



# Module 1 – Verb Tenses & Narrative

Title: "Making Sense of Time in English"

## [Opening]

Hello and welcome back!

Let's look at some more examples to see how the choice between **present perfect** and **past simple** can change the meaning.

♦ *I've never been to Italy.*

→ This tells us about your life experience up to now.

♦ *I didn't go to Italy last summer.*

→ This refers to one specific time in the past.

Now, consider the questions:

➤ *Have you ever broken a bone?*

➤ *Did you break your leg when you fell last year?*

Both talk about injuries, but the first is general (in your life), and the second is about a particular moment.

### Common time expressions:

Use **present perfect** with:

- ever, never, already, yet, so far, just, recently  
*Ex: I've already finished my homework.*  
*Have you ever met a celebrity?*

Use **past simple** with:

- yesterday, last week, in 2010, when I was a child, two days ago  
*Ex: I visited Rome in 2019.*  
*She called you yesterday.*

♦ Tip: If the time is finished, use the **past simple**. If the time is still happening or not mentioned, use **present perfect**.



## [Section 2 – Past Perfect]

Let's add more depth to our understanding of the **past perfect**.

It helps us describe not just sequence, but also **cause and effect** in the past.

♦ *He was tired because he had worked all night.*

→ First he worked, then he felt tired. The cause is clear.

Compare: ♦ *I missed the bus because I had forgotten to set my alarm.*

→ The forgetting happened **before** missing the bus.

Without the past perfect, it's harder to know what happened first: ♦ *I forgot to set my alarm. I missed the bus.*

→ Two events, but the relationship isn't as clear.

### Mini Timeline:

1. Forgot to set alarm → past perfect
2. Missed the bus → past simple

We also use the past perfect in **reported speech**: ♦ *She said she had never seen the film before.*

♦ *He told me he had finished the report.*

And in **conditional sentences** (especially type 3): ♦ *If I had studied more, I would have passed the exam.*

### Example 2:

I had finished dinner before the movie started.

#### Timeline:

1. I finished dinner → earlier
2. The movie started → later

Correct sentence using past perfect:

"I had finished dinner before the movie started."

### Example 3:

They had studied English before they moved to the UK.



**Timeline:**

1. Studied English → earlier
2. Moved to the UK → later

✅ This shows preparation before an event.

Correct sentence using past perfect:

They had studied English before they moved to the UK.

**Example 4:**

We had never seen snow until we went to Canada.

**Timeline:**

1. Never saw snow → past life experience
2. Went to Canada → specific past event

✅ The past perfect "**had never seen**" gives context to the experience

Correct sentence using past perfect:

**We had never seen snow until we went to Canada.**

## [Section 3 – Future Forms]

Let's look more closely at each future form and when to use them.

### "Will" – Instant decisions & promises

- *I'll answer the phone!*
- *Don't worry, I'll help you.*

### Predictions (without evidence)

- *People will live on Mars one day.*
- *It will be hard, but we'll manage.*

### "Be going to" – Intentions & evidence-based predictions

- *I'm going to learn Spanish this year.* (intention)
- *Look at those clouds — it's going to storm.* (evidence)

### Present Continuous – Fixed arrangements

- *I'm flying to Paris on Monday.*
- *We're meeting the new client at 10.*

Note: These are planned events, usually already scheduled.

Quick comparison:

Expression	Use
I'll call her	spontaneous decision
I'm going to call her	planned action
I'm calling her tonight	confirmed arrangement

- ◆ *I'll call John later.* → Decision now
- ◆ *I'm calling John later.* → Appointment already arranged
- ◆ *I'm going to call John later.* → Already decided

### Time expressions with the future:

- With **will**: tomorrow, soon, next week
- With **going to/present continuous**: tonight, this weekend, on Monday



## [Mini-section – Future in the Past]

Let's dig a bit deeper into how we describe future plans from a **past viewpoint**.

We often use:

- **was/were going to**
- **would**

- ◆ *I thought she was going to resign.*
- ◆ *They told me they would arrive at 9.*

We also use it for plans that **didn't happen**: ◆ *I was going to bake a cake, but I didn't have time.*

- ◆ *He was going to apply for the job, but he changed his mind.*

It adds a layer of narrative perspective, especially in storytelling.

Compare: ◆ *She said she would send the file.* (reported speech)

- ◆ *I knew he was going to win the race.* (expectation from the past)

## [Recap & Outro]

When telling a story, English often moves between different tenses to show the **sequence**, **background**, and **current relevance** of events.

Here's how:

- **Past simple** sets the main events.
  - **Past perfect** adds background or earlier events.
  - **Present perfect** adds relevance to now or summarises experience.
  - **Future forms** project forward, even within a past-based story.
- ◆ *I had just finished the report when the power went out.*
  - ◆ *She has worked on five projects so far, and she will lead the next one.*
  - ◆ *He was going to call, but he forgot.*

Mastering this interplay makes your communication sound natural and fluent.



## Testo lezione 1: Sarah's Story – A Manager Reflecting on Her Career

*(Focus on Present Perfect vs. Past Simple, Past Perfect, and Future Forms)*

### Story Summary

This story follows Sarah, a successful marketing manager at GlobalTech, as she reflects on her professional journey and plans for the future. The narrative explores three different time perspectives: her current achievements and ongoing experiences, her past career at a previous company, and her future aspirations and scheduled activities. Sarah demonstrates how our personal and professional lives are interconnected across time, showing how past experiences shape present circumstances and influence future decisions. The story illustrates the natural flow of time in storytelling, moving seamlessly between what has happened, what is happening now, and what will happen next.

Through Sarah's experiences, we see how career progression involves continuous learning, adaptation, and planning. The narrative also touches on workplace relationships, professional development, and the importance of building on past experiences to create future opportunities. Sarah's story is relatable to anyone navigating their career path, making it an ideal context for understanding how different verb tenses work together to create coherent narratives about our lives and experiences.

### "Sarah's Career Journey"

Sarah sits in her office, looking at her computer screen with a satisfied smile. **She has worked** as a marketing manager for GlobalTech for three years now, and today marks a special milestone in her career.

**She has just received** an email from her CEO congratulating her on the successful launch of their latest campaign. The project was challenging, but Sarah feels proud of what she accomplished. **She has learned** so much since she started working here, and the experience **has made** her more confident in her abilities.

Reflecting on her journey, Sarah remembers her previous job. **She worked** at a small advertising agency for two years before joining GlobalTech.

**She lived** in a tiny apartment near the old office, and **she commuted** by bus every day. Those were difficult times, but they taught her valuable lessons.

The transition wasn't easy. When Sarah first arrived at GlobalTech, **she had never managed** such a large team before. **She had worked** only with small groups in her previous position, so the responsibility felt overwhelming. **She had studied** marketing theory at university, but real-world experience was completely different.

Looking ahead, Sarah has exciting plans. **She is going to present** her new strategy to the board next month.

**She will focus** on digital marketing trends and social media engagement. Her assistant **is meeting** with the design team tomorrow to discuss the visual elements of the campaign.



Sarah also has personal goals. **She is going to take** a course in data analytics next year because she believes it **will help** her understand customer behavior better. **She is going to travel** to the company's headquarters in New York next year for a conference.

Last week, Sarah had coffee with her former colleague, Mike. He told her about his new job, and she was surprised to learn that he **was going to quit** his position even before she left the previous company. He said he **would call** her when he settled into his new role, and indeed he did.

Sarah's phone rings, interrupting her thoughts. It's her manager calling about tomorrow's meeting. **She has prepared** all the necessary documents, and **she has reviewed** the quarterly reports. **She has been working** on this project for months, and finally, everything is coming together.