

4 Decide whether the verb form in *italics* is suitable or unsuitable.

- a) While I *had* a bath, someone knocked on the door. *unsuitable*
- b) Sally *didn't go* to a boxing match before.
- c) Harry tried to repair the car, but he *didn't* really know what he *was doing*.
.....
- d) What *did you wear* to the Ponsonby's party?
- e) *Were you eating* spaghetti every day when you lived in Italy?
- f) I *didn't* know you *had bought* a new car.
- g) They all wanted to believe her, but suspected she *was lying*.
- h) As Peggy walked home, she tried to remember what *happened*.
- i) 'What a terrible day!' thought Lucy. Everything *had gone* wrong!
.....
- j) Although it rained a lot, I *was enjoying* my holiday last year.

5 Put each verb in brackets into a suitable past verb form.

When Professor Mallory, the famous archaeologist, (1) *invited*

(invite) me to take part in his expedition to find the Lost City of the Himalayas, I (2) (not hesitate) to accept his invitation. Mallory

(3) (discover) an ancient map showing the position of the

city, although no European (4) (ever go) to the area before.

In fact, most of Mallory's colleagues either (5) (believe)

that the city (6) (never exist) or (7) (feel)

that it (8) (vanish) long ago and (9) (become) simply a legend. According to the Professor, the builders of the city

(10) (hide) it among the mountains in order to protect its

immense riches. He (11) (believe) that the descendants of

these ancient people (12) (still keep) themselves apart from

the rest of mankind for the very same reasons. So when we

(13) (set off) on a cool May morning towards the distant

mountains, each of us (14) (look forward) to exciting

discoveries. For a week or more we (15) (climb) higher and

higher, following the map, which Mallory (16) (study) from

time to time. Then one afternoon, while we (17) (rest) at the

top of a valley, we (18) (notice) that a rider on a horse

(19) (wave) at us from the other side of the valley. A rider

whose clothes (20) (shine) like gold!

6 Rewrite each sentence beginning as shown. Use a participle clause.

- a) Norman collected the parcel, but then he realised it was the wrong one.
After *collecting the parcel, Norman realised it was the wrong one.*
- b) Sue left the house but first she checked that she had her keys.
Before
- c) Mark was parking his car when he noticed the wing-mirror was broken.
While
- d) Julia cleaned the house, but then she fell asleep on the sofa.
After
- e) Brian bought a new television, but first he checked all the prices.
Before
- f) Alan was skiing in Switzerland and met his old friend, Ken.
While
- g) Kate took two aspirins, and then she felt a lot better.
After
- h) Sheila went out for the evening, but first she washed her hair.
Before

Key points

- 1 The past simple describes completed events in the past, such as the main events in a narrative. It can also describe habits and routines in the past.
- 2 The past continuous is used for:
 - a) background description.
 - b) actions in progress, often contrasted with a sudden event.
 The past continuous cannot be used to describe past routines and habits.
- 3 Participle clauses can introduce a clause giving the main event.
The subjects of both clauses must be the same.
- 4 The past perfect describes a past event which took place before another past event. If *before* or *after* is used, the past perfect is optional.
The past perfect is not used for an event that happened a long time ago in the past.
- 5 *Used to* only refers to past time, and has no present form.
- 6 *Would* can be used to describe habitual actions in the past, usually in writing. It does not make such a strong contrast with the present as *used to*. Compare:
Jim would always make his mother a cup of tea after lunch.
Jim used to drink tea, but now he prefers coffee.
Would cannot be used to describe states.
Sally used to be a dancer.

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