ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Past Tenses MCQ Test With Answers + PDF Exercise 2

English Grammar Tests · 20 questions · Online test and questions PDF: https://englishtestsonline.com/past-tenses-test-2/

1	**A**	2	**E**	3	**C**	4	**B**	5	**A**	6	**A**	7	**B**	8	**B**	9	**D**	10	**A**
11	**C**	12	**C**	13	**C**	14	**C**	15	**C**	16	**B**	17	**C**	18	**D**	19	**D**	20	**D**

Explanations

1. I couldn’t imagine what _____ to her.
✔ **A) had happened**
The main verb **couldn't imagine** is in the past, and the event happened before that moment, so we use the past perfect: **had happened**. Not **will happen**, because after a past verb we would need **would happen**.

2. He felt that he _____ a mistake.
✔ **E) had made**
The feeling (**felt**) is in the past, and the mistake happened before it, so we use the past perfect: **had made**. Not **has made**, because the present perfect does not follow a past reporting verb like **felt**.

3. I _____ my homework when my mother came.
✔ **C) had already done**
The homework was finished before the mother came, so we use the past perfect for the earlier action: **had already done**. **Already** goes between **had** and the past participle.

4. Turning, I found my father sitting beside me on the sofa. I said, “How _____ you _____ here?”
✔ **B) did / get**
He arrived at a finished moment in the past, so we use a past simple question: **How did you get here?** After **did**, the main verb is in the base form (**get**).

5. Last summer we _____ a trip to Houston.
✔ **A) made**
Last summer is a finished past time, so we use the past simple: **made**. **Make a trip** means travel somewhere.

6. He _____ barely _____ of him until that evening.
✔ **A) had / heard**
Until that evening shows a time before a past moment, so we use the past perfect: **had barely heard**. Not **didn't hear**, because **barely** is already negative and cannot be used with **not**.

7. She _____ in Tashkent five years ago.
✔ **B) lived**
Five years ago is a finished past time, so we use the past simple: **lived**. The present perfect (**has lived**) cannot be used with **ago**.

8. I _____ English at school, so I know it a little.
✔ **B) learned**
The learning is finished in the past (**at school**), so we use the past simple: **learned**. Not **were learning**, because with **I** we say **was**, not **were**.

9. Yesterday at this time it _____.
✔ **D) was snowing**
Yesterday at this time shows an action in progress at a moment in the past, so we use the past continuous: **was snowing**.

10. We _____ he _____ ill.
✔ **A) did not know / was**
Both parts are in the past, so both verbs are past simple: **did not know** and **was**. After a past verb like **knew**, we normally use a past form in the second part, not **is** or **will be**.

11. The plane _____ at 4 and it _____ us 20 minutes to get there.
✔ **C) landed / took**
These are two finished actions, one after the other, so both are past simple: **landed** and **took**. We use **it took us 20 minutes** to say how long something lasted.

12. We _____ the station by 5 o’clock yesterday.
✔ **C) had reached**
By 5 o'clock yesterday means 'before that past time', so we use the past perfect: **had reached**. Not **have reached**, because the present perfect cannot be used with **yesterday**.

13. The Browns _____ out of town last Sunday and _____ a good time there.
✔ **C) went / had**
Last Sunday is a finished past time, so both verbs are past simple: **went** and **had**. **Have a good time** means enjoy yourself.

14. Before answering the telephone, he _____ the table.
✔ **C) had laid**
He laid the table first and answered the phone after that, so the earlier action is in the past perfect: **had laid**. Don't confuse **lay** (past: **laid**, 'put something down') with **lie** (past: **lay**, 'be in a flat position').

15. Who _____ at the meeting yesterday?
✔ **C) spoke**
Yesterday is finished past time, so we use the past simple: **spoke**. When **who** is the subject, we don't use **did**: **Who spoke?**

16. He met me with the bird in his hand. It _____ curiously at me.
✔ **B) was looking**
The story is in the past, and the bird's action was in progress when he met me, so we use the past continuous: **was looking**.

17. Nick _____ yesterday.
✔ **C) didn’t come**
Yesterday is finished past time, so we use the past simple negative: **didn't come**. Not **came not**, because we make past negatives with **didn't** + base verb.

18. I knew that he _____ the same paper each morning.
✔ **D) bought**
After a past verb like **knew**, a regular habit is usually in the past simple: **bought**. **Each morning** shows a repeated action, so we don't need the past perfect (**had bought**).

19. He asked the children who _____ the book.
✔ **D) had torn**
This is a reported question after the past verb **asked**. The book was torn before he asked, so we use the past perfect: **had torn**. Not **has torn**, because the present perfect doesn't follow a past reporting verb.

20. Who _____ on a hike yesterday?
✔ **D) went**
When **who** is the subject, we don't use **did**: **Who went? Yesterday** tells us to use the past simple. Not **did go**, because that form is only used for strong emphasis.

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