

Verb Tenses

Teaching

A **tense** is a verb form that shows the time of an action or condition. There are three simple tenses and three perfect tenses. The set of forms that express the different tenses of a verb is called the **conjugation** of the verb. Below, only the present tense and present perfect tense of *aim* are fully conjugated.

Simple Tenses

Singular		Plural
Present Expresses an action as it happens, or that happens regularly, or is generally true. (Also see note below.)		
1st Person	I aim	we aim
2nd Person	you aim	you aim
3rd Person	he/she/it aims	they aim
Past Expresses an action that occurred in the past.		
3rd Person	he/she/it aimed	they aimed
Future Expresses an action that will occur in the future.		
3rd Person	he/she/it will aim	they will aim

Perfect Tenses

Singular		Plural
Present Perfect Shows that an action was completed at an indefinite time(s) in the past, or started in the past but continues in the present.		
1st Person	I have aimed	we have aimed
2nd Person	you have aimed	you have aimed
3rd Person	he/she/it has aimed	they have aimed
Past Perfect Shows that an action preceded another action in the past.		
3rd Person	he/she/it had aimed	they had aimed
Future Perfect Shows that an action in the future will precede another future action.		
3rd Person	he/she/it will have aimed	they will have aimed

Note: The **historical present tense** describes a past event as if it were happening now (*As the British soldiers trudge back to Boston, the farmers, hidden in the bush, aim at them.*)

Using Verb Tenses

Underline the form of the verb that correctly completes the sentence. On the blank, write the tense of the verb.

- In April 1775, the Americans (fought, had fought) British troops at the battles of Lexington and Concord, the first battles of the American Revolution.
- Before the first battle, the British (have passed, had passed) the Intolerable Acts.
- A famous painting (depicts, will depict) George Washington crossing the Delaware.
- A newspaper headline in September, 1777, could have read, "The British (had captured, have captured) Philadelphia."
- General Prescott (told, has told) his men not to fire on the British "until you see the whites of their eyes."
- Before the war began, the British (had believed, have believed) they would win easily.
- In 1783, two years after the British (had surrendered, have surrendered) at Yorktown, the Treaty of Paris, recognizing American independence, was signed.

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CHAPTER 4

Verb Tenses

More Practice

A. Using Verb Tenses

Underline the form of the verb that correctly completes the sentence. On the blank, write the tense of the verb.

1. By the time Cheryl went to bed, she (finished, had finished) reading *Moby Dick*. _____
2. When a witness takes the oath, he or she (swears, swore) to speak the truth. _____
3. Teri couldn't count the number of times she (takes, has taken) pictures of her dog. _____
4. By this time next year, my brother (will graduate, will have graduated) from college. _____
5. Yesterday, a bee (stung, has stung) me. _____
6. When I heard the intruder, I (sprang, have sprung) from my bed. _____
7. If you take that train, you (will arrive, will have arrived) in Chicago tomorrow. _____
8. Because of yesterday's rains, the river (has overflowed, had overflowed) its banks today. _____
9. Analogies (puzzle, puzzled) many students taking aptitude tests. _____
10. Beginning next Tuesday, Juan (will travel, will have traveled) to Antigua. _____

B. Correcting Verb Tenses

In each sentence below, change the underlined verb to show the correct order of events. Write the correct verb form on the line to the right

1. For almost 200 years, we recall the founders of our nation each Fourth of July. _____
2. The city of Boston celebrate Evacuation Day on March 17, the date when British troops evacuated the city. _____
3. The British evacuated because General Washington place 50 stolen canons from Fort Ticonderoga around the city. _____
4. Each of the 13 states had considered itself a separate entity before they adopt the Articles of Confederation. _____
5. By the end of 2007, our country be united under the Constitution for 230 years. _____
6. Prior to 1760, the British tax the colonists rather lightly. _____
7. In 1775, patriot Patrick Henry say, "Give me liberty or give me death!" _____

Verb Tenses

Application

A. Using Verb Tenses

Rewrite the sentence below four ways, changing the tense of its verb to each tense indicated. Add phrases or clauses as needed to show the correct use of the new verb tense.

SENTENCE I plan my activities.

EXAMPLE (past perfect) *Before I started off on my trip, I had planned my activities for every stop.*

1. (past) _____

2. (present perfect) _____

3. (future) _____

4. (future perfect) _____

B. Correcting Verb Tenses

Revise the underlined verbs in the following paragraph to correct errors and show the proper sequence of events. Write the correct form of the verb above each one.

The Continental Congress already established the Articles of Confederation before the American Revolution ended. The Articles have set up a loose confederation. This arrangement allows each state to keep its sovereign independence. The former colonies, at first, preferred not to be subject to a central government. Several years will pass before the 13 states developed the cooperation needed for adopting the Constitution. Now people will take the Constitution for granted. It is unfortunate that many people forgot the strong debate that took place between the ratification of the Articles of Confederation and the ratification of the Constitution.