

Exercise: Put the verbs between brackets into the simple past or the past continuous tense.
Justify your answers.

- 1- I (make) a cake when the light went out. I had to finish it in the dark.
- 2- I didn't want to meet Paul so when he entered the room I (leave).
- 3- Unfortunately when I arrived Ann just (leave), so we only had time for a few words.
- 4- He (watch) TV when the phone rang. Very unwillingly he (turn) down the sound and (go) to answer it.
- 5- He was very polite. Whenever his wife entered the room he (stand) up.
- 6- The admiral (play) bowls when he received news of the invasion. He (insist) on finishing the game.
- 7- When I arrived she (have) lunch. She apologized for starting without me but said that she always (lunch) at 12.30
- 8- He always (wear) a raincoat and (carry) an umbrella when he walked to the office.
- 9- What you (think) of his last book? ~ I (like) it very much.
- 10- I (share) a flat with him when we were students. He always (complain) about my untidiness.
- 11- He suddenly (realize) that he (travel) in the wrong direction.
- 12- I just (open) the letter when the wind (blow) it out of my hand.
- 13- The burglar (open) the safe when he (hear) footsteps. He immediately (put) out his torch and (crawl) under the bed.
- 14- When I (look) for my passport I (find) this old photograph.
- 15- You looked very busy when I (see) you last night. What you (do)?
- 16- The boys (play) cards when they (hear) their father's step. They immediately (hide) the cards and (take) out their lesson books.
- 17- He (not allow) us to go out in the boat yesterday as a strong wind (blow).
- 18- As I (cross) the road I (step) on a banana skin and (fall) heavily
- 19- I still (lie) on the road when I (see) a lorry approaching.
- 20- How you (damage) your car so badly? ~ I (run) into a lamp-post yesterday. ~ I suppose you (drive) too quickly or were not looking where you (go)
- 21- She was very extravagant. She always (buy) herself new clothes.

Key answers :

Sentence Number	Answer	Justification
01	I was making	One action interrupted by another (Past simple Vs past Conts)
02	I left	The sentence “I didn't want to meet” indicates a more deliberate action (using the past simple)
03	When I arrived Ann was just leaving	The use of the past conts indicates that the speaker and Ann met each other and they talked for few minutes. “so we only had time for a few words”
04	He was watching TV when the phone rang Turned - Went	One action interrupted by another Successive actions
05	Stood Up	Past habit
06	Was playing - received Insisted	One action interrupted by another Deliberate action
07	When I arrived, she was having lunch She always lunched	One action interrupted by another i.e., his arrival interrupted her lunch Past Habitual Action
08	Wore - carried	Past Habitual Actions
09	What did you think? I liked it	Justification 01: Verb of mental activity (i.e., used in simple tenses) Justification 02: Certain action i.e., the speaker was certain that the receiver had already read the book. Verb of emotion (i.e., used in simple tenses)
10	I was sharing a flat when we were students He was always complaining	Two parallel actions which were happening at the same time (i.e., past Conts Vs past Conts) “Always” used with the Conts tense to indicate “ complaining ”
11	Realized - was travelling	One action interrupted by another
12	There are two possibilities: 1st : I was opening – blew 2nd : I opened – blew	Justification 01: One action interrupted by the other i.e., the wind blew the letter out of his hands when he was opening it Justification 02: successive actions. Once the letter was completely opened, the wind blew it out of his hands successively
13	Was opening – heard Put - crawled	One action interrupted by another Successive actions (immediately)
14	Was looking - found	One action interrupted by another
15	Saw	Definite time (Last night)

	What were you doing?	More polite question
16	Were playing – heard Hid - took	One action interrupted by another Successive actions (they are considered also as deliberate actions)
17	He did not allow us A strong wind was blowing	Definite time (yesterday) + Deliberate action Conts Action
18	I was crossing – stepped - fell	One action interrupted by two actions (was crossing) (stepped + fell) Justification 02: (Stepped + fell) are also considered as successive actions.
19	Was lying – saw	One action interrupted by another
20	How did you damage your car? Ran You were driving You were not looking	Certain action. The speaker was certain that the car had already been damaged. Definite time (yesterday) Non certain actions (I suppose)
21	She was always buying	The use of the adjective “ extravagant ” indicates that the speaker is complaining rather than describing a fact. Complaining

Best of Luck