

1 Il Past Continuous si costruisce in questo modo:

AFFERMATIVA			
I/he/she/it	was	waiting	
You/we/they	were	waiting	
NEGATIVA			
I/he/she/it	was not/wasn't	waiting	
You/we/they	were not/weren't	waiting	
INTERROGATIVA			
Was	I/he/she/it	waiting?	
Were	you/we/they	waiting?	

Per le regole sulle variazioni ortografiche della forma in **-ing** (es. **waiting**), vedi la Tavola D a pag. 323.

(Per le risposte brevi, vedi l'unità 45.)

2 Si usa il Past Continuous per parlare di un'azione, o situazione, che era in corso in un momento particolare del passato (es. **at 7 p.m., in 1991**):

A: *What **were** you **doing** at 7 o'clock last night?*

B: *I **was driving** home from work.*



6.30

Driving



7.00



7.15

*I **was living** in Japan in 1991. (Ho vissuto lì dal 1990 al 1993.)*

3 Ora osserva bene:



*When I **walked** into the room, Ann **was writing** postcards and Keith **was reading**.*

(= Quando entrai nella stanza, Ann stava scrivendo cartoline e Keith stava leggendo.)

Si usa il Past Simple (**walked**) per descrivere un'azione completamente finita. Si usa il Past Continuous (**was writing**) per descrivere un'azione in corso nel passato. Spesso questa fa da sfondo o è interrotta da un'azione più breve, ma conclusa, espressa con il Past Simple.

4 Si usa **while** prima del Past Continuous:

*I met her **while** we **were working** for the same company. (**while** = mentre)*

Si usa **when** (NON **while**) prima del Past Simple:

***When** I met her, we **were working** for the same company. (**when** = nel momento in cui)*

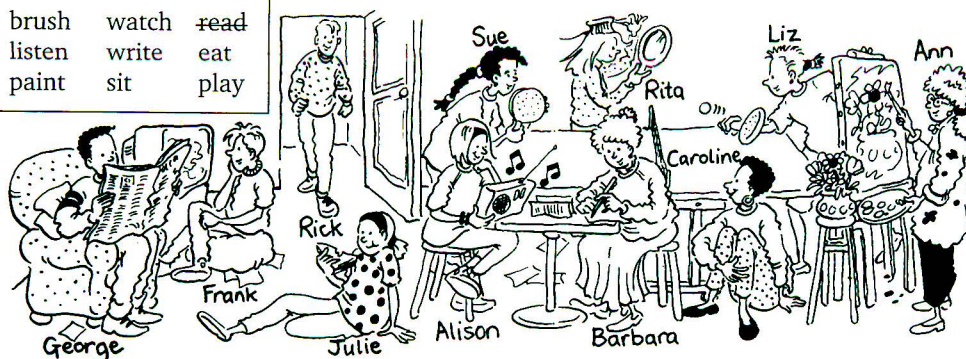
Esercizi

A Completa le frasi coniugando i verbi tra parentesi al Past Continuous.

- It **was snowing** (snow) when I left home this morning.
- I tried to explain my problem to her, but she (not/listen).
- He (talk) on the phone when I arrived.
- A lot of people (wait) for the 7.30 bus last night.
- I (live) in London when I met them.
- I nearly had an accident this morning. A car (come) towards me, but I moved quickly out of the way.
- At the end of the first half of the game, they (win).
- It was a sunny afternoon and people (sit) on the grass in the park. Then it suddenly started to rain.
- Which hotel (you/stay) in when you lost your passport?
- Fortunately, I (not/drive) too fast when the child walked into the road.
- I looked out of the window, and I saw that it (not/rain) anymore.

B Descrivi ciò che stavano facendo le persone nella figura quando Rick è entrato nella stanza. Coniuga i verbi del riquadro al Past Continuous.

brush	watch	read
listen	write	eat
paint	sit	play



- George was reading a newspaper.
- Julie a sandwich.
- Sue and Liz table tennis.
- Frank television.
- Caroline on the floor.
- Barbara a letter.
- Rita her hair.
- Alison to some music.
- Ann a picture.

C Leggi le informazioni su Shirley e Kevin e completa le frasi su di loro, usando il Past Continuous (**I was doing**) o il Past Simple (**I did**).

Shirley		Kevin	
1970-76	lived in New York	1972-80	lived in Washington
1973-76	studied at university	1973-75	did a course in Computing
1976	left university	1975-80	worked as a computer operator
1976-80	worked as a translator	1979	met Shirley
1979	met Kevin	1980-85	ran his own company
1982	married Kevin	1982	married Shirley

- In 1972 Shirley was living in New York.
- In 1974 Kevin in Washington.
- In 1974 Shirley at university.
- In 1974 Kevin a course in Computing.
- When Shirley university in 1976, Kevin as a computer operator.
- When Kevin Shirley, she as a translator.
- While Shirley as a translator, she Kevin.
- In 1982 Kevin his own company.
- While he his own company, Kevin Shirley.