



Past Continuous Common Mistakes

Past Continuous

There are four common mistakes that English learners make in the past continuous tense. Let's review them, so you can avoid these mistakes!



I was needing a pen all morning

Common Mistakes

I was needing a pen all morning



Need is a stative verb. Stative verbs cannot be used in the past continuous tense. Instead, they must use the past simple tense.

Common Mistakes

I was needing a pen all morning



I needed a pen all morning

Past Continuous

We have attached a list of the most common stative verbs underneath this presentation.



I waiting for him at the bus stop

Common Mistakes

I waiting for him at the bus stop



We must use all parts of the past continuous tense, including was/were (verb to be).

Common Mistakes

I waiting for him at the bus stop



I was waiting for him at the bus stop



I did swimming in the sea

Common Mistakes

I did swimming in the sea



Don't mix up the past simple and past continuous. Did is used in the past simple tense. The past continuous is was/were + present participle.

Common Mistakes

I did swimming in the sea



I was swimming in the sea



I was cooking when we was arriving

Common Mistakes

I was cooking when we was arriving 

The word “when” is used with the past simple tense (the interrupting event) whilst the other is the past continuous (long event). “While” is used with the past continuous tense.

Common Mistakes

I was cooking when we was arriving



I was cooking when he arrived

I was cooking while he was arriving