ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

English Tenses Advanced Level MCQs Test With Answers 4

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Explanations

1. In 1619, the first African slaves _____ in Virginia, USA, and by 1790, their numbers in the USA _____ nearly 700,000.
✓ **B) arrived / had reached**
The first gap is a finished event at a stated past time (**in 1619**), so it takes the past simple **arrived**. **By 1790** marks a point in the past, and the growth was complete before it, so we use the past perfect **had reached**. Not **have arrived**: the present perfect cannot be used with a finished past date.

2. We _____ a lovely view of the Bosphorus and the bridges over it while the plane _____ over Istanbul.
✓ **C) got / was flying**
The flight over Istanbul was the longer background action in progress, so it takes the past continuous **was flying**. The view is a completed past event during that time, so it takes the past simple **got**. The pattern is **past simple + while + past continuous**.

3. When they _____ in Sydney Harbour, they _____ non-stop for three months.
✓ **A) anchor / will have been sailing**
After **when** in a future time clause we use the present simple (**anchor**), not **will**. The main clause looks back from that future moment at an activity lasting up to it (**for three months**), so it takes the future perfect continuous **will have been sailing**.

4. According to the new schedule, which the whole team have accepted, we _____ every Monday and Wednesday next term, but I'm sure we _____ back to our normal routine of once a week before long.
✓ **D) are going to train / will revert**
A decided plan for the future (**next term**) is expressed with **be going to**: **are going to train**. The second gap is the speaker's personal prediction (**I'm sure**, **before long**), so it takes **will revert**. Not **are training / reverted**: the past simple **reverted** cannot refer to the future.

5. The prospector ran into town in excitement because, at last, he _____ some gold at the site which he _____ for months.
✓ **D) had found / had been panning**
The finding happened before he ran into town, so it takes the past perfect **had found**. The panning had continued over a period up to that moment (**for months**), so it takes the past perfect continuous **had been panning**.

6. I expect you _____ bored with working at the Post Office by this time next year and _____ for a more interesting job.
✓ **C) will have become / will be looking**
By this time next year asks us to look back from a future point, so the change will be complete: future perfect **will have become**. At that same future moment the search will be in progress, so it takes the future continuous **will be looking**. Not **had become**: the past perfect refers to the past, not the future.

7. Listen! The coach _____ the strengths of our opponents because our team _____ against them before.
✓ **C) is explaining / haven't played**
Listen! shows the action is happening now, so we use the present continuous **is explaining**. **Before** (meaning up to now) with no past time given calls for the present perfect **haven't played**. Not **hadn't been playing**: there is no past reference point.

8. When I _____ the alterations to the company accounts, I was left in no doubt that the accountant _____ money from the firm.
✓ **A) saw / had been stealing**
Saw is a completed past event, and it matches **was left** in the main clause. The stealing had gone on over a period before the discovery, so it takes the past perfect continuous **had been stealing**. Not **was stealing**: the stealing came before the moment I saw the alterations.

9. According to the doctor, this time next week, I _____ around as normal and the cut on my foot _____ completely.
✓ **B) will be walking / will have healed**
This time next week marks a future moment. An action in progress then takes the future continuous **will be walking**. An action completed by then takes the future perfect **will have healed**.

10. Shadow puppets _____ in China and _____ as far as Turkey and Greece today.
✓ **D) originated / have spread**
The origin is a finished event in the distant past, so it takes the past simple **originated**. The spread up to the present (**today**) takes the present perfect **have spread**.

11. Over recent years, many skilled craftsmen and women _____ their jobs in the pottery trade in the UK, but gradually English porcelain _____ its reputation.
✔ E) have lost / is regaining
Over recent years describes a period up to now, so it takes the present perfect **have lost**. **Gradually** describes a change happening around now, so it takes the present continuous **is regaining**. Not **had been losing**: there is no past reference point for a past perfect.

12. After she _____ to turn up for our appointment for the third time, I _____ to meet her again.
✔ E) had failed / refused
Her failure to turn up came before the refusal, so it takes the past perfect **had failed**. The refusal is the later past event, in the past simple **refused**. Not **has failed / had refused**: this reverses the time order.

13. Since I took part in my first debating match, I _____ a member of the debating club, which I _____ most weekends.
✔ B) have been / attend
Since + a past event shows a state continuing up to now, so we use the present perfect **have been**. A regular habit (**most weekends**) takes the present simple **attend**.

14. By the first half of the 19th century, the potato _____ the staple food in Ireland. In 1845, a disease _____, which resulted in widespread starvation.
✔ C) had become / struck
By the first half of the 19th century is a past reference point, so the earlier change takes the past perfect **had become**. **In 1845** is a finished past time, so it takes the past simple **struck**. Not **has struck**: the present perfect cannot be used with a past date.

15. The origins of domestic poultry _____ uncertain, but experts believe that some breeds are descended from the Indian jungle-fowl, which still _____ in India today.
✔ D) are / exists
Both gaps describe present facts, so both take the present simple. The origins **are** uncertain now, and the jungle-fowl still **exists** today. The singular verb **exists** agrees with **the Indian jungle-fowl**.

16. In 1868, the US government _____ 7000 Navajo Indians to return to their homeland and, since then, they _____ one of the largest Indian tribes in the USA.
✔ A) allowed / have become
In 1868 is a finished past time, so it takes the past simple **allowed**. **Since then** shows a period from that time up to now, so it takes the present perfect **have become**.

17. In 1960, only 2000 American Indians _____ at university, while in 1970, only a decade later, this number _____ to 12000.
✔ B) were studying / increased
The first gap describes a situation in progress at a past time (**in 1960**), so it takes the past continuous **were studying**. The rise is a completed change in the past, so it takes the past simple **increased**. Not **will have increased**: 1970 is in the past.

18. Today we _____ a lot of tangerines at one pound per kilo, unlike yesterday, when we _____ very few customers.
✔ B) are selling / had
Today shows a temporary activity happening now, so we use the present continuous **are selling**. **Yesterday** is a finished time, so it takes the past simple **had**.

19. A: Isn't that your daughter playing outside without a coat on? She _____ a chill.

B: She has a thermal vest on under her pullover, but you have a point. I _____ her coat.
✔ D) will catch / will fetch
A's warning is a prediction about the future: **She will catch a chill**. B decides to act at the moment of speaking (**but you have a point**), and a sudden decision takes **will**: **I will fetch**. Not **am going to fetch**: that shows a plan made before speaking, and **catches** is wrong in any case.

20. The number of orders per week _____ all year and the sales manager is confident that we _____ our target.
✔ E) has been increasing / will reach
All year describes a continuing trend up to now, so it takes the present perfect continuous **has been increasing**. The manager's confident prediction about the future takes **will reach**.

21. As the police _____ the road, we _____ a time-consuming detour around the mountain.
✔ C) had closed / made
The road closure happened before the detour and caused it, so it takes the past perfect **had closed**. The detour is the later past event, in the past simple **made**.

22. I _____ some shopping during my lunch break, but I couldn't as I _____ awful because of my cold.
✔ A) was going to do / felt
Was going to expresses a past plan that did not happen, which the clue **but I couldn't** confirms. The reason is a past state, so it takes the past simple **felt**. Not **did**: that would mean the shopping actually happened.

23. By the time the work on their house is finished, they _____ the painters, decorators and carpenters a total of £8000. They _____ a beautiful kitchen, though.
✔ D) will have paid / will have
By the time + a future moment calls for the future perfect **will have paid**, because the payments will be complete by then. The second sentence is a simple future result, **will have**.

24. I feel certain that Greg _____ in his new business because he _____ so hard all the time.
✔ B) will succeed / works
I feel certain introduces a prediction, so it takes **will succeed**. **All the time** describes a habit, so it takes the present simple **works**.

25. Before Petar Preradović _____ poems in his native Croatian, he _____ all his poems in German.
✔ C) published / had written
Both events are in the past. The later one (publishing in Croatian) takes the past simple **published**. The earlier one takes the past perfect **had written**, which shows it came first.

26. I _____ some notes earlier and _____ to them during my presentation. In the event, however, I didn't use them once.
✓ C) had written / was going to refer
The notes were written before the presentation, so it takes the past perfect **had written**. **Was going to refer** shows a past intention that did not happen, which the clue **I didn't use them once** confirms.

27. Because of Istanbul's geographical location, it _____ a place of trade since civilisation _____.
✓ E) has been / began
Since + a past event shows a state continuing up to now, so the main clause takes the present perfect **has been**. The **since** clause names the starting point, a finished past event, so it takes the past simple **began**.

28. When Boris Yeltsin _____ on 31st December 1999, he _____ President of Russia for eight years.
✓ D) resigned / had been
The resignation is a finished event on a past date, so it takes the past simple **resigned**. The eight-year period lasted up to that past moment, so it takes the past perfect **had been**.

29. The circumference of a circle _____ 3.14159265 times its diameter no matter how small or large it is.
✓ A) measures
Scientific and mathematical facts that are always true take the present simple: **measures**. The phrase **no matter how small or large it is** shows the fact is general.

30. At present, British farmers _____ to the government because since the EC lifted the ban on British beef, the French _____ to buy any.
✓ B) are protesting / have refused
At present signals a temporary action happening now, so we use the present continuous **are protesting**. **Since** + a past event shows a situation continuing up to now, so it takes the present perfect **have refused**.

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