

What is 'tense'?

Tense is the form of a verb which tells you **when** something happened. Look at the verb 'talk' for example.

If you say '**I talk**', you are either telling us a **fact** or talking about your **routine**.

If you say '**I talked**', you are telling us about a **finished action in the past**.

On a basic timeline, you have the past, present and future. At each of these points in time, there are four different verb structures: **simple, continuous, perfect, and perfect continuous**.

Technically, there are only two grammatical tenses in English: **present** and **past**. To talk about the **future**, we actually use **the present tense**. However, it can be useful to separate **the verb structures into 12**, like this:

Present simple e.g. **I walk**

Present continuous e.g. **I am walking**

Present perfect e.g. **I have walked**

Present perfect continuous e.g. **I have been walking**

Past simple e.g. **I walked**

Past continuous e.g. **I was walking**

Past perfect e.g. **I had walked**

Past perfect continuous e.g. **I had been walking**

Future simple e.g. **I will walk**

Future continuous e.g. **I will be walking**

Future perfect e.g. **I will have walked**

Future perfect continuous e.g. **I will have been walking**

REFERENCES

https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/tenses_with_georgie/ep-240119

