

## 2.4. PAST TENSE

A verb indicated action, condition or process. The term ‘tense’ is used to refer to different forms of the verb indicating time of action. Only a person, having a good understanding of tense will be able to write and speak correctly without any ambiguity. Those who do not stick to a particular structure for a particular purpose, may intend to say something, but it may be interpreted the other way. This brings out the fact that it is mandatory to have a clear concept about the use of different tense structures for different purposes of time and action.

### SIMPLE PAST

#### USAGE

1. To express action that began and ended a particular time in the past.

Eg. We went to Goa last year.

2. An action started and completed in the past.

Eg: She worked in GH for 10 years

3. An action that took place regularly in the past. (‘used to’ is used)

Eg: She used to play in the evening when she was young.

4. When interrogating about past actions

Eg: When did you have your schooling?

Keywords: yesterday, last week, last month, last year, recently, 1947 etc

### PAST CONTINUOUS

#### USAGE

#### EXAMPLE

- |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. An interrupted action.           | I was reading the novel when Ram came |
| 2. A continuous action in the past. | I was having many friends at college. |

Keywords: when, while
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### PAST PERFECT

#### USAGE

#### EXAMPLE

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Predicting actions likely to happen in future.<br>exams.            | You will pass in the              |
| 2. To express willingness to do something.                             | I will help you.                  |
| 3. To express a decision made at the time of speaking.<br>Short while. | I will call on you in a           |
| 4. Used in question tags.  | Let's leave this place, shall we? |

Be forms: shall be, will be

Key words: tomorrow, next week, next month, next year, in 2025, etc.

### SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

It is one of the important chapters while learning grammar. It is as important as tense and voice. Learning the rules for subject-verb agreement is a must to write error free sentences. There are many rules to be followed while writing a form of a verb which should follow the subject.

- The verb has to agree in number with a noun.  
Mango is generally sweet. -  
Mangoes are generally sweet  
The quality of the mango is good.  
The quality of the mangoes is good quality' should be considered and not 'mangoes'
- The qualities of the people are generally noble,  
His knowledge of Indian vernaculars is far beyond the common.

2. Two or more singular nouns joined by 'and' should have a plural verb.  
Mango and banana are sweet.  
Fire and water do not agree.  
Gold and silver are shiny metals.
3. If two or more singular nouns suggest one idea, it requires singular verb.  
Bread and butter is his food  
Time and tide waits for no man.  
My friend and colleague has come.  
Fire and water do not agree.
4. Two singular subjects connected by 'or' take singular verb.  
Our happiness or our sorrow does not come from others.  
Either the cat or the dog is at the entrance.  
Neither compliment nor accusation shakes him.
5. Words joined by 'with', 'as well as' take singular verb.  
The house, with all furniture, is insured.  
The teacher, with students is going for educational trip.  
Gold, as well as silver has fallen in price.
6. Two singular subjects connected by 'or' take singular verb. Our happiness or our sorrow does not come from others.  
Either the cat or the dog is at the entrance.  
Neither compliment nor accusation shakes him.
7. If the subject differs in number, the verb must follow the subject that precedes it.  
  
Neither the chairman nor the director is present at the function.  
Neither the chairman nor the directors are present at the function.  
Neither the directors nor the actor was present.  
  
Neither the director nor the actors were present.
8. Each, Everyone and many a' should be followed by a singular verb:  
  
Each of these metals is found in Asia.  
  
Every one of the boys loves to ride bike.
9. Some nouns take singular verb.  
  
The news is not true.

Physics is interesting.

The wages of sin is death.

A pair of scissors cuts nice.

10. 'Pains' and 'means' take singular or plural verb according to the sense of the sentence.

Great pains have great rewards.

Much pains is taken

All means of transport have been used

The means tried by you is enough.

11. The nouns singular in form but plural in meaning take a plural verb.

Two dozen cost one hundred rupees. (correct)

Two dozen costs one hundred rupees. (incorrect)

None though singular takes a plural verb

None were brave. (correct)

12. A collective noun takes a singular verb when taken as a whole or united.

The collective noun takes a plural verb when it is in divided state in sense.

The committee has sent a notification.

The committee have different opinions.

The committee has sent its notice.

13. When the plural noun represents a single work or object, it takes a singular verb

The United States has a big army.

Wuthering Heights is an interesting novel. 290h

14. When the plural noun denotes some quantity, it takes a singular verb.

Five kilometers is not a long distance.

Fifty thousand rupees is a sizeable amount.

**Fill in the blanks with the correct verb that agrees with the subject**

- One of my friends \_\_\_\_\_ (**has**, have) gone to Zambia.
- Oil and water \_\_\_\_\_ (**do**, does) not mix.
- She or her roommate \_\_\_\_\_ (**was**, were) present here.
- Everyone \_\_\_\_\_ (**is**, are) present.
- Pencils \_\_\_\_\_ (is, are) short.
- Bread and butter \_\_\_\_\_ (**is**, are) my favorite breakfast.
- Mr. Ashok, as well as his wife, \_\_\_\_\_ (**is**, are) a vegetarian.
- My sister, along with her two children, \_\_\_\_\_ (**has**, have) arrived.
- Arabian Nights \_\_\_\_\_ (is, are) an interesting book.
- Each man and each woman \_\_\_\_\_ (**has**, have) a vote.
- Neither he nor I \_\_\_\_\_ (**has**, have) money to spare for this.
- Meena, Nisha and Rita (is, **are**) great friends.
- Thousand rupees \_\_\_\_\_ (is, are) too much for this bag.
- There \_\_\_\_\_ (is, **are**) fifty benches in this room.
- The audience \_\_\_\_\_ (**has been**, have been) waiting for long.

**Exercises****Subject verbs Agreement: Choose the correct option.**

1. The police ----- (has/have) enquired the case.
2. Mathematics -----(is/are) an interesting subject.
3. She, along with her classmates----- (has/have) decided to go on field trip.
4. The introduction of the programs----- (is/are) catchy.
5. Fools and money----- (is/are) parted.
6. The horse and carriage----- (wait/waits) near the entrance.

7. Either Jack or his friends------(sing/sings).
8. Either my friend / I------(is/am) mistaken.
9. Many a student------(does/do) not know many formula by heart.
10. None------(is/are) so deaf to hear him.

