ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Mixed Tenses Advanced Level Test – Quiz (Online Exercise With Answers) 1

English Tenses Tests · 25 questions · Online test and questions PDF:
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Explanations

1. Tim was very upset yesterday because he _____ that he _____ his wallet.
✔ **C) realised / had lost**
The first gap is a past action yesterday, so it takes the past simple: **realised**. Losing the wallet happened before he realised it, so the second gap needs the past perfect: **had lost**. Not **had realised / lost**, because that reverses the order: the losing came first, not the realising.

2. While Mum _____ the VCD I hired, I _____ my assignment.
✔ **A) was watching / finished**
While introduces a longer background action in progress, so it takes the past continuous: **was watching**. The shorter, completed action in the main clause takes the past simple: **finished**. The other options mix present or future forms into a past-time sentence.

3. She _____ the house when I _____ to her after a long time.
✔ **B) had been cleaning / went**
The cleaning was going on for some time up to the moment of my visit, so we use the past perfect continuous: **had been cleaning**. The visit is a single past event, so it takes the past simple: **went**. The present perfect forms cannot be used with a finished past moment like **when I went**.

4. Some time ago, an interesting discovery _____ by archaeologists on the Aegean island of Kea.
✔ **C) was made**
Some time ago refers to a finished time in the past, and the discovery was made **by archaeologists**, so we need the past simple passive: **was made**. Not **has been made**, because the present perfect cannot be used with a finished past time expression like **ago**.

5. For the time being, we _____ for the exam, but this time tomorrow we _____ the best movie of this year.
✔ **B) are studying / will be watching**
For the time being describes a temporary situation now, so we use the present continuous: **are studying**. **This time tomorrow** refers to an action in progress at a future moment, which needs the future continuous: **will be watching**. Not **will have watched**, because that would mean the film is already finished by then.

6. James Bond always drank champagne in the novels although he _____ to wine by the time he _____ it to the silver screen.
✔ **A) had switched / made**
By the time + past simple (**made**) sets a past reference point, and the change to wine happened before that point, so it needs the past perfect: **had switched**. Not **switched / had made**, because the past perfect must go with the earlier action (the switch), not with the later one.

7. By the end of tomorrow, Dortmund _____ Chelsea from the Champions League.
✔ **D) will have eliminated**
By + a future time (**by the end of tomorrow**) shows an action that will be complete before that point, so we use the future perfect: **will have eliminated**. Dortmund is doing the eliminating, so the verb is active. Not **will have been eliminating**, because the continuous form is not used for a single completed result.

8. These days, people who _____ manual work often receive far more money than clerks who _____ in offices.
✔ **D) do / work**
The sentence states a general fact about the present, and the main verb is in the present simple (**often receive**), so both relative clauses also take the present simple: **do** and **work**. The present continuous would suggest a temporary situation, which does not fit a general statement about types of jobs.

9. The theatre company _____ a grant of £6,000 and it _____ a further £2,000 from elsewhere now.
✔ **B) has been given / is seeking**
Receiving the grant is a past event with a present result and no time given, so we use the present perfect passive: **has been given**. **Now** shows an action in progress at the moment, which needs the present continuous: **is seeking**. Not **was given / has sought**, because **has sought** does not match **now**.

10. She _____ me at the meetings only on Sundays as a child.
✔ **C) saw**
As a child refers to a finished period in the past, and **only on Sundays** describes a repeated past habit, so the past simple is used: **saw**. Not **was seeing**, because the past continuous is not used for regular past habits like this.

11. During the summer months, the monastery _____ very busy, for it is visited by thousands of people who _____ the pass in cars.
✔ **D) is / cross**
The sentence describes a regular situation every summer, and the other verb is in the present simple (**is visited**), so both gaps take the present simple: **is** and **cross**. Not **has been**, because nothing links the situation to a past starting point.

12. _____ and _____ me about your trip to Denver.
✔ **C) Sit down / tell**
This is an instruction to the listener, so both verbs are in the imperative, which is the base form: **Sit down** and **tell**. Two imperatives joined by **and** must have the same form, so **-ing** forms, **to**-infinitives and past forms are wrong.

13. Mother _____ Ali that he _____ to clean the garage after school.
✔ **E) reminded / had promised**
The reminding is a past event, so it takes the past simple: **reminded**. Ali's promise was made before the reminder, so in this reported structure it takes the past perfect: **had promised**. Not **had reminded / promised**, because that reverses the order of the two actions.

14. The injured _____ to the ambulance while the people _____ around the crime scene.
✔ **A) were being taken / were gathering**
Two actions were in progress at the same time in the past, linked by **while**, so both take the past continuous. The injured did not take themselves, so the first verb is passive: **were being taken**. The second is active: **were gathering**. Not **have been taken**, because the present perfect does not match a past scene.

15. I couldn't find out what _____.
✔ **C) had happened**
The main verb is in the past (**couldn't find out**), and the event happened before the attempt to find out, so the reported clause needs the past perfect: **had happened**. Present and future forms do not fit after a past reporting verb here.

16. “Hi, Mum!” _____ Peter, as he _____ himself down on the floor with a groan.
✔ **D) said / was throwing**
The speaking is a short completed action, so it takes the past simple: **said**. **As** shows another action in progress at the same moment, which takes the past continuous: **was throwing**. Not **was saying / threw**, because a short greeting is a single completed act, not a background action.

17. It was six o’clock and he _____ bored because he _____ for two hours.
✔ **E) was / had been waiting**
It was six o'clock sets a past moment, so his feeling at that moment takes the past simple: **was**. **For two hours** shows an action continuing up to that past moment, so it needs the past perfect continuous: **had been waiting**. Not **was waiting**, because the past continuous is not used with **for** + a period up to a past point.

18. The headline of the local newspaper was quite surprising: “100-Year-Old Woman Still _____ Alone on Farm”.
✔ **B) lives**
Newspaper headlines usually use the present simple to report facts and news, so the right form is **lives**. Headlines avoid longer forms such as the present perfect continuous (**has been living**). The past and future forms do not fit because the headline describes the woman's present situation.

19. In those times, life was hard and bitter for both of them. For a whole year, they _____ as complete strangers to each other as if they _____.
✔ **A) remained / had never met**
The story is told in the past simple (**life was hard**), so the main action over that year also takes the past simple: **remained**. After **as if**, an unreal situation in the past takes the past perfect: **had never met**. In fact, they had met. Not **had remained**, because there is no later past event for it to come before.

20. The young artist _____ of giving up painting, but soon she changed her mind and _____ her pictures to the gallery.
✔ **D) had thought / brought**
Her thoughts of giving up came before she **changed her mind**, so the earlier action takes the past perfect: **had thought**. The second gap is part of the same sequence as **changed**, so it takes the past simple: **brought**. Not **was thinking / has brought**, because the present perfect cannot follow a finished past sequence.

21. By ten o’clock, he _____ the engine and he _____ to paint the garage when I paid a visit to him.
✔ **E) had repaired / was going to start**
By ten o'clock + a past reference (**when I paid a visit**) shows an action completed before that time, so we use the past perfect: **had repaired**. The painting was planned but had not begun, so we use **was going to** for a future plan seen from the past: **was going to start**. Not **had started**, because he had not yet begun painting.

22. A few years ago, it _____ that certain cells of the human body never _____.
✔ **B) was found / die**
A few years ago needs the past simple, and the passive is used because the finder is not mentioned: **was found**. The discovery is a general scientific fact that is still true, so the reported clause can stay in the present simple: **die**. The plural subject **cells** needs **die**, not **dies**.

23. Since they _____ acting, they _____ in three plays, a television commercial and two TV dramas.
✔ **B) began / have performed**
After **since**, we use the past simple for the starting point: **began**. The main clause covers the time from then until now, so it takes the present perfect: **have performed**. Not **have been performing**, because a counted number of completed jobs (**three plays, a commercial and two dramas**) needs the simple form.

24. The peak _____ the prize for mountaineers, especially if it _____ before.
✓ A) is / has not been attained
The sentence states a general present truth, so the main verb is the present simple: **is**. **Before** (up to now) and the passive meaning (nobody has reached it) need the present perfect passive: **has not been attained**. Not **is / had not been attained**, because the past perfect does not go with a present main clause.

25. She last drove a car three years ago. Since she _____ an accident, she _____ a car for three years.
✓ C) had / hasn’t driven
Here **since** means **because**. The accident is a finished past event, so it takes the past simple: **had**. **For three years** up to now needs the present perfect: **hasn't driven**. Not **had had / hasn't driven**, because the past perfect needs a later past reference point, and this sentence is about the present.

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