ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

The Past Continuous Tense or The Past Simple Tense Test A1 A2 Level Exercises

A1 A2 Level Grammar Tests · 16 questions · Online test and questions PDF:
https://englishtestsonline.com/the-past-continuous-tense-or-the-past-simple-tense-test-a1-a2-level-exercises/

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

Explanations

1. What _____ you _____ at ten yesterday?
✔ **B) were / doing**
We ask about an action in progress at a time in the past with **was/were + -ing**: **What were you doing at ten yesterday?**

2. Laura _____ a glass while she _____ the dishes.
✔ **D) broke / was washing**
The short action uses the past simple: **broke**. The longer action after **while** uses the past continuous: **was washing**.

3. I _____ my primary school teacher while I was shopping.
✔ **B) met**
Met is a short, finished action. It happened during the longer action **was shopping**. **Meet** becomes **met** in the past.

4. He was having dinner _____ the phone rang.
✔ **A) when**
Use **when** to show that a short action (**the phone rang**) happened during a longer action (**was having dinner**).

5. What _____ you do when you saw the accident yesterday morning?
✔ **C) did**
This is a past simple question, so we use **did** + base verb: **What did you do...?** Not **were**, because the main verb is **do**, not **doing**.

6. I _____ a monkey in the park while I was walking to work.
✔ **B) saw**
Saw is a short action. It happened during the longer action **was walking**. **See** becomes **saw** in the past.

7. Jason was studying English _____ he heard a strange noise.
✔ **B) when**
Use **when** before the short action: **was studying** (long action) **when he heard** (short action).

8. Mozart _____ his first piece of music when he was only five years old.
✔ **B) wrote**
This is a finished action in the past, so we use the past simple. **Write** becomes **wrote** in the past.

9. While my mother was cooking dinner, I _____ the table in the dining room.
✔ **D) was setting**
Two long actions happened at the same time, so both use the past continuous: **was cooking** and **was setting**.

10. We were _____ to music while they were playing football.
✔ **D) listening**
The past continuous is **was/were + -ing**: **We were listening**.

11. A: What _____ when he fell in the lake?

B: I _____ on the phone.
✔ **D) were you doing / was talking**
We ask and answer about an action in progress when something else happened, so both parts use the past continuous: **were you doing** and **was talking**.

12. Sue _____ an old bracelet while she _____ the attic.
✔ **B) found / was cleaning**
Short action: **found** (the past of **find**). Long action after **while**: **was cleaning**. Not **founded**: that is the past of **found**, which means to start a company.

13. The postman knocked on the door _____ we were having a party.
✔ **A) while**
Use **while** before a longer action in the past continuous: **while we were having a party**.

14. A: Why _____ this morning?

B: She _____ her finger while she _____ the salad.
✔ **D) was she crying / cut / was preparing**
Cut is the short action. The past of **cut** is also **cut**. **Was preparing** is the longer action after **while**. Ask about the action in progress with **was she crying**. Not **prepare**: we need a past form here.

15. My mother _____ all my clothes last weekend.
✔ **D) washed**
This is a finished action at a past time (**last weekend**), so we use the past simple: **washed**.

16. Mary was sleeping _____ the phone rang.
✔ **A) when**
Use **when** before the short action: **was sleeping** (long action) **when the phone rang** (short action).