

PAST CONTINUOUS

A2 | Teens / Adults | Grammar Practice | 35-45 minutes

Learn and practise | Describe actions in progress at a past time.

1. READ: Last night at eight

Read the conversation. Notice the bold past continuous forms.

Mia: I called you at eight last night. **Were you working?**

Ben: No, I **was cooking** dinner. My phone was in the other room.

Mia: What **were you making?**

Ben: Soup. My brother **was helping** me cut the vegetables.

Mia: That sounds nice. I **wasn't doing** anything exciting. Just cleaning!

Ben: You should come round next time. We made far too much!

2. GRAMMAR: In progress at a past time

Use was / were + verb-ing for an action in progress at a particular time in the past.

Form	Pattern	Example
Positive	was / were + verb-ing	I was cooking at eight.
Negative	wasn't / weren't + verb-ing	They weren't sleeping.
Question	Was / Were + subject + -ing?	Were you working?

Use **was** with I / he / she / it; **were** with you / we / they.

Short answers: Yes, I was. / No, I wasn't. Yes, they were. / No, they weren't.

Spelling: **read - reading; make - making; sit - sitting.**

A. CHOOSE

Circle the correct form. The example answer is bold: I **was** / were reading.

1. She was / were cooking at six.
2. They was / were waiting outside.
3. I was watch / watching a film.
4. We wasn't / weren't working.
5. Was / Were you sleeping?
6. He was siting / sitting by the door.
7. What was / were Anna doing?
8. Yes, I was / did. (Were you studying?)

Read each answer aloud. Check the subject, the noun or the clue.

PAST CONTINUOUS

A2 | Teens / Adults | Grammar Practice | 35-45 minutes

Use it | Complete a context, write sentences and speak with a partner.

B. COMPLETE: A missed call

Write the past continuous form. Include was or were. Use contractions for negatives.

Eva: What (1) _____ (you / do) at seven last night?

Dan: I (2) _____ (drive) home. Was your call important?

Eva: Not really. Jo and I (3) _____ (plan) our weekend trip.

Dan: (4) _____ (Jo / look) at train times?

Eva: Yes. I (5) _____ (not / use) my laptop, so she borrowed it.

Dan: Sorry I missed it. We (6) _____ (not / move) very fast in the traffic!

C. CHANGE THE SENTENCES

1-2: Make negatives with wasn't or weren't.

Example: He was reading. **He wasn't reading.**

1. They were playing cards.

2. She was watching TV.

3-4: Make questions. Example: She was working. **Was she working?**

3. Ben was making dinner.

4. You were waiting outside.

D. WRITE ABOUT YOU

Write three true sentences about what you and other people were doing at a past time.

Example: **At eight last night, I was reading. My sister was studying. We weren't watching TV.**

E. SPEAK WITH A PARTNER

1. Ask: **What were you doing at eight last night?** Ask a follow-up question.

2. Imagine a busy cafe yesterday. Describe three people and their activities.

Your partner asks one question with **Was / Were ...?**

PAST CONTINUOUS

A2 | Teens / Adults | Grammar Practice | 35-45 minutes

Answer key | Keep this page separate during student practice.

1. READ: Last night at eight

Sample target language from the conversation:

Mia: I called you at eight last night. **Were** you **working**?

Ben: No, I **was cooking** dinner. My phone was in the other room.

Mia: What **were** you **making**?

Ben: Soup. My brother **was helping** me cut the vegetables.

Mia: That sounds nice. I **wasn't doing** anything exciting. Just cleaning!

A. CHOOSE

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| 1. was | 2. were |
| 3. watching | 4. weren't |
| 5. Were | 6. sitting |
| 7. was | 8. was |

B. COMPLETE: A missed call

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. were you doing | 2. was driving |
| 3. were planning | 4. Was Jo looking |
| 5. wasn't using | 6. weren't moving |

C. CHANGE THE SENTENCES

1. They weren't playing cards.
2. She wasn't watching TV.
3. Was Ben making dinner?
4. Were you waiting outside?

D. WRITE ABOUT YOU / E. SPEAK

Personal answers will vary. Check the target grammar.

Sample: At eight last night, I was reading. My sister was studying. We weren't watching TV.

Teacher note: B uses contractions as instructed. This lesson focuses on actions in progress at a past time; interrupted actions can be practised in a later contrast lesson. Accept other sensible times and activities in D/E.