

Lesson 14.1: The Perfect Tense



What is the Perfect Tense?

The **tense** of a verb tells: (*circle one*)

- How many people are doing the action.
- When the action is taking place.
- How anxious the person doing the action is.

- You know that:

The **present tense** tells about actions that are happening now: *The dog chews the bone.*

The **future tense** tells about actions that will happen later: *The dog will chew the bone.*

The **imperfect tense** tells about actions that were habitual or continual in the past, or about events that did not have a specific ending in the past:

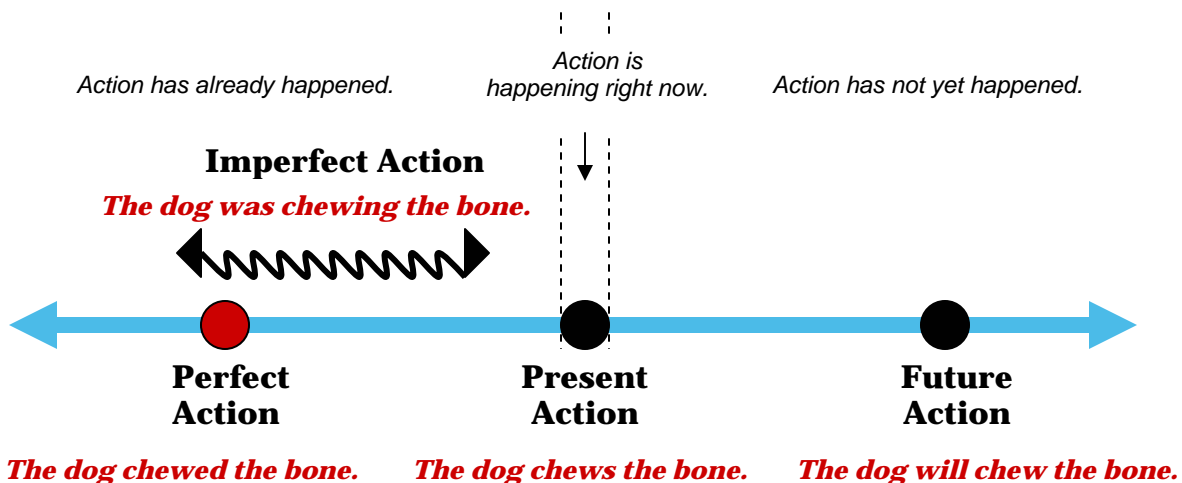
The dog used to chew the bone. The dog was chewing the bone.

- Now we will learn about the **perfect tense**. It tells about events that happened and were completed in the past. In English, we can express this in 3 ways:

*The dog chewed the bone.
The dog did chew the bone.
The dog has chewed the bone.*

- Notice that in grammar, the word *perfect* does not mean *exactly right*. It means **completely finished**. So, the **perfect tense** has the sense of **completion of an action** in the past while the **imperfect tense** is **unclear about when the action was finished**.

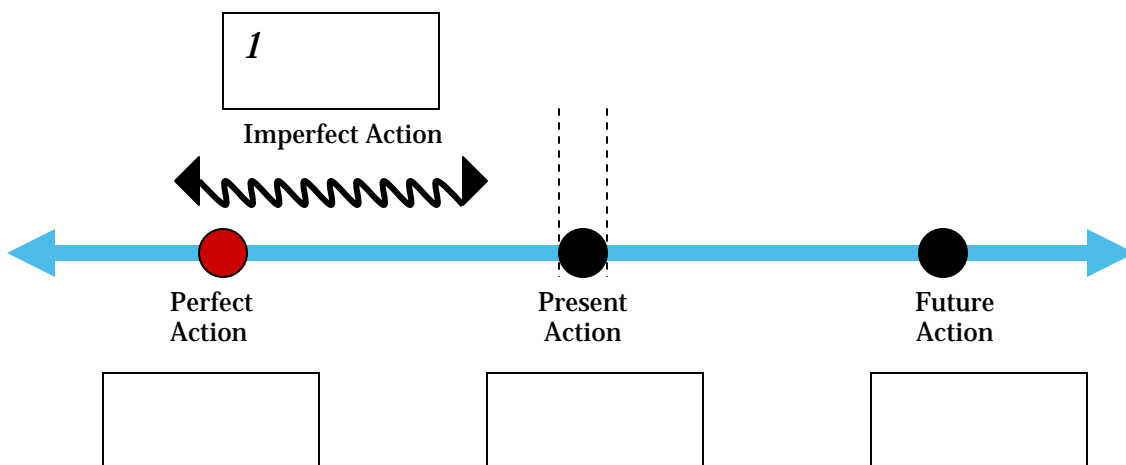
- Study this timeline of tenses:



Lesson 14.1 -- Continued

Practice: In the sentence below, circle the verb. Figure out when the action takes place. Then write the number of the sentence in the box by the correct tense on the timeline. *One is done for you.*

1. One day, a dog was carrying home a nice, big bone.
2. He will enjoy this treat at home.
2. On the way, he crossed a bridge.
3. He was looking down into the water.
4. He sees another dog.
5. The other dog was holding a nice, big bone in his mouth.
6. The dog wanted the other dog's bone!
7. He barked at the other dog.
8. The nice, big bone dropped out of his mouth and into the water.
9. Now the dog is sad and hungry.
10. He will learn not to be greedy next time.



- What separates the past from the future?