

Universidad de Los Andes
Facultad de Humanidades y Educación
Escuela de Idiomas Modernos

Verb Tenses – Exercises¹ (Suggested Answers)

I. Change the position of the adverb clause in the sentence. Underline the adverb clause in the given sentence, and underline the adverb clause in the new sentence. Punctuate carefully.

Example: I didn't feel any older when I reached my 21st birthday.

When I reached my 21st birthday, I didn't feel any older.

1. I had a cup of tea before I left for work.

BEFORE I LEFT FOR WORK, I HAD A CUP OF TEA.

2. After I get home from work, I like to read the evening newspaper.

I LIKE TO READ THE EVENING NEWSPAPER AFTER I GET HOME FROM WORK.

3. Since my watch broke, I have been late to work three times.

I HAVE BEEN LATE TO WORK THREE TIMES SINCE MY WATCH BROKE.

4. My cat hides under the house whenever it rains.

WHENEVER IT RAINS, MY CAT HIDES UNDER THE HOUSE.

5. I'm going to get a job once I finish school.

ONCE I FINISH SCHOOL, I'M GOING TO GET A JOB.

6. While I was waiting for my bus, I heard a gunshot.

I HEARD A GUNSHOT WHILE I WAS WAITING FOR MY BUS.

7. The village will have no electric power until a new generator is installed.

UNTIL A NEW GENERATOR IS INSTALLED, THE VILLAGE WILL HAVE NO ELECTRIC POWER.

8. The last time I was in Taipei, I saw Mr. Wu.

I SAW MR. WU THE LAST TIME I WAS IN TAIPEI.

9. As soon as we saw the tornado heading toward our town, we ran to the basement of the town hall.

WE RAN TO THE BASEMENT OF THE TOWN HALL AS SOON AS WE SAW THE TORNADO HEADING TOWARD OUR TOWN.

II. Using the words in parentheses, **make logical connections** between the ideas in *Column A* with the ideas in *Column B*. Punctuate carefully and pay attention to verb tenses. Underline the adverb clauses in the new sentences.

Examples: a. As soon as the taxi gets here, we can leave.

b. I turned off the TV before I left the room.

Column A

1. Our taxi gets here. (*as soon as*)

2. I turned off the TV (*before*)

Column B

A. She was leaving the store.

B. It destroyed everything in its path.

¹ Adapted from: Azar, B. S. (2000). Understanding and using English grammar – Workbook (3rd ed.) White Plains, NY: Longman.

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|---|---|
| 3. I parachuted from a plane. (<i>the first time</i>) | C. We can leave. |
| 4. My boss stormed into my office. (<i>while</i>) | D. I get sleepy. |
| 5. Ceylon had been independent for 24 years. (<i>after</i>) | E. I left the room. |
| 6. Jack fell off his bicycle. (<i>since</i>) | F. Its name was changed to Sri Lanka. |
| 7. Ms. Johnson will return your call. (<i>as soon as</i>) | G. We can eat. |
| 8. John learns how to use a computer. (<i>once</i>) | H. She has some free time. |
| 9. I won't return this book to the library. (<i>until</i>) | I. I finish my research project. |
| 10. Sue dropped a carton of eggs. (<i>as</i>) | J. I was both terrified and exhilarated. |
| 11. Anna goes to class. (<i>the next time</i>) | K. I was talking on the phone to an important |
| 12. The flooding river raced down the valley. (<i>when</i>) | client. |
| 13. The rice is done. (<i>just as soon as</i>) | L. He'll be able to work more efficiently. |
| 14. When I go to bed at night, I like to read. (<i>until</i>) | M. He's had to use crutches to walk. |
| | N. She'll remember to take her grammar book. |

1. AS SOON AS OUR TAXI GETS HERE, WE CAN LEAVE.
2. I TURNED OFF THE TV BEFORE I LEFT THE ROOM.
3. THE FIRST TIME I PARACHUTED FROM A PLANE, I WAS BOTH TERRIFIED AND EXHILARATED.
4. MY BOSS STORMED INTO THE OFFICE WHILE I WAS TALKING ON THE PHONE TO AN IMPORTANT CLIENT.
5. AFTER CEYLON HAD BEEN INDEPENDENT FOR 24 YEARS, ITS NAME WAS CHANGED TO SRI LANKA.
6. SINCE JACK FELL OFF HIS BICYCLE, HE'S HAD TO USE CRUTCHES TO WALK.
7. MS. JOHNSON WILL RETURN YOUR CALL AS SOON AS SHE HAS SOME FREE TIME.
8. ONCE JOHN LEARNS HOW TO USE A COMPUTER, HE'LL BE ABLE TO WORK MORE EFFICIENTLY.
9. I WON'T RETURN THIS BOOK TO THE LIBRARY UNTIL I FINISH MY RESEARCH PROJECT.
10. SUE DROPPED A CARTON OF EGGS AS SHE WAS LEAVING THE STORE.
11. THE NEXT TIME ANNA GOES TO CLASS, SHE'LL REMEMBER TO TAKE HER GRAMMAR BOOK.
12. WHEN THE FLOODING RIVER RACED DOWN THE VALLEY, IT DESTROYED EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH.
13. JUST AS SOON AS THE RICE IS DONE, WE CAN EAT.
14. WHEN I GO TO BED AT NIGHT, I LIKE TO READ UNTIL I GET SLEEPY.

III. Choose the letter of the correct answer.

1. After Jessica C her degree, she intends to work in her father's company.
A. will finish B. will have finished C. finishes D. is finishing
2. By the time I go to bed tonight, I C my work for the day.
A. will finish B. have finished C. will have finished D. finish
3. When my parents D for a visit tomorrow, they will see our new baby for the first time.
A. will arrive B. arrived C. will have arrived D. arrive
4. Fatemah looked down to discover a snake at her feet. When she saw it, she C.
A. was screaming B. had screamed C. screamed D. screams

5. By the time Alfonso finally graduated from high school, he C seven different schools because his parents moved frequently.
A. attended B. was attending C. had attended D. had been attending
6. Until you learn to relax more, you D your ability to speak English.
A. haven't improved B. aren't improving C. don't improve D. won't improve
7. I borrowed four books on gardening the last time I B to the library.
A. go B. went C. had gone D. have gone
8. Before I started the car, all of the passengers B their seat belts.
A. will buckle B. had buckled C. buckle D. have buckled
9. It seems that whenever I travel abroad, I C to take something I need.
A. forgot B. am forgetting C. forget D. had forgotten
10. When I see the doctor this afternoon, I A him to look at my throat.
A. will ask B. asked C. will have asked D. ask
11. After ancient Greek athletes won a race in the Olympics, they A a simple crown of olive leaves.
A. received B. had received C. were receiving D. have received
12. After the race A, the celebration began.
A. had been won B. is won C. will be won D. has been won
13. I'll return Bob's pen to him the next time I A him.
A. see B. will see C. will have seen D. have seen
14. I C all of the questions correctly since I began this grammar exercise on verb tenses.
A. am answering B. answer C. have answered D. answered
15. A small stone struck the windshield while we B down the gravel road.
A. drive B. were driving C. had driven D. had been driving

IV. Use any appropriate tense for the verbs in parentheses.

1. My grandfather (*fly, never*) **HAS NEVER FLOWN** in an airplane, and he has no intention of ever doing so.
2. Jane isn't here yet. I (*wait*) **HAVE BEEN WAITING** for her since noon, but she still (*arrive, not*) **DOES NOT ARRIVE**.
3. In all the world, there (*be*) **ARE** only 14 mountains that (*reach*) **REACH** above 8,000 meters (26,247 feet).

4. I have a long trip ahead of me tomorrow, so I think I'd better go to bed. But let me say good-bye now because I won't see you in the morning. I (*leave, already*) **WILL ALREADY HAVE LEFT** by the time you (*get*) **GET** up.
5. Right now we (*have*) **ARE HAVING** a heat wave. The temperature (*be*) **HAS BEEN** in the upper 90s (upper 30s Celsius) for the last six days.
6. Last night I (*go*) **WENT** to a party. When I (*get*) **GOT** there, the room was full of people. Some of them (*dance*) **WERE DANCING** and others (*talk*) **WERE TALKING**. One young woman (*stand*) **WAS STANDING** by herself. I (*meet, never*) **HAD NEVER MET** her, so I (*introduce*) **INTRODUCED** myself to her.
7. About three yesterday afternoon, Jessica (*lie*) **WAS LYING** in bed reading a book. Suddenly she (*hear*) **HEARD** a loud noise and (*get*) **GOT** up to see what it was. She (*look*) **LOOKED** out the window. A truck (*back, just*) **HAD JUST BACKED** into her new car!
8. Next month I have a week's vacation. I (*plan*) **AM PLANNING** to take a trip. First, I (*go*) **WILL GO** to Madison, Wisconsin, to visit my brother. After I (*leave*) **LEAVE** Madison, I (*go*) **WILL GO** to Chicago to see a friend who (*study*) **IS STUDYING** at the university there. She (*live*) **HAS LIVED** in Chicago for three years, so she (*know*) **KNOWS** her way around the city. She (*promise*) **PROMISED** to take me to many interesting places. I (*be, never*) **HAVE NEVER BEEN** in Chicago, so I (*look*) **AM LOOKING** forward to going there.
9. Yesterday while I (*sit*) **WAS SITTING** in class, I (*get*) **GOT** the hiccups. The person who (*sit*) **WAS SITTING** next to me told me to hold my breath. I (*try*) **TRIED** that, but it didn't work. The instructor (*lecture*) **WAS LECTURING** and I didn't want to interrupt him, so I just sat there trying to hiccup quietly. Finally, after I (*hiccup*) **HAD HICCUPPED** for almost five minutes, I (*raise*) **RAISED** my hand and (*excuse*) **EXCUSED** myself from class to go get a drink of water.
10. The weather has been terrible lately. It (*rain*) **HAS BEEN RAINING** off and on for two days, and the temperature (*drop*) **HAS DROPPED** drastically. It (*be*) **IS** really cold today. Just three days ago, the sun (*shine*) **SHONE** and the weather (*be*) **WAS** pleasant. The weather certainly (*change*) **CHANGES** quickly here. I never know what to expect. Who knows? When I (*wake*) **WAKE** up tomorrow morning, maybe it (*snow*) **WILL BE SNOWING**.

V. Complete the sentences with the verbs in parentheses. Use any appropriate tense.

On June 20th, I returned home. I (*be*) **HAD BEEN** away from home for two years. My family (*meet*) **MET** me at the airport with kisses and tears. They (*miss*) **HAD MISSED** me as much as I had missed them. I (*be*) **WAS** very happy to see them again. When I (*get*) **GOT** the chance, I (*take*) **TOOK** a long look at them. My little brother (*be*) **WAS** no longer little. He (*grow*) **HAD GROWN** a lot. He (*be*) **WAS** almost as tall as my father. My little sister (*wear*) **WAS WEARING** a green dress. She (*change*) **HAD CHANGED** quite a bit, too, but she (*be, still*) **IS STILL** mischievous and inquisitive. She (*ask*) **ASKED** me a thousand questions a minute, or so it seemed. My father (*gain*) **HAD GAINED** some weight, and his hair (*turn*) **HAD TURNED** a little grayer, but otherwise he was just as I had remembered him. My mother (*look*) **LOOKED** a little older, but not much. The wrinkles on her face (*be*) **ARE** smile wrinkles.

VI. Complete the sentences with the verbs in parentheses. Use any appropriate tense.

PART I:

- A: What (*seem*) **SEEMS** to be the trouble, Ms. Jones?
B: I (*send*) **SENT** in my money for a subscription to your magazine, *Computer Data*, two months ago, but to date I (*receive, not*) **HAVE NOT RECEIVED** any issues.
A: I'm sorry to hear that. Unfortunately, one of our main computers (*function, not*) **IS NOT FUNCTIONING** at the moment. However, our computer specialists (*work*) **ARE WORKING** very hard to fix it at the present time. We (*start*) **WILL START** your new subscription as soon as possible.
B: Thank you.

PART II:

- A: Where's Sonia? I (*see, not*) **HAVE NOT SEEN** her lately.
B: She (*recuperate, at home*) **IS RECUPERATING AT HOME**.
A: Oh? What (*she, recuperate*) **IS SHE RECUPERATING** from?
B: She (*hurt*) **HURT** her back while she (*play*) **WAS PLAYING** volleyball last week in the game against South City College.
A: What happened? How (*she, hurt*) **DID SHE HURT** her back?
B: She (*try*) **WAS TRYING** to spike a ball when she (*collide*) **COLLIDED** with another player and (*fall*) **FELL** to the ground. She (*land*) **LANDED** hard and (*twist*) **TWISTED** her back.
A: Gosh, that's too bad. I'm sorry to hear that. How's she doing?
B: Well, she's pretty uncomfortable. She (*wear*) **HAS WORN/BEEN WEARING** a special brace on her back for the last five days. Needless to say, she (*be, not*) **HAS NOT BEEN** able to play volleyball since her injury. She (*not, probably, be*) **WILL NOT PROBABLY BE** able to play again for at least a month.
A: (*Her doctor, allow*) **WILL HER DOCTOR ALLOW** her to play in the national tournament at the end of the summer?
B: She (*have*) **WILL HAVE HAD** the brace on her back for more than seven weeks by then, so I think he will.
A: I hope so. I know how much she likes to compete in volleyball games. And the team really needs her.

Part III:

- A: Hi, Jim. How's it going?
B: Great.
A: (*You, enjoy*) **DID YOU ENJOY** the rock concert last night?
B: You bet! I had a terrific time.
A: Tell me about it. I (*go, never*) **HAVE NEVER GONE** to a rock concert.
B: Well, I (*go, never*) **HAD NEVER GONE** to a rock concert before either, so I (*know, not*) **DID NOT KNOW** what to expect. I've been to symphony concerts lots of times, but never a rock concert. Ten minutes before the concert was supposed to start, hundreds of teenagers (*try, still*) **WERE STILL TRYING** to find their seats. The place was a madhouse. I thought

that things would settle down once the concert began. Boy, was I wrong! As soon as the lead singer (*appear*) **APPEARED** on the stage, everyone (*start*) **STARTED** screaming at the top of their lungs. I couldn't hear myself think. But after a while things calmed down. And the music was great. At one time during the concert, while the lead singer (*sing*) **WAS SINGING** a famous hit song, many people in the audience knew the song so well that they sang along with him. All in all, the concert (*be*) **WAS** a lot of fun, but very noisy.

A: It does sound like it was a lot of fun!

PART IV:

Mark Twain, the author of the *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, is one of America's best loved storytellers. He (*grow up*) **GREW UP** in a small town on the Mississippi River. As a young boy, he (*admire, greatly*) **GREATLY ADMIRERD** the pilots of the riverboats and dreamed about being a riverboat pilot on the mighty river. He pursued his dream, and by the age of 22, he himself (*become*) **HAD BECOME** a riverboat pilot. Later in life, when he (*become*) **BECAME** a writer, many of his stories (*contain*) **CONTAINED** elements of his own experiences. He wrote many humorous stories and articles about life on the Mississippi River before he (*die*) **DIED** in 1910 at the age of 74. Sadly, Twain (*work*) **HAD BEEN WORKING** on a new story for several months before his death, but he (*finish, never*) **NEVER FINISHED** it. Over the years since his death, his boyhood home in Hannibal, Missouri, **HAS BECOME** (*become*) a favorite place for Americans to visit to learn about Twain and life on the Mississippi at the turn of the 19th century.

VII. Choose the correct answer.

Example: I've been in this city for a long time. I C here sixteen years ago.

- A. have come B. was coming C. came D. had come

1. "Hurry up! We're waiting for you. What's taking you so long?"

"I C for an important phone call. Go ahead and leave without me."

- A. wait B. will wait C. am waiting D. have waited

2. "Robert is going to be famous someday. He C in three movies, already."

"I'm sure he'll be a star."

- A. has been appearing B. had appeared C. has appeared D. appeared

3. "Where's Polly?"

"She A ."

- A. is in her room studying B. in her room is studying
C. studies in her room D. has in her room studied

4. "Hello? Alice? This is Jeff. How are you?"

"Jeff? What a coincidence! I A about you when the phone rang."

- A. was just thinking B. just thought C. have just been thinking D. was just thought

5. "What B about the new simplified tax law?"
"It's more confusing than the old one."
A. are you thinking B. do you think C. have you thought D. have you been thinking
6. "When is Mr. Fields planning to retire?"
"Soon, I think. He C here for a long time. He'll probably retire either next year or the year after that."
A. worked B. had been working C. has been working D. is working
7. "Why did you buy all this sugar and chocolate?"
"I C a delicious dessert for dinner tonight."
A. make B. will make C. am going to make D. will have made
8. "Let's go! What's taking you so long?"
"I'll be there as soon as I C my keys."
A. found B. will find C. find D. am finding
9. Next week when there B a full moon, the ocean tides will be higher.
A. is being B. is C. will be D. will have been
10. While I C TV last night, a mouse ran across the floor.
A. watch B. watched C. was watching D. am watching
11. Fish were among the earliest forms of life. Fish D on earth for ages and ages.
A. existed B. are existing C. exist D. have existed
12. The phone A constantly since Jack announced his candidacy for president this morning.
A. has been ringing B. rang C. had rung D. had been ringing
13. The earth D on the sun for its heat and light.
A. is depend B. depending C. has depend D. depends
14. I don't feel good. I A home from work tomorrow.
A. am staying B. stay C. will have stayed D. stayed
15. Today there are weather satellites that beam down information about the earth's atmosphere. In the last two decades, space exploration B great contributions to weather forecasting.
A. is making B. has made C. made D. makes
16. On July 20, 1969, Astronaut Neil Armstrong B down onto the moon, the first person ever to set foot on another celestial body.
A. was stepping B. stepped C. has stepped D. was step

17. The plane's departure was delayed because of mechanical difficulties. When the weary passengers finally boarded the aircraft, many were annoyed and irritable because they D in the airport for three and a half hours.
A. are waiting B. were waiting C. have been waiting D. had been waiting
18. If coastal erosion continues to take place at the present rate, in another fifty years this beach B anymore.
A. doesn't exist B. isn't going to exist C. isn't existing D. won't be existing
19. Homestead High School's football team D a championship until last season, when the new coach led them to win first place in their league.
A. has never won B. is never winning C. had never been winning D. had never won
20. Non-native speakers need many years of intensive language study before they can qualify as interpreters. By the end of this year, Chen C English for three years, but he will still need more training and experience before he masters the language.
A. will be studying B. has studied C. will have been studying D. has been studying

VIII. Choose the correct answer.

Example: I've been in this city for a long time. I C here sixteen years ago.
A. have come B. was coming C. came D. had come

1. "May I speak to Dr. Paine, please?"
"I'm sorry, he A a patient at the moment. Can I help you?"
A. is seeing B. sees C. has been seeing D. was seeing
2. "When are you going to ask your boss for a raise?"
"A to her twice already! I don't think she wants to give me one."
A. I've talked B. I've been talking C. I was talking D. I'd talked
3. "Do you think Harry will want something to eat after he gets here?"
"I hope not. It'll probably be after midnight, and we B."
A. are sleeping B. will be sleeping C. have been sleeping D. be sleeping
4. Paul, could you please turn off the stove? The potatoes C for at least thirty minutes.
A. are boiling B. boiling C. have been boiling D. were boiling
5. "Is it true that spaghetti didn't originate in Italy?"
"Yes. The Chinese C spaghetti dishes for a long time before Marco Polo brought it back to Italy."
A. have been making B. have made C. had been making D. make

6. "I once saw a turtle that had wings. The turtle flew into the air to catch insects."
"Stop kidding. I A you!"
A. don't believe B. am not believing C. didn't believe D. wasn't believing
7. "Could someone help me lift the lawnmower into the pickup truck?"
"I'm not busy. I B you."
A. help B. will help C. am going to help D. am helping
8. My family loves this house. It B the family home ever since my grandfather built it 60 years ago.
A. was B. has been C. is D. will be
9. Here's an interesting statistic: On a typical day, the average person C about 48,000 words. How many words did you speak today?
A. spoke B. was speaking C. speaks D. is speaking
10. I know you feel bad now, Tommy, but try to put it out of your mind. By the time you're an adult, you B all about it.
A. forget B. will have forgotten C. will forget D. forgot
11. It's against the law to kill the black rhinoceros. They D extinct.
A. became B. have become C. become D. are becoming
12. After ten unhappy years, Janice finally quit her job. She A along with her boss for a long time before she finally decided to look for a new position.
A. hadn't been getting B. isn't getting C. didn't get D. hasn't been getting
13. The National Hurricane Center is closely watching a strong hurricane over the Atlantic Ocean. When it A the coast of Texas sometime tomorrow afternoon, it will bring with it great destructive force.
A. reaches B. will reach C. is reaching D. reaching
14. At one time, huge prehistoric reptiles dominated the earth. This Age of Dinosaurs A much longer than the present Age of Mammals has lasted to date.
A. lasted B. was lasting C. has lasted D. had lasted
15. Jim, why don't you take some time off? You D too hard lately. Take a short vacation.
A. worked B. work C. were working D. have been working
16. The city is rebuilding its dilapidated waterfront, transforming it into a pleasant and fashionable outdoor mall. Next summer when the tourists arrive, they D 104 beautiful new shops and restaurants in the area where the old run-down waterfront properties used to stand.
A. will found B. will be finding C. will have found D. will find

17. A minor earthquake occurred at 2:07 A.M. on January 3. Most of the people in the village C at the time and didn't even know it had occurred until the next morning.
A. slept B. had slept C. were sleeping D. sleep
18. The little girl started to cry. She B her doll, and no one was able to find it for her.
A. has lost B. had lost C. was losing D. was lost
19. According to research reports, people usually A in their sleep 25 to 30 times each night.
A. turn B. are turning C. have turned D. turned
20. Jane's eyes burned and her shoulders ached. She D at the computer for five straight hours. Finally, she took a break.
A. is sitting B. has been sitting C. was sitting D. had been sitting