

BASIC TENSES

[You can tell if a verb is regular or irregular by how it forms its past tense (see chart below).]

Note: The future and future perfect tenses are not covered in Evergreen and are not on the ENC 0020 test.

| TENSE | HOW IT IS FORMED | HOW IT IS USED | EXAMPLE |
|-----------------|---|---|--|
| Present | uses basic form of the verb | indicates an action that is happening now | <i>Joe works in the writing lab.</i> [regular] <i>Carole is here today.</i> [irregular] |
| Past | Regular: formed by adding -d or -ed to the basic verb Irregular: consult chart | indicates an action already completed | <i>Joe worked in the writing lab last year.</i> [regular] <i>Carole was here last week.</i> [irregular] |
| Present Perfect | uses the helping verb has/have plus the past participle form of the verb (same as the past form for regular verbs) | indicates an action that began in the past and continues into the present | <i>Joe has worked in the lab for two years now.</i> [reg.] <i>Carole has been here all week.</i> [irregular] |
| Past Perfect | uses the helping verb had plus the past participle | indicates one action completed in the past before another past action | <i>Joe had worked in the writing lab before he started teaching.</i> [regular] <i>Carole had been here for an hour before I got here.</i> [irregular] |
| Future | uses the helping verb will plus the basic form of the verb | indicates that an action will happen in the future | <i>Joe will work in the writing lab next week.</i> [regular] <i>Carole will be here next week.</i> [irregular] |
| Future Perfect | uses the helping verbs will have plus the past participle | indicates an action that will be completed in the future before another future action | <i>Joe will have worked in the writing lab for three years by the end of this year.</i> [regular] <i>Carole will have been here all week.</i> [irregular] |

Practice for the PERFECT TENSES

PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

The **PRESENT PERFECT** is formed by combining the helping verb **has** or **have** with the **past participle**.

Examples: *I **have decided** to attend college.* *Mary **has learned** about computers.*

As opposed to the simple *past*, which shows action completed, the *present perfect* tense indicates an action that began in the past but that continues, or whose effect continues, in the present.

Action completed: *Pat **lived** in Chicago for ten years.* [he no longer lives there]

Continuing action: *Pat **has lived** in Chicago for ten years.* [he still lives there]

Which sentence would mean that Mr. Perkins is still your mailman?

- a. Mr. Perkins *was* our mailman for twelve years. b. Mr. Perkins *has been* our mailman for twelve years.

Which sentence would you use to indicate that Archie's voice is still gone?

- a. Archie *has lost* his voice. b. Archie *lost* his voice.

Directions: CIRCLE THE CORRECT VERB IN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES

1. When I was a small child, I (*disliked, have disliked*) spinach.
2. Ever since I was a small child, I (*disliked, have disliked*) spinach.
3. We don't want to move because we (*lived, have lived*) in our present home for many years.
4. Before entering law school, my brother (*spent, has spent*) three years in the Navy.
5. Professor Moriarty (*taught, has taught*) at this college for six years and plans to be here for another four.

PAST PERFECT TENSE

The **PAST PERFECT** tense is formed by combining the helping verb **had** with the **past participle**. It is used when one action happened in the past before another past action.

Example: *By the time she graduated, Miriam **had taken** 25 courses.*

*Ellen returned the dress that she **had bought**.*

Notice that in each sentence, two actions take place, one before the other. Miriam took 25 courses before she graduated. Ellen bought the dress before she returned it. The *past perfect* tense is used for the earlier of two actions. (The *past* tense is used for the later action.)

Directions: CIRCLE THE CORRECT VERB IN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES

1. John ate the apple that he (*picked, had picked*).
2. The police captured the prisoner who (*escaped, had escaped*).
3. The witness made this statement but later (*denied, had denied*) it.
4. The witness later denied the statement that he (*made, had made*).
5. I remembered what the coach (*said, had said*) about forward passes.