

Verb Tenses and Aspects in English

		Tense		
		Past	Present	Future
Aspects	Simple	Past Simple	Present Simple	Future Simple
	Progressive	Past Progressive	Present Progressive	Future Progressive
	Perfect	Past Perfect	Present Perfect	Future Perfect
	Perfect Progressive	Past Perfect Progressive	Present Perfect Progressive	Future Perfect Progressive

Examples



Look at the sentences below. They are all about eating Thai food, but the tense and aspect change the meaning of the sentences. What do you think each sentence means? For the future tense, imagine that the speaker has plans to eat Thai food at 2 pm the following day. *Please note that no contractions were used, but it is possible to use them with many of these sentences.*

positive statements		Tense		
		Past	Present	Future
Aspects	Simple	I ate Thai food yesterday.	I eat Thai food often.	I will eat Thai food tomorrow.
	Progressive	I was eating Thai food when my phone rang.	I am eating Thai food right now.	I will be eating Thai food at 2:00 pm tomorrow afternoon.
	Perfect	I had eaten Thai food before I visited Thailand.	I have eaten Thai food before.	I will have eaten Thai food by 3:00 pm tomorrow.
	Perfect Progressive	I had been eating Thai food until I discovered Japanese food.	I have been eating Thai food a lot lately.	I will have been eating Thai food for 15 minutes at 2:15 tomorrow afternoon.

negative statements		Tense		
		Past	Present	Future
Aspects	Simple	I did not eat Thai food yesterday.	I do not eat Thai food often.	I will not eat Thai food today.
	Progressive	I was not eating Thai food when my phone rang.	I am not eating Thai food right now.	I will not be eating Thai food at 1:30 pm tomorrow afternoon.
	Perfect	I had not eaten Thai food before I visited Thailand.	I have not eaten Thai food before.	I will not have eaten Thai food by 1:00 tomorrow.
	Perfect Progressive	I had not been eating Thai food, but then I discovered how delicious it is when I was in Thailand.	I have not been eating Thai food lately.	I will not have been eating Thai food for 15 minutes at 2:05 tomorrow afternoon.

yes/no questions		Tense		
		Past	Present	Future
Aspects	Simple	Did I eat Thai food yesterday?	Do I eat Thai food often?	Will I eat Thai food tomorrow?
	Progressive	Was I eating Thai food when my phone rang?	Am I eating Thai food right now?	Will I be eating Thai food at 1:30 pm tomorrow afternoon?
	Perfect	Had I eaten Thai food before I visited Thailand?	Have I eaten Thai food before?	Will I have eaten Thai food by 1:00 tomorrow?
	Perfect Progressive	Had I been eating Thai food often when we met?	Have I been eating Thai food lately?	Will I have been eating Thai food for 15 minutes at 2:05 tomorrow afternoon?