

# Year 6 Past and Present Tense:

## A Step-by-Step Guide for Parents

This step-by-step explanation to past and present tense can help you support your child's learning at home. Each subject is broken down into manageable chunks, providing you with a simple guide to follow when exploring tenses together, either as part of homework or if you decide to give your child some extra support. Whether your child is creating new verbs out of adjectives and nouns by using suffixes, reading a wide variety of different text types and recognising the tenses that are used in each, or accurately using the variety of different present, past and future tenses that exist in the English language, you will find a step that matches where your child is at as well as some ideas for where to go next.

Within **this area of the website**, you will find a selection of resources intended to help your child learn about each step of this guide. Each step also contains a keyword or phrase that you can use to search the Twinkl site for more resources and activities, designed to support your child in achieving that stage. Simply type the keyword or phrase into the search bar and press enter to explore together.

 

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. The contents of this resource are for general, informational purposes only. This guide is intended to offer parents general guidance on what subject areas tend to be covered in their child's year group and where they could support their children at home. However, please be aware that every child is different and information can quickly become out of date. There are some subject areas that we have intentionally not covered due to the nature of how they are taught or because a trained professional needs to teach these areas. We try to ensure that the information in our resources is correct but every school teaches the national curriculum in its own way. If you would like further guidance or are unsure in any way, we recommend that you speak to your child's teacher or another suitably qualified professional.

# Past and Present Tense

## What Is Past and Present Tense?

Past and present tense is all about time. The tense is determined by when an action is happening. If an action has already happened, it is past tense. If it is happening now, it is present tense. If it is about to happen or will happen later, it is future tense.

Verbs are doing words. They describe an action (what is happening). During year 6, your child will begin to explore different ways to change words from one type to another. They will explore how to change a noun or adjective into a verb, by adding different suffixes (-ate, -ise, -ify, -en). For example:

tight (noun) - tighten (verb)

pure (noun) - purify (verb)

The past progressive tense is used to describe an ongoing activity in the past. Often, it is used to set the scene for another action. For example:

He was sleeping peacefully, when the bird crashed into the window.

She was painting the door, when the phone rang.

The present progressive tense is used for an ongoing action in the present. For example:

They are fishing in the river.

The train is arriving at the station.

The present perfect tense refers to actions or states that:

- occur at an indefinite time in the past and have a consequence in the present (e.g. 'We have talked before.' Here, it is clear the talking happened in the past, but not clear when or if it happened more than once and over a longer period of time. The talking is also impacting what is happening in the present);
- began in the past, but continue into the present (e.g. 'He has grown impatient over the last few hours.' Here, the growing impatience started in the past, but the person is still feeling impatient now).



As well as using the resources found in this category and the suggested keyword searches to help your child with exploring past and present tense, a few ideas for games and activities to help your child learn how to find out about past and present tense, in their spoken language, reading and writing, are outlined below.

### Where Am I?

Use these blank, **editable star labels** to record all the different forms of tenses that your child has learnt about (past simple, present simple, past progressive, present progressive, past perfect, present perfect and future tense). Place the stars face down and ask your child to choose one. They then imagine a place, thinking about what they can see, hear, smell and feel. As you ask your child questions about the place they are imagining, they answer using the tense that they chose. Can you guess the place they are describing and the tense they are using?

### Sensory Descriptions

Describing senses often happens in simple present tense (I can see a bright blue sky, I can feel a cool, fresh breeze). Encourage your child to describe what they can see, smell, hear or feel around them, but focus on using different tenses. Can they use progressive tense to describe what they can hear or perfect tense for what they can feel?

### Verbing - Real or Fake?

Verbing is the process of turning a noun into a verb. Sometimes these words are actual, grammatically correct verbs (e.g. booking, beautify, drinking) but some aren't (e.g. pilling, apartmentalise, herbing). For example, someone may be hospitalised when they go to hospital, but when they move into an apartment, they aren't apartmentalised. Can your child think of as many real and fake verbing words? Can they record them and sort them into real and fake categories?

### Read, Read, Read!

One of the best ways to explore past and present tense is to read as many different text types as possible with your child. Through stories, diaries, information texts, instructions and recipes, your child will explore a variety of different tenses and see how authors use them in many ways. Can your child spot sentences and phrases that are written in different tense forms? Can they identify which tense they are written in and explain their reasons?



## Step 1

### Suffix -ise

Verbs are doing words. They describe an action and are altered in order to change the tense of the sentence. Your child will begin to explore how to use different suffixes to change nouns or adjectives into verbs. This includes adding -ate, -ise or -ify to the end of an adjective or noun. For example:

terror (noun) - terrify (verb)

advert (noun) - advertise (verb)

germ (noun) - germinate (verb)

You could try playing suffix bingo together to help your child practise this skill at home.

## Reading Year 6

Over the course of year 6, your child will continue to read a wide range of different text types, including stories, poetry, diaries, instructions, explanations and debates. This is a great way for your child to explore the different tenses that are used in each style of writing and identify how authors use a range of tenses in their writing, including past progressive or present perfect tense. Your child will identify the purpose of different forms of writing and explain why a certain tense matches this purpose. Comprehension packs are a great way for your child to explore a variety of different styles of writing at home.

## Step 2

## Step 3

### Past and Present Tense

At this stage, your child will be familiar with most tense forms. They will have learnt about the different ways in which tenses are written and used and will now begin to focus on trying to use them in their own writing consistently and accurately. This display pack contains a variety of visual reminders for your child about the meaning of each type of tense. Can they give an example of each? Here are some examples of tenses that your child could explore in more detail.

## Simple Present and Past Tense

While simple past and present tense is one of the more straightforward tenses your child will use, it is always good for them to practise and ensure this knowledge is secure. Simple past tense describes an action that has already happened whereas simple present tense describes an action that is happening now. To revisit these tense forms, your child could try identifying whether the sentences in this PowerPoint quiz are past or present tense.

## Step 3a

## Step 3b

### Present Progressive Tense

The present progressive tense is used to describe an ongoing action in the present. For example:

They are fishing in the river.

The train is arriving at the station.

Your child could use this dice game to explore these types of tense, using the dice to generate different challenges and creating spoken examples of each. Can they think of some examples that match each type of progressive tense?



## Step 3c

### Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense refers to completed events of the past, that happened before another action took place. For example:

After Sofie had finished her work, she went to lunch.

I washed the floor when the painter had gone.

Using these visual display cards can be a great way to recap the different tenses with your child and help them remember what each one means. Can they then create some examples of their own, using the information they have found?

# Explore and Discover More

Twinkl Go! is a digital platform, hosting interactive content such as videos, games, audiobooks and more. Twinkl Go! enables digital content to be streamed to your computer or mobile device.



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Twinkl Book Club is our book subscription service. Enjoy our original works of fiction in beautiful printed form, delivered to you each half-term and yours to keep!

Twinkl Boost is a range of intervention resources, created to support and lift learning with children at every level. These include our easy-to-use SATs and Phonics Screening resources.



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Imagine resources are designed to help your children to think creatively, question and imagine. Every week, a new topic consisting of five photos, each with related activities, is created.

Twinkl Originals are engaging stories written to inspire pupils from EYFS to KS2. Designed to encourage a love of reading and help curriculum-wide learning through accompanying resources.



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Twinkl Kids' TV is our wonderful YouTube channel dedicated to fun and informative video-style resources full of new and creative activities you can try at home!