

Instructions:

1. Print the blank exercises.
2. Allow 15 minutes for each exercise.
3. Check the answers against the answer key.

Tips for approaching tense exercises.

Read the passage as if it is a reading comprehension exercise. If you understand the passage and digest it, you are far more likely to get the right answers.

Always read a complete sentence before attempting to complete the blank.

Decide the form by going through these steps:

1. Decide if the verb is active or passive (look at the word before the verb - and ask yourself: Can 'xxx' do something (active) or is something done (passive) to xxx.
 - A. Decisions need to make. ❌ *Active* - decisions cannot 'do' something.
 - B. Decisions need to be made. ✅ *Passive* - decisions are made by people.
2. Decide the tense/form by looking at clues. Be extra careful with present perfect tense (actions that started in the past but still have an effect on the present).
3. Decide the agreement. Remember that indefinite pronouns (anyone, someone...) take the 3rd person (add 's') of the verb form.

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Past Perfect Continuous

I was tired because I had been doing my exams.	Provide background information.
I had been working for hours without a break.	When a period of time is specified.
When he came I had been baking.	To link one event with another (showing the order)
I had been meaning to visit her but didn't have time.	

Clues in sentences: linked events with a need to show time order

Diary Future (Present Continuous)

I am picking her up at 6 pm.	Pre-arranged plans
I can't come as I am going on holiday.	Explain why unable to do something

Clues in sentences: specific times, giving reasons, declining invitations

Going To Future

I am going to buy a new cat tomorrow.	Indicate a plan or intention
It is going to rain tomorrow	Predict future events
If he comes in I am going to leave	Express an condition

Clues in sentences: similar to will/shall future but used more often in conversation

Will/Shall Future

I will help clean my room now.	Deciding to do something
It will rain tomorrow.	Prediction
I will lose weight.	Expressing determination
I will tell your teacher.	Expressing commitment
That will be the postman.	Logical deduction
He will be late. (He always is)	Persistence (especially habit)

Clues in sentences: used to show determination

Future Continuous

This time tomorrow he will be taking his exam.	Action expected to cross a certain time
We will be arriving at 6 am.	Reassuring/asserting arrangements
I shall be making a complaint.	Threatening or promising future action
I expect you will be feeling hungry.	Logical deduction

Clues in sentences: Expressing future situations with a specific time

Future Perfect

I will have left England by next week.	With <i>by</i> at a point in the future
He will have arrived home by now.	Logical deduction

Clues in sentences: by

Future Perfect Continuous

This time tomorrow I will have been sitting on the plane for 10 hours.	Predicted duration of an event
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Clues in sentences: a time in the future with a continuous action

Exercise 2

Complete the following text using the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

Dear Roy,

It was great to get your e-mail last night. I must admit _____ (plan) to e-mail you earlier but you _____ (beat) me to it. I _____ (be) so busy lately that I totally _____ (forget).

Although it _____ (be) hard at first, I _____ (settle) in now and _____ (get) used to studying in the U.K. The school is very different from those in Hong Kong and at first I found it very strange. I'll give you some examples. All the students _____ (expect) to participate in class discussions. The teacher _____ (not/allow) anyone to sit quietly and just listen. Teachers never stand at the front and ask us to copy things. Instead, we have to come up with the answers and give our reasons for them!

Another area that took some _____ (adjust) to was the amount of team projects. We have them every week. At first, I found them annoying but I _____ (learn) the value of cooperating with others and now _____ (find) them a lot of fun.

You asked me about our dormitory. Well, it is kind of what you would expect - you _____ (see) movies like Harry Potter so you should know what I mean! It's quite old-fashioned but then we have all the mod cons like wi-fi. Sometimes, when our dormitory matron _____ (sleep), we have pyjama parties and eat candy in our beds! Thank goodness there are no CCTV cameras _____ (instal) or we could be in big trouble.

Overall, I love my new school. I _____ (attach) some pictures to this e-mail. One day, I hope you _____ (come) over and visit and I can show you around!

Please say 'hi' to all my classmates in Hong Kong and tell them I miss them and _____ (look) forward to _____ (see) them for our reunion in the summer! Hope to hear from you soon.

Best wishes,

James

Exercise 2 - Answers

Complete the following text using the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

Dear Roy,

It was great to get your e-mail last night. I must admit ***I had planned*** (plan) to e-mail you earlier but you ***beat*** (beat) me to it. I ***have been*** (be) so busy lately that I totally ***forgot*** (forget).

Although it ***was*** (be) hard at first, I ***have settled/am settling*** (settle) in now and ***have got/getting*** (get) used to studying in the U.K. The school is very different from those in Hong Kong and at first I found it very strange. I'll give you some examples. All the students ***are expected*** (expect) to participate in class discussions. The teacher ***does not/doesn't allow*** (not/allow) anyone to sit quietly and just listen. Teachers never stand at the front and ask us to copy things. Instead, we have to come up with the answers and give our reasons for them!

Another area that took some ***adjusting*** (adjust) to was the amount of team projects. We have them every week. At first, I found them annoying but I ***have learned*** (learn) the value of cooperating with others and now ***find*** (find) them a lot of fun.

You asked me about our dormitory. Well, it is kind of what you would expect - you ***have seen*** (see) movies like Harry Potter so you should know what I mean! It's quite old-fashioned but then we have all the mod cons like wi-fi. Sometimes, when our dormitory matron ***is sleeping*** (sleep), we have pyjama parties and eat candy in our beds! Thank goodness there are no CCTV cameras ***installed*** (instal) or we could be in big trouble.

Overall, I love my new school. I ***have attached*** (attach) some pictures to this e-mail. One day, I hope you ***will come*** (come) over and visit and I can show you around!

Please say 'hi' to all my classmates in Hong Kong and tell them I miss them and ***look*** (look) forward to ***seeing*** (see) them for our reunion in the summer! Hope to hear from you soon.

Best wishes,

James