

# What Were You Doing When...? (Past Continuous)

Pre-intermediate (A2-B1)



**Part 1. Think about one small but memorable moment from the last few weeks. Before that moment happened, what were you doing? Write or say 2–3 sentences describing the situation.**

**Ideas:**

- You dropped something important.
- You received an unexpected message.
- You realised you had misunderstood something.
- Something went slightly wrong.

**Example:**

*I was standing in a queue at the supermarket. I was checking my phone and half-listening to music.*

**Part 2. Read the text and answer the questions.**

*“On Sunday afternoon, I was feeling very productive. I was cleaning the flat, playing music, and thinking about how organised I had become. At the same time, I was messaging a friend about meeting later. Then I heard a strange noise. I walked into the kitchen and realised the washing machine was leaking water onto the floor.”*

1. What mood was the writer in before the problem?
2. What was happening in the background?
3. What changed the situation?

**Part 3. Complete the sentences.**

1. We use was/were + verb-ing to describe...
2. We use the past simple to describe...

**Part 4. Read each situation. First imagine the background. Then add what suddenly happened. Try to make the situation realistic.**

1. I was trying to unlock my front door when...  
(Think: keys, phone, neighbours, weather...)
2. We were taking a photo together when...  
(Think: someone walked past, someone blinked, something fell...)
3. I was sending an important email when...  
(Think: autocorrect, wrong attachment, internet problems...)
4. She was explaining something confidently when...  
(Think: forgot a word, phone rang, someone interrupted...)

**Part 5. Think of a moment when you were doing two things at the same time and something didn't go perfectly.**

**Complete:**

While I was \_\_\_\_\_, I was also \_\_\_\_\_, and then \_\_\_\_\_.

**Example:**

*While I was cooking, I was also answering a message, and then I burnt the food.*



**Part 6. Discuss the following questions.**

1. What were you doing when your phone battery last died at the worst possible moment?
2. What were you doing when you last realised you were in the wrong place?
3. What were you doing when someone called your name unexpectedly in public?
4. What were you doing when something small went wrong but felt dramatic at the time?

**Part 7. Create a short story about a slightly awkward or unexpected moment.**

**Include:**

- Two background actions (past continuous)
- One clear interruption (past simple)
- One reaction

**Example:**

*I was trying to look calm during an online meeting. I was sharing my screen confidently. Then I realised everyone could see my private messages. I immediately stopped talking.*

**REFLECTION**

**Complete the sentences with your own ideas.**

1. Today I practised describing...
2. One useful sentence I said today was...

