

Year 1 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 fiction and stories together, either as part of homework or if you decide to give your child some extra support. Whether your child is identifying things that happen in the past and present and recognises verbs as being action words, or they are beginning to use the spelling patterns for adding -ed and -ing to verbs to change the tenses, 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 However, please be aware that every child is different and information can quickly become out of date.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.

What Is Past and Present Tense?

Past and present tense are 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). Your child will start to collect together a variety of different action words that they can use. They will act out different actions (e.g. jumping, running, dancing, skipping) and explore what verbs mean.

Often, in order to change the tense of a verb, the verb itself has to be changed in some way. This can often involve adding the suffix -ed or -ing to the verb. For example, I **played** (past tense) football yesterday, I **play** (present tense) football or I am **playing** (present tense) football. Learning the spelling rules for adding -ed and -ing is a key skill for your child to learn.

Eventually, these past and present tense verbs will be used in simple sentences by your child. This will combine everything that your child has learnt to decide if the sentence is happening now or in the past, which version of the verb to use, how to add -ed or -ing to the verb and put this all together into a short sentence.

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, both in their spoken language, reading and in their writing, are outlined below.

What Did You Do Today?

At the end of the day, try asking your child what they did today. Focus on them using the past tense version of verbs to describe some of the actions they have done. Then ask what they are doing now - focus on present tense verbs to describe them.

Garden Sorting Tenses Game

Label stones (or some similar object found outdoors) in the garden with verbs and past tense versions of verbs. Can your child sort the verbs into piles of the correct tenses? Can they put all the past tense verbs together?

Your child could play this **Twinkl Go! game** which involved sorting the verbs into the correct bowl, based on if it is past, present or future tense, in order to feed the hungry hamster. Please note, you need an Ultimate subscription to access Twinkl Go!

Flower Petal Verbs

You could use **this flower petal template** to create two flowers. In the middle of the first flower, write 'verb'. On the petals of this flower, ask your child to write as many actions as they can think of (e.g. jump, kick, dance) on the petals and stick them around the middle. In the middle of the second flower, write 'past tense'. On the petals of this flower, ask your child to write the past tense versions of the verbs they listed before and stick them around the middle.

What Does the Thing Do?

In the middle of a piece of paper, ask your child to draw an animal or thing (for an extra challenge, they could build a representation of the thing using playdough or building blocks). Around the outside of this drawing, encourage your child to write as many actions (verbs) that the creature or thing can do. For example, if they drew a dog, they may write bark, run, jump, eat, etc.

Step 1

Verbs

Your child will begin by exploring what verbs are and what they represent - a verb is a doing/action word (jump, run, swim, write, think) and represents something that is done. To help your child explore these words, they could try acting out different actions and name what it is called. You could also encourage them to think of as many different actions that they do during the day. These verb action posters can be a great memory aid for you to use at home with your child.



Past and Present Verbs

After your child has learnt all about verbs and recognises that they are action words which represent things that are done, they will begin to think about things that are happening now and things that have already happened. They will begin to understand that when a verb happens can affect the way it is said and written. At this point, they will begin to experiment with using past and present tense versions of different verbs in their spoken sentences. They will recognise that 'I listening to the teacher' doesn't make sense as a spoken phrase if used in the past tense, but 'I listened to the teacher' does. Visual cards and puzzle pieces are a good way to match up past and present tense versions of verbs and recognising how the tense changes the verb.

Step 2



Step 3

Adding -ed and -ing

As your child becomes more familiar with verbs and the tense of different verbs, they will begin to explore the spelling rules for changing verbs. At first, your child will recognise and add -ed to turn some verbs into past tense and add -ing to turn others into present tense. This is the most simplistic way of changing verb tenses and is often a straightforward place to begin (however, this doesn't work for all sentences and verbs). This presentation is full of advice and examples for your child to attempt and is a great way for them to explore the spelling patterns for adding the suffixes -ing, -er, -est and -ed.

Sentence Building

Your child will now begin using past and present tense verbs in written sentences. This will mean that they will put all the skills that they have learnt about past and present tense so far into practise. They will need to understand that events happen at different stages of time and that verbs change depending on the tense before putting this information together to form simple sentences. They will begin to recognise when a sentence is happening now or has happened in the past. For example, 'The clock is ticking' = present tense, 'The clock ticked' = past tense. Sentence builder cards are a great way for your child to build simple sentences. Why not challenge your child to change the tense of the constructed sentence by adjusting the verb?

Step 4

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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Book Club

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!



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Boost

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

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.



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ORIGINALS

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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KIDS' TV

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!