



WRITING CENTRE

Verb tenses are commonly used to clarify time relationships such as: past, present, future, perfect, and continuous. They can also work as a combination of two or three tenses and are typically used in conjunction with the following pronouns:

I	we
you	you (plural)
he/she/it	they

Note that **simple tenses** are the most common and portray either something that is a habit or regular activity; **continuous tenses** indicate something that occurs continuously for a particular period of time and **perfect tenses** show things that occur at an unregulated period of time or the relationship between two different events that occurred at different times.

PRESENT TENSES:

	Subject + Verb	Examples
Simple present	... verb(s)	I listen. He cooks.
Present continuous	... am/is/are + present participle	I am listening. He is cooking.
Present perfect	... have/has + past participle	I have listened. He has cooked.
Present perfect continuous	... have/has + been + present participle	I have been listening. He has been cooking.

PAST TENSES:

	Subject + Verb	Examples
Simple past	... verb+ed (except for verbs with irregular forms)	You spoke. It played.
Past continuous	... was/were + verb+ing	You were speaking. It was playing.
Past perfect	... had + past participle	You had spoken. It had played.
Past perfect continuous	... had + been + verb+ing	You had been speaking. It had been playing.

FUTURE TENSES:

	Subject + Verb	Examples
Simple future	... will + base verb	You will read. They will stay.
Future continuous	... will be + present participle	You will be reading. They will be staying.
Future perfect	... will have + past participle	You will have read. They will have stayed.
Future continuous perfect	... will + have + been + present participle	You will have been reading. They will have been staying.