

PAST TIME CLAUSES - WHILE/WHEN/AS

As we said before, we use the Past Continuous tense to describe what was happening **at a specific moment in the past**.

- I was watching TV **at 8 o'clock yesterday**.

But, instead of a "time phrase" like -at 8 o'clock yesterday-, -at noon on Monday- or -at teatime-, we can say "WHEN" things were happening using a "**TIME CLAUSE**":

- I was watching TV **when mum came in**.

That means that we can locate an action in time using a **TIME PHRASE** (*at 8 yesterday*) or a **TIME CLAUSE** (*when mum came in*).

*Como ya hemos explicado, usaremos el Pasado Continuo para describir lo que estaba ocurriendo **en un momento concreto del pasado**.*

- I was watching TV **at 8 o'clock yesterday**. (*Yo estaba viendo la tele **ayer a las 8***)

*Pero, en lugar de un complemento circunstancial de tiempo como -ayer a las 8-, -el lunes a mediodía- o -a la hora del café-, podemos decir **CUÁNDO** estaba ocurriendo la acción utilizando una "**ORACIÓN SUBORDINADA DE TIEMPO**".*

- Yo estaba viendo la tele **cuando mamá entró**.

*Quiere decir esto que podemos situar la acción en el tiempo utilizando o bien un **COMPLEMENTO DE TIEMPO** (*at 8 yesterday*) o bien una **ORACIÓN SUBORDINADA** (*when mum came in*)*

TIME CLAUSES are always introduced by a **CONJUNCTION** (connector)

*Las **ORACIONES SUBORDINADAS** van encabezadas por una **CONJUNCIÓN** o conector.*

WHEN



**PAST
SIMPLE**

CUANDO

WHILE



**PAST
CONTINUOUS**

MIENTRAS

I was watching TV **when mum came in**

I was watching TV **while dad was reading**

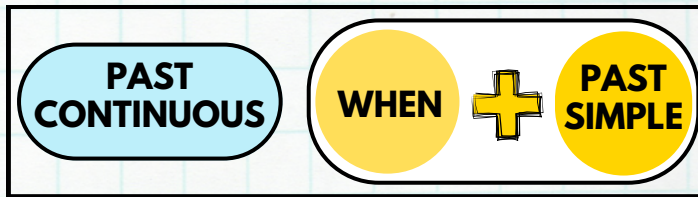
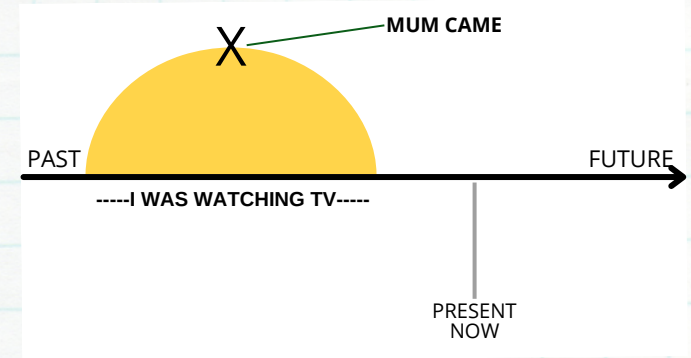
1

We describe an action that was happening in the past and a short action that interrupted it.

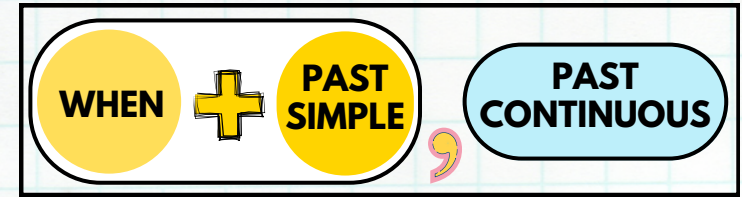
- What was happening = PAST CONTINUOUS
- What interrupted it = PAST SIMPLE

Quando describimos lo que estaba ocurriendo en el pasado y una acción repentina que lo interrumpe.

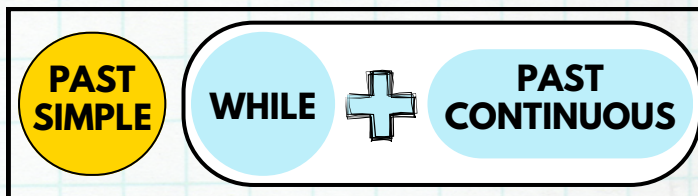
- *Lo que estaba ocurriendo va en = PAST CONTINUOUS*
- *La acción que lo interrumpe va en = PAST SIMPLE*



She was writing a letter *when the phone rang*
 We were having a picnic *when it started to rain*
 I was listening to music *when my son dropped a glass*
 My dad was working *when someone stole his car*



When the phone rang, she was writing a letter
When it started to rain, we were having a party
When my son dropped a glass, I was listening to music
When someone stole my dad's car, he was working



She broke her leg while she was riding her bike
We heard a noise while we were watching a horror film
The police caught him while he was stealing a car
He felt sick while he was swimming in the pool



While she was riding a bike, she broke her leg
While we were watching a horror film, we heard a noise
While he was stealing a car, the police caught him
While he was swimming in the pool, he felt sick

Ella estaba escribiendo una carta cuando sonó el teléfono

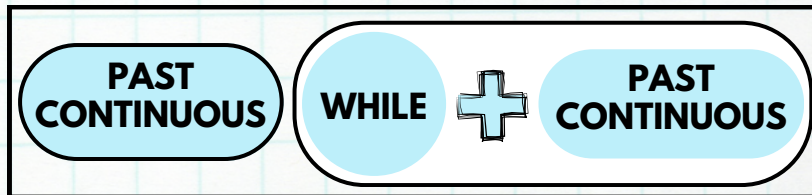
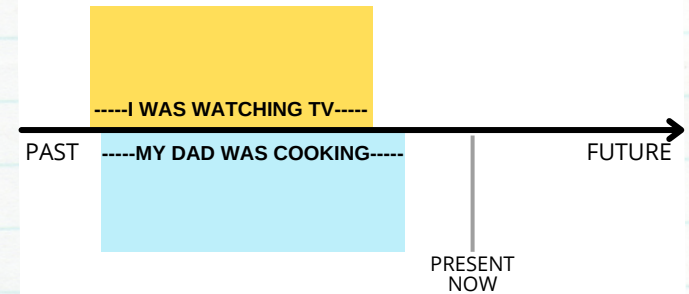
2

We describe two simultaneous actions, that were happening at the same time in the past.

- Both actions = PAST CONTINUOUS + WHILE

Quando describimos dos acciones simultáneas, que ocurrían al mismo tiempo en el pasado.

- Las dos acciones van en = PAST CONTINUOUS + WHILE



I was taking care of your Mom while you were working.
 Karen was cooking while her children were playing in the garden.
 Jason was riding his bike while his parents were watching him.
 I was having a nice cup of coffee while it was raining

While you were working, I was taking care of your Mom.
 While her children were playing in the garden, Karen was cooking
 While his parents were watching him, Jason was riding his bike
 While it was raining, I was having a nice cup of coffee.

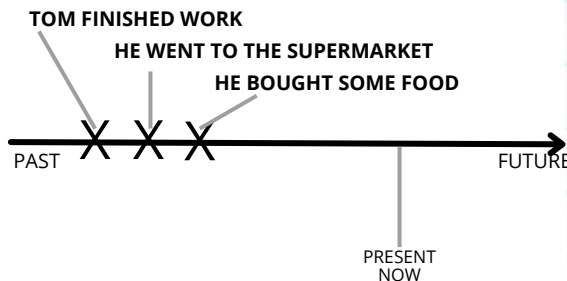
Karen estaba cocinando mientras los niños jugaban en el jardín



REMEMBER !

We use WHEN + Past Simple, Past Simple, Past Simple... to describe consecutive past actions in a narrative.

Recuerda que utilizamos WHEN seguido se una serie de verbos en PASADO SIMPLE para describir acciones que ocurrieron una tras otra en un relato o narración.



When Tom finished work, he went to the supermarket and bought some food
 When the teacher came in, he opened the book and he started talking