Passive: BE + V3**

**Continuous (passive): BE + BEING + V3**

(present continuous)	am/is/are
(past continuous)	was/were
(future continuous)	will be/be going to be

Tom	is	writing	a letter (P1)	to Sarah (P2).
	was			
	will be			

	is going to be writing			
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P1:

A letter	is	being	written	to Sarah	by Tom.
	was				
	will be				
	is going to be				

P2

Sarah	is	being	written	a letter	by Tom.
	was				
	will be				
	is going to be				

III. Perfect Simple Tenses

**Perfect Simple Active: HAVE + V3 Passive: BE + V3**

**Perfect Simple Passive: HAVE + BEEN + V3**

- (Present perfect simple) have/has
- (Past perfect simple) had
- (Future perfect simple) will have/  
be going to have

Active

Tom	has	written	a letter (P1)	to Sarah (P2).
	had			
	will have			
	is going to have			

P1

A letter	has	been	written	to Sarah	by Tom.
	had				
	will have				
	is going to have				

P2

Sarah	has	been	written	a letter	by Tom.
	had				
	will have				
	is going to have				

Perfect Continuous Tenses

**Perfect continuous active: HAVE BEEN Ving Passive: BE + V3**

- (Present perfect continuous) **HAVE** **BEEN** **BEING** + V3  
Have/has
- (Past perfect continuous) Had
- (Future perfect continuous) Will have/be going to have

Active

Tom	has	been	writing	a letter (P1)	to Sarah (P2).
	had				
	will have				
	is going to have				

P1

A letter	has	been	being	written	to Sarah	by Tom.
	had					
	will have					
	is going to have					



	A	B	C	D	
16.	ventilator shafts they <u>made</u> their way <u>to</u> the roof. The cellhouse vent <u>was provided with</u> the route <u>to</u> the roof	A	B	C	D
17.	and <u>from there</u> they <u>shinned</u> down to the ground below. They went <u>over</u> the <u>15-foot</u> <u>perimeters</u> fence and	A	B	C	D
18.	<u>have not been</u> heard <u>from ever</u> since. Ironically, similar to a previous escape attempt, <u>the</u> tides were	A	B	C	D
19.	<u>at a</u> negative 8 miles per hour <u>that</u> June night. Water temperatures <u>predicted</u> to <u>have been</u> very low, and it	A	B	C	D
20.	<u>is being presumed</u> that all three perished. <u>None of</u> them <u>have been</u> arrested and nor <u>has the case been</u> brought	A	B	C	D
21.	to court again. <u>Nonetheless</u> , several other <u>ironies</u> are <u>shrouding</u> this escape. The guards and the warden <u>had</u>	A	B	C	D
22.	<u>been</u> alerted <u>to</u> the activity of the prisoners. An attempt <u>signaled</u> by the changes <u>in</u> the prisoners' behavior.	A	B	C	D
23.	There was <u>a lot of</u> cohering <u>among</u> them and extra notice was taken <u>as to</u> where the guards <u>must have been</u>	A	B	C	D
24.	<u>at all times</u> . The inmates <u>held</u> small shaving mirrors outside their cells <u>tried</u> to gain <u>an edge on</u> the guards.	A	B	C	D
25.	<u>The night of</u> the escape, the new captain of <u>the guards</u> was <u>on duty</u> . When a guard <u>reported about</u> noises on	A	B	C	D
26.	the roof, the captain <u>explained</u> that it <u>must be</u> the wind. When another report on <u>curious</u> noises <u>were being</u>	A	B	C	D
27.	made, it was also <u>written off</u> as a stray cat or dog. <u>Still</u> , the official <u>blame for</u> the escape <u>would fall on</u> the island	A	B	C	D
28.	itself. <u>In four days</u> , an army boat <u>found</u> a small pouch <u>containing</u> some photos that <u>supposedly</u> belonged to	A	B	C	D
29.	of Clarence Anglin. It <u>was</u> found <u>afloating</u> near some rocks at the foot of <u>the</u> Golden Gate Bridge. The <u>hollow</u>	A	B	C	D
30.	corridors of <u>Alcatraz penitentiary</u> <u>still echo</u> the desperate footsteps <u>resonating</u> from the past <u>through</u> the old brick walls.	A	B	C	D