

Situations Exercise 6 – Past Continuous

1: Yesterday you arrived at your office and you found your colleague in the middle of coffee preparation. He started before you arrived. Tell another colleague. Start with ‘When I arrived, John’ and use the verb phrase ‘make coffee’.

2: Yesterday you arrived at your office and your colleague offered to make some coffee. He made the coffee after you arrived. Tell another colleague. Start with ‘when I arrived, John’ and use the verb phrase ‘make coffee’.

3: In your old job, your colleague made coffee every day. Usually when you arrived, he was in the middle of coffee preparation. Tell your friend. Start with ‘every day when I arrived, John’ and use the verb phrase ‘make coffee’.

4: In your old job, your colleague made coffee after you arrived every day. He waited for you to arrive before he made the coffee. Tell another friend. Start with ‘every day when I arrived, John’ and use the verb phrase ‘make coffee’.

5: In your old job, your colleague made coffee very often, but not at regular times. Tell another friend. Start with ‘John’ use the verb phrase ‘make coffee’ and the word ‘forever’.

6: Talk about yesterday. Unusually, when you arrived at the office, John wasn’t in the middle of coffee preparation. Tell another colleague. Start with ‘when I arrived, John’ and use the verb phrase ‘make coffee’.

7: Your friend thinks that last night you started watching TV before seven pm and finished afterwards. Tell him he has the wrong idea. Start with 'at seven I' and use the verb phrase 'watch TV'.

8: Tell a friend about when you went to school. Explain that usually you started eating lunch before twelve o'clock and finished afterwards. Start with 'every day at twelve o'clock, we' and use the verb phrase 'eat lunch'.

9: Tell a friend about when you went to school. Explain that usually you started eating lunch at twelve o'clock. Start with 'every day at twelve o'clock we' and use the verb phrase 'eat lunch'.

10: Tell a friend about when you went to school. Explain that each day after the bell rang, you would put all your books into your bag. Start with 'usually when the bell rang, we' and use the verb phrase 'put our books away'.

11: Tell a friend about when you went to school. You usually started putting your books away before the bell rang and finished afterwards. Start with 'usually when the bell rang, we' and use the verb phrase 'put our books away'.

12: Talk about your sister's last holiday. Unfortunately, she missed the plane. When she arrived at the airport, the plane had already started to take off. And it finished taking off after she arrived, but it was too late, of course. Start with 'when my sister arrived at the airport, the plane' and use the verb phrase 'take off'.

13: Talk about your sister's last holiday. She went by plane. She had to be quick because there wasn't much time between her arriving at the airport and the plane leaving. Start with 'just after my sister arrived, the plane' and use the verb 'leave'.

14: Talk about your last holiday. You missed the train. It started to leave before you arrived at the station and finished afterwards. Start with 'when we arrived at the station, the train' and use the verb 'leave'.

15: Talk about your last holiday. You went by train. You had to be quick, because there wasn't much time between you arriving at the station and the train leaving. Start with 'just after we arrived, the train' and use the verb 'leave'.

16: Tell your friend a story about when you visited a famous restaurant in Paris. You talk about the atmosphere in the restaurant by mentioning the music and the people chatting. These things started before and finished after the action in the story and are the background to the events. Start with 'music' and use the verb 'play' and then use 'and people' and the verb 'chat'.

17: Tell your friend a story about when you visited a famous restaurant in Paris. In the background, music was playing and people were chatting. Talk about the events of the story. Start with 'the waiter' and use the verb phrase 'drop a huge tray full of glasses'.

18: Tell your colleague about your grandmother. She laughed a lot, but (of course) not at fixed times. Start with 'my grandmother' and use the verb 'laugh' and the word 'always'.

19: Tell your colleague about your grandmother. She loved your grandfather's jokes. Each time he made a joke, afterwards your grandmother would laugh. Start with 'when my grandfather made a joke, my grandmother' and use the verb 'laugh' and the word 'always'.

20: Tell your friend about last winter. Your brother spent a lot of time writing his thesis. Start with 'my brother' and use the verb phrase 'write his thesis all winter'.

21: Tell your friend about yesterday evening. You spent a lot of time cleaning the kitchen. Start with 'I' and use the verb phrase 'clean the kitchen all evening'.

22: Your colleague asks why you didn't answer all your emails last week. It was because you spent a lot of time preparing a presentation. Start with 'I' and use the verb phrase 'prepare a presentation all week'.

23: Your friend asks you why you didn't go to the party last night. You explain that you spent a lot of time doing your homework. Start with 'I' and use the verb phrase 'do my homework all evening'.

24: Your friend asks you why you didn't call her last night. Tell her you spent the whole evening at work. Start with 'I' and use the verb phrase 'work all evening'.

25: It's late in the evening and your friend calls you and asks why you haven't called her. Tell her you've spent the whole evening at work. Start with 'I' and use the verb phrase 'work all evening'.

26: It's nearly the end of the summer and you meet a friend that you haven't seen since the spring. You wonder why you haven't seen her so far this summer. Ask her a question. Start with 'what' and use the verb phrase 'do all summer' and the subject 'you'.

27: It's the winter and you meet a friend that you haven't seen since the spring. You wonder why you didn't see her in summer. Ask her a question. Start with 'what' and use the verb phrase 'do all summer' and the subject 'you'.

28: Explain to your flatmate that you were in the middle of leaving the party when your best friend arrived and so you changed your mind. Start with 'I' and use the verb phrase 'leave but Lucy arrived'.

29: Explain to your boss that you haven't finished an email that she wanted you to write because you were interrupted. In the middle of the action of writing the email, a client called you with an emergency. Start with 'I' and use the verb phrase 'write the email but a client called'.

30: Yesterday you spent a lot of time writing an essay, but you didn't finish it. Tell your classmate. Start with 'yesterday I' and use the verb phrase 'write an essay'.

31: Tell your friend about what you did last weekend. You tried to clean out your garage but you didn't finish. Start with 'at the weekend, I' and use the verb phrase 'clean out my garage'.

32: Tell your flatmate about your grandfather. He very often took you for a picnic when you were a child, but not at regular times. Start with 'my grandfather' and use the verb phrase 'take us for a picnic' and the word 'always'.

33: Tell your friend about your brother. When you were children, he very often teased you. It was an irregular habit and it felt like it happened too often! Start with 'my brother' and use the verb phrase 'tease me' and the word 'constantly'.

Answers to Past Continuous Situations

- 1: When I arrived, John was making coffee.
- 2: When I arrived, John made coffee.
- 3: Every day when I arrived, John was making coffee.
- 4: Every day when I arrived, John made coffee.
- 5: John was forever making coffee.
- 6: When I arrived, John wasn't making coffee.
- 7: At seven I wasn't watching TV.
- 8: Every day at twelve o'clock we were eating lunch.
- 9: Every day at twelve o'clock we ate lunch.
- 10: Usually when the bell rang we put our books away.
- 11: Usually when the bell rang, we were putting our books away.
- 12: When my sister arrived at the airport the plane was taking off.
- 13: Just after my sister arrived, the plane left.
- 14: When we arrived at the station, the train was leaving.
- 15: Just after we arrived, the train left.
- 16: Music was playing and people were chatting.
- 17: The waiter dropped a huge tray full of glasses.
- 18: My grandmother was always laughing.
- 19: When my grandfather made a joke, my grandmother always laughed.
- 20: My brother was writing his thesis all winter.
- 21: I was cleaning the kitchen all evening.
- 22: I was preparing a presentation all week.
- 23: I was doing my homework all evening.
- 24: I was working all evening.
- 25: I've been working all evening.
- 26: What have you been doing all summer?
- 27: What were you doing all summer?
- 28: I was leaving but Lucy arrived.
- 29: I was writing the email but a client called.
- 30: Yesterday I was writing an essay.
- 31: At the weekend, I was cleaning out my garage.

32: My grandfather was always taking us for picnics.

33: My brother was constantly teasing me.