

TENSE

DEFINITION

Tense plays a crucial role in the English language. It denotes the time an action takes place, whether sometime in the past, in the present or will take some time in the future. It changes the form of the verb to express the time of an action. The word-‘tense’ comes from the Latin word ‘tempus’, which means time.

Verb Tenses

Present- Tells what is happening now

I am reading a book.



Future - Tells what will happen in the future

I will read a book later.



Past- tells what happened in the past

I have read the book

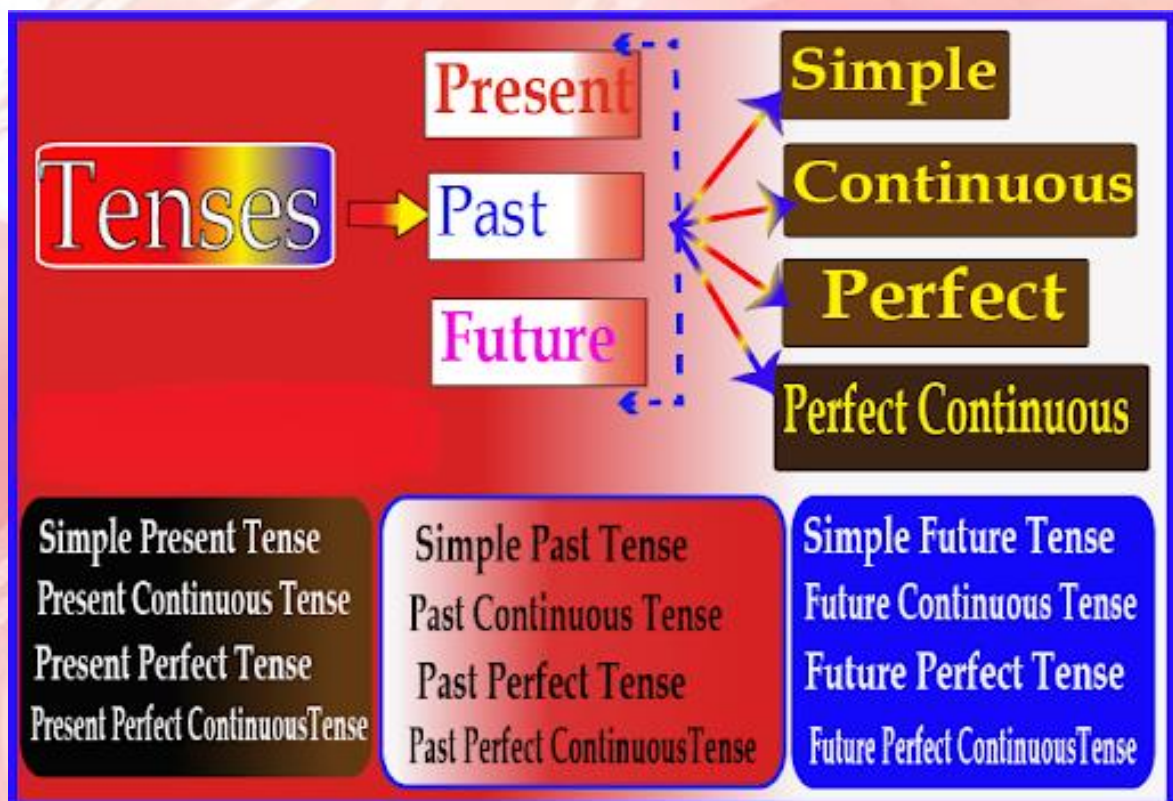
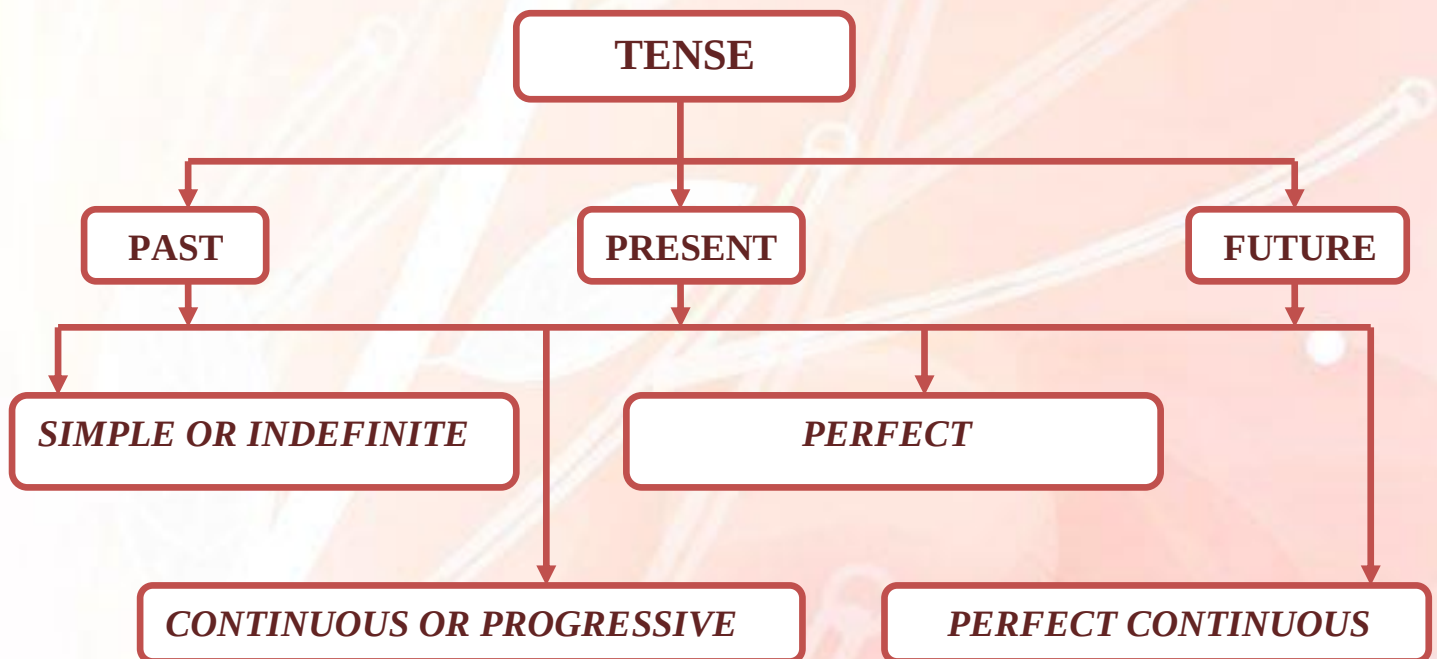


Verb: is a word that expresses action or a state of being

KINDS OF TENSE

There are three kinds of tense and each has four subdivisions:

- ✓ Present Tense
- ✓ Past Tense
- ✓ Future Tense



PRESENT TENSE

A verb that refers to present time is said to be in the present tense.

1) Simple Present Tense:

It indicates an action that is generally true or habitual. That is, it took place in the past, continue to take place in the present, and will take place in the future. It is used to express habitual or regular or repeated action.

- **This tense is used to denote:**

A habitual action- for instance, "He walks to school."

General truths- for instance, "The sun rises in the east", "Honesty is the best policy."

Structure: Subject + V1

Note: S/ES is added to the main verb when the subject is in third person singular number, for example: My mother bakes cake every day.

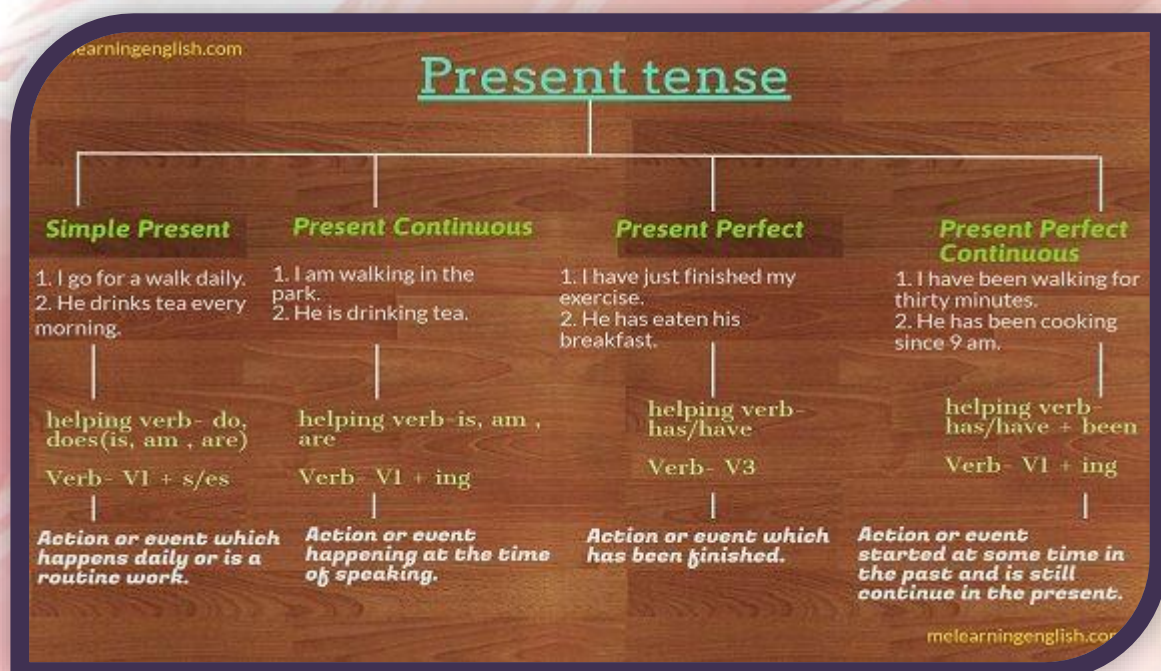
2) Present Continuous Tense:

It indicates an action that is taking place at the moment of speaking.

Structure: Subject +is/am/are + V1 + ing

For example, "She is making a paper-boat now."

"I am writing a letter now."



3) Present Perfect Tense:

It indicates an action that has been completed sometime before the present moment, with a result that affects the present situation.

Structure: Subject + has/have+V3

For example, "He has finished the work just now."

"They have completed their job recently."

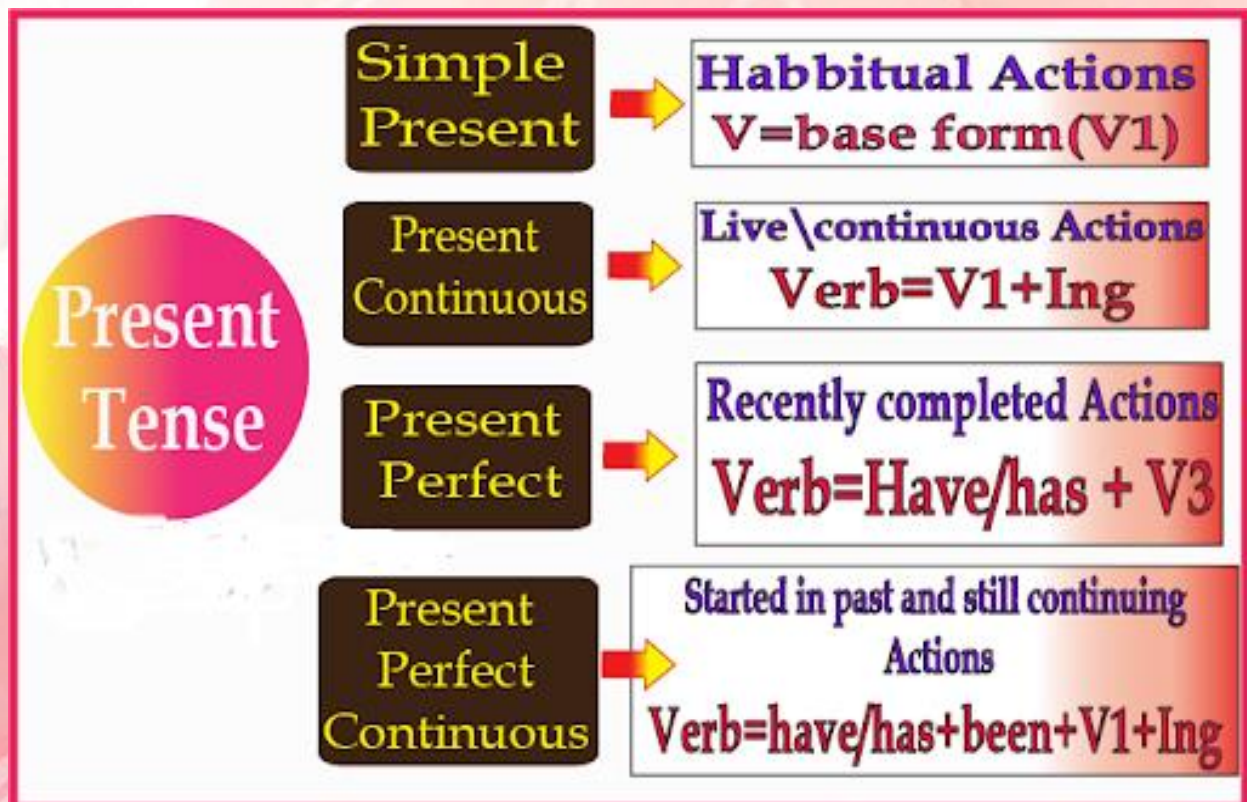
4) Present Perfect Continuous Tense:

It indicates an action that started in the past and is continuing at the present time.

Structure: Subject + has/have + been +V1+ing

For example, "He has been sleeping for an hour."

"Sheela has been singing the song for two hours."



PAST TENSE

The past tense is the verb tense used for a past activity or a past state of being.

1) Simple Past Tense:

The past indefinite tense, also known as simple past tense is used to indicate a finished or completed action/task that occurred/happened at a specific point in time in the past.

Structure: Subject + V2

For example, "He danced in the function."

"He flew to London yesterday."

(The actions took place in the past, are finished and are completely unrelated to the present)

2) Past Continuous Tense:

The past continuous or progressive tense is used to demonstrate an action that was happening in the past for a period of time in a particular context or an action in the past that is longer in duration than another action in the past.

Structure: Subject + was/were + V1+ ing

For example, "It was getting darker."

"The light went out while they were reading."

PAST TENSE

SIMPLE PAST
TENSE

PAST
CONTINUOUS
TENSE

PAST
PERFECT
TENSE

PAST
PERFECT
CONTINUOUS
TENSE

3) Past Perfect Tense:

The past perfect is used to demonstrate an action that occurred before another action in the past. There are usually two completed actions in the sentence; one happens before the other.

Structure: Subject + had + past participle form of the main verb + before + subject + simple past tense

Subject + simple past tense + after + subject + had + past participle form of the main verb...

For example, "He had exercised before it started to rain."

"He slept after I had returned from the market."

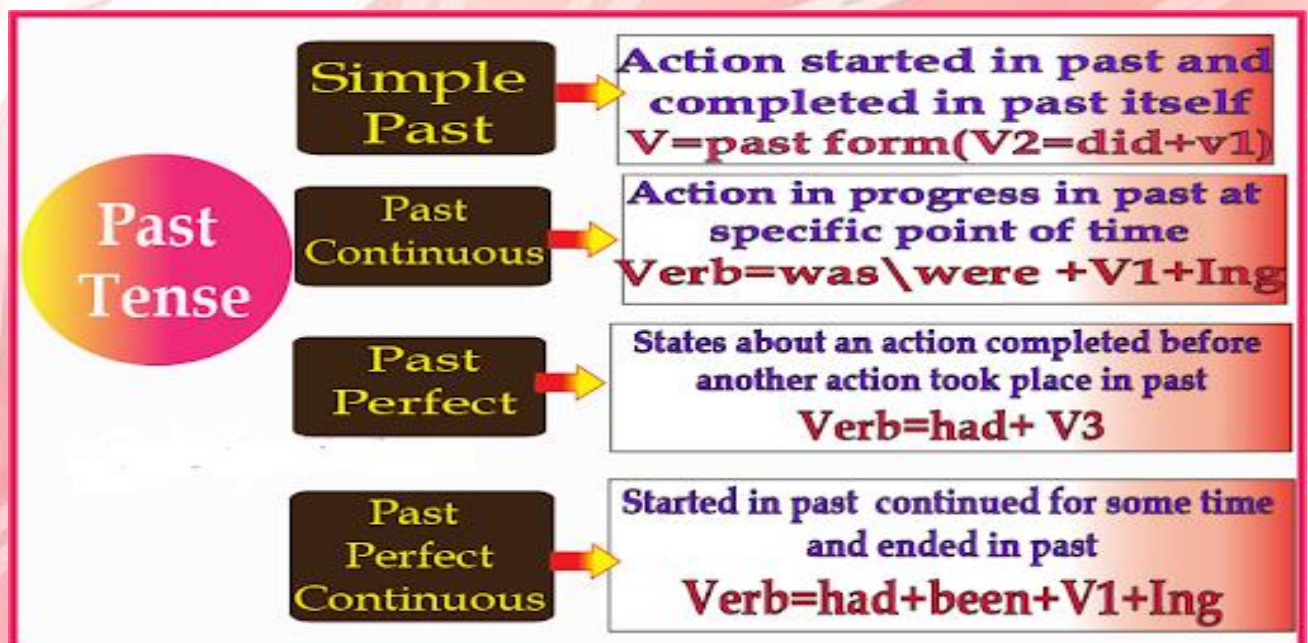
4) Past Perfect Continuous Tense:

It indicates an action in the past that took place before another time or event in the past and continued during the second event/time point in the past.

Structure: Subject + had + been + V1+ing + . . . + before + subject + past simple tense

For example, "Alan had been playing cricket for 18 years before he retired."

"Jack had been living in Sydney since 2010 before he moved to Melbourne."



FUTURE TENSE

The future tense expresses actions that have not yet occurred or that will occur at a later time.

1) Simple Future Tense:

It indicates an action that will take place after the present time and that has no real connection with the present time.

Structure: Subject + will/shall + verb

For example, "She will visit her ailing grandmother soon."

"He will walk home."

2) Future Continuous Tense:

The future continuous tense is used when an action is thought to be going on at a specific time/context in the future. It also indicates an action in the future that is longer in duration than another action in the future.

Structure: Subject+ will/shall+ be + V1+ ing

For example, "He will be walking when it starts to rain."

"I shall be sleeping at around 6.00 a.m. tomorrow."

Future Tense Chart

Simple Future Tense	Structure	Subj + will/shall +V1 + Obj
	Example	I will eat an apple
Future Continuous Tense	Structure	Subj+ will/shall + be + V1 + ing + Obj
	Example	I shall be eating an apple
Future Perfect Tense	Structure	Subj + will/shall + have+ V3 + Obj
	Example	I shall have eaten an apple
Future Perfect Continuous Tense	Structure	Subj + will/shall + have + been + V1 + ing + Obj
	Example	I shall have been eating an apple

3) Future Perfect Tense:

It indicates an action in the future that will have been completed before another time or event in the future.

Structure: Subject + will/shall + have + V3

For example, "By the time we arrive, he will have studied."

"She will have cleaned the house before her father comes."

4) Future Perfect Continuous Tense:

It indicates an action in the future that will have been continuing until another time or event in the future.

Structure: Subject+ will/shall+ have +been + V1+ ing

For example, "He will have been exercising an hour at 2:00."

"I shall have been doing the work before my mother comes."

Structure of Future Tense			
INDEFINITE	CONTINUOUS	PERFECT	PERFECT CONTINUOUS
Subject + shall / will + verb + obj	Subject + shall be / will be + verb + ing	Subject + shall have / will have + past participle of verb's	Subject + shall have been or will have been + verb + ing + since / for
I shall eat rice	I shall be eating rice	I shall have eaten rice or We will have eaten rice	I shall have been reading in this school for 5 years



VERB TENSES

ENGLISH
GRAMMAR

The tense of a verb shows the time of an event or action.



PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
● Simple Past Tense The action is simply mentioned and understood to have taken place in the past. ● Past Continuous tense The action was ongoing till a certain time in the past. ● Past Perfect Tense It is used to express something that happened before another action in the past. ● Past Perfect Continuous Tense It is used to express something that started in the past and continued until another time in the past.	● Simple Present Tense The action is simply mentioned and there is nothing being said about its completeness. ● Present Continuous Tense The action is on-going/ still going on and hence continuous. ● Present Perfect Tense The action is complete or has ended and hence termed Perfect. ● Present Perfect Continuous Tense The action has been taking place for some time and is still ongoing.	● Simple Future Tense Simple Future is used when we plan or make a decision to do something. Nothing is said about the time in the future. ● Future Continuous Tense The future continuous tense is used to express action at a particular moment in the future. ● Future Perfect Tense Future Perfect expresses an action that will occur in the future before another action in the future. ● Future Perfect Continuous Tense It is used to talk about an on-going action before some point in the future.

The 12 Verb Tenses

ENGLISH VERB TENSE	Past	Present	Future
SIMPLE	I studied English yesterday.	I study English.	I will study English.
CONTINUOUS	I was studying English.	I am studying English	I will be studying English.
PERFECT	I had studied English.	I have studied English.	I will have studied English.
PERFECT CONTINUOUS	I had been studying English.	I have been studying English.	I will have been studying English.



Tenses timeline



timeline	tense	use
	simple present	repeated actions
		generalizations
	present continuous	actions happening now
		actions happening around now
	simple past	completed action
		how long
	past continuous	interrupted action
	present perfect	unspecified time
		how long
	present perfect continuous	how long
	past perfect	past before the past
		how long
	past perfect continuous	how long
	future	
	future perfect	completed action before future action
	future perfect continuous	how long before future action

SEQUENCE OF TENSE

Sequence of tenses is a set of grammatical rules of a particular language, governing the agreement between the tenses of verbs in related clauses or sentences. The principle in accordance with which the Tense of the Verb in the Subordinate Clause follows the Tense of the Verb in the Principal Clause is known as the Sequence of Tenses.

- As long as the main clause's verb is in neither the past nor the past perfect tense, the verb of the subordinate clause can be in any tense that conveys meaning accurately. When the main clause verb is in the past or past perfect, however, the verb in the subordinate clause must be in the past or past perfect.

The exception to this rule is when the subordinate clause expresses what is commonly known as a general truth:

- In the 1950s, English teachers still believed that a background in Latin is essential for an understanding of English.
- Columbus somehow knew that the world is round.
- Slaveowners widely understood that literacy among oppressed people is a dangerous thing.

The tables below demonstrate the correct relationship of tenses between clauses where time is of the essence (i.e., within sentences used to convey ideas about actions or conditions that take place over time).

Tense in Independent Clause	Purpose of Dependent Clause/ Tense in Dependent Clause	Example(s)
Simple Present	To show same-time action, use the present tense	I <i>am</i> eager to go to the concert because I <i>love</i> the Wallflowers.
	To show earlier action, use past tense	I <i>know</i> that I <i>made</i> the right choice.
	To show a period of time extending from some point in the past to the present, use the present perfect tense.	They <i>believe</i> that <i>they have elected</i> the right candidate.

	To show action to come, use the future tense.	The President <i>says</i> that he <i>will veto</i> the bill.
Simple Past	To show another completed past action, use the past tense.	I <i>wanted</i> to go home because I <i>missed</i> my parents.
	To show an earlier action, use the past perfect tense.	She <i>knew</i> she <i>had made</i> the right choice.
	To state a general truth, use the present tense.	The Deists <i>believed</i> that the universe <i>is</i> like a giant clock.
Present Perfect or Past Perfect	For any purpose, use the past tense.	She <i>has grown</i> a foot since she <i>turned</i> nine. The crowd <i>had turned</i> nasty before the sheriff <i>returned</i> .
Future	To show action happening at the same time, use the present tense.	I <i>will be</i> so happy if they <i>fix</i> my car today.
	To show an earlier action, use the past tense.	You <i>will surely pass</i> this exam if you <i>studied</i> hard.
	To show future action <i>earlier than</i> the action of the independent clause, use the present perfect tense.	The college <i>will probably close</i> its doors next summer if enrollments <i>have not increased</i> .
Future Perfect	For any purpose, use the present tense or present perfect tense.	Most students <i>will have taken</i> sixty credits by the time they <i>graduate</i> . Most students <i>will have taken</i> sixty credits by the time they <i>have graduated</i> .

: Sequence of Tenses with Infinitives and Participles:

Like verbs, infinitives and participles are capable of conveying the idea of action in time; therefore, it is important that we observe the appropriate tense sequence when using these models.

INFINITIVES		
Tense of Infinitive	Role of Infinitive	Example(s)
Present Infinitive (to see)	To show same-time action or action later than the verb	Coach Espinoza <i>is</i> eager <i>to try</i> out her new drills. [The eagerness is now; the trying out will happen later.]
		She <i>would have liked to see</i> more veterans returning. [The present infinitive <i>to see</i> is in the same time as the past <i>would have liked</i> .]
Perfect Infinitive (to have seen)	To show action earlier than the verb	The fans <i>would like to have seen</i> some improvement this year. ["Would like" describes a present condition; "to have seen" describes something prior to that time.]
		They <i>consider</i> the team <i>to have been coached</i> very well. [The perfect infinitive <i>to have been coached</i> indicates a time prior to the verb <i>consider</i> .]

PARTICIPLES

Tense of Participle	Role of Participle	Example(s)
Present Participle (seeing)	To show action occurring at the same time as that of the verb	<i>Working</i> on the fundamentals, the team slowly <i>began</i> to improve. [The action expressed by <i>began</i> happened in the past, at the same time the <i>working</i> happened.]
Past Participle or Present Perfect Participle	To show action occurring earlier than that of the verb	<i>Prepared</i> by last year's experience, the coach <i>knows</i> not to expect too much. [The action expressed by <i>knows</i> is in the present; <i>prepared</i> expresses a time prior to that time.]
		<i>Having experimented</i> with several game plans, the coaching staff <i>devised</i> a master strategy. [The present perfect participle <i>having experimented</i> indicates a time prior to the past tense verb, <i>devised</i> .]

:Sequence of Tense in indirect speech:

Direct speech		Indirect speech
<i>I. Present Tenses</i>		
Present Simple	→	Past Simple
Present Progressive	→	Past Progressive
Present Perfect	→	Past Perfect
Present Perfect Progressive	→	Past Perfect Progressive
<i>II. Past Tenses</i>		
Past Simple	→	Past Perfect
Past Progressive	→	Past Perfect Progressive
Past Perfect	→	Past Perfect
<i>III. Future Simple</i>		
Future Simple	→	Future-in-the-Past
Future Perfect	→	Future-in-the-Past Perfect

Present Simple I <u>'m</u> a teacher.	Past Simple He said (that) he <u>was</u> a teacher.
Present Progressive I <u>'m having lunch</u> with my parents.	Past Progressive He said (that) he <u>was having lunch</u> with his parents.
Past Simple I <u>bought</u> a new car.	Past Perfect He said (that) he <u>had bought</u> a new car.
Future Simple I <u>will go</u> to the cinema.	Future-in-the-Past He said (that) he <u>would go</u> to the cinema.
Present Perfect I <u>have been</u> to France three times.	Past Perfect He said (that) he <u>had been</u> to France three times.