



MINI LESSON 22: PAST CONTINUOUS (WITH "WHILE" AND "WHEN")

Objective:

Learn how to use the **past continuous tense**, especially in sentences with "**while**" and "**when**."

GRAMMAR EXPLANATION

The **past continuous** describes an action that was *in progress* at a specific moment in the past.

◆ Structure:

Subject + was/were + verb-ing

Subject	Be Verb	Example Verb
I / He / She / It	was	watching
You / We / They	were	studying

◆ "While" vs. "When"

- **While** = two **long** actions happening at the same time.
*Example: I was cooking **while** he was watching TV.*
 - **When** = a **short** action interrupts a longer action.
*Example: I was sleeping **when** the phone rang.*
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PRACTICE 1: Choose the correct option.

1. I ____ (was reading / read) a book when the lights went out.
 2. While she ____ (was cleaning / cleaned), her brother was doing homework.
 3. They were playing soccer ____ (while / when) it started to rain.
 4. I saw a strange animal ____ (while / when) I was walking in the forest.
 5. We ____ (watched / were watching) a movie when the doorbell rang.
 6. While I was studying, my mom ____ (was cooking / cooked) dinner.
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PRACTICE 2: Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

1. I _____ (drive) home when I saw the accident.
 2. While we _____ (have) lunch, the dog barked.
 3. She _____ (listen) to music when her phone rang.
 4. While he _____ (take) a shower, the lights went out.
 5. The kids _____ (not sleep) when the storm started.
 6. I _____ (not pay) attention while the teacher was explaining.
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PRACTICE 3: Write your own sentences.

Use the prompts to write complete sentences with **while** or **when**.

1. I / cook / the phone / ring
 2. We / walk / it / start / rain
 3. He / study / his friends / arrive
 4. They / play / the power / go out
 5. She / not listen / the teacher / ask a question
 6. I / try / call you / you / sleep
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Answer Key

◆ Practice 1:

1. **was reading**
 2. **was cleaning**
 3. **when**
 4. **when**
 5. **were watching**
 6. **was cooking**
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◆ Practice 2:

1. **was driving**
 2. **were having**
 3. **was listening**
 4. **was taking**
 5. **were not sleeping**
 6. **was not paying**
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◆ Practice 3: (Answers will vary)

Examples:

1. I was cooking **when** the phone rang.
2. We were walking **when** it started to rain.
3. He was studying **when** his friends arrived.
4. They were playing **when** the power went out.
5. She was not listening **when** the teacher asked a question.
6. I was trying to call you **while** you were sleeping.