

Verb Tenses

Excerpted from *The Writer's Harbrace Handbook* and *The St. Martin's Handbook*

| | Present | Past | Future |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Simple | walk, walks | walked | will walk |
| Progressive | am, is, are walking | was, were walking | will be walking |
| Perfect | has, have walked | had been walking | will have walked |
| Perfect-Progressive | has, have been walking | had been walking | will have been walking |

- The three **simple** tenses are present, past, and future.
- Verbs are also labeled **progressive**, **perfect**, and **perfect-progressive**:
 - ✚ The **perfect** form of a verb expresses a completed action. The present perfect tense signals a time prior to the present. The past perfect tense refers to an action in the past that occurred prior to another action in the past (ex., I had lived in Ellensburg before I lived in Davis). The future perfect tense refers to an action which is going to be completed before a future time.
 - ✚ The **progressive** form expresses a continuing action. The action is still *progressing*. The present progressive tense indicates an activity in progress or a temporary situation. When used in the past tense, the progressive form indicates an action that occurred in the past but was either repeated or ongoing. The future progressive form indicates actions that will occur over a period of time in the future.
 - ✚ The **perfect-progressive** expresses the continuation of an action up to some point in the present, past, or future. The perfect-progressive combines the attributes of the *perfect* and *progressive* tenses. The present perfect progressive signals an event or action that is ongoing or incomplete. The past perfect progressive refers to an action that occurred over a period of time in the past and prior to another past action. Finally, the future perfect progressive is an event that occurs in the present and will continue for a specified amount of time (ex., In two more hours, I will have been working for four hours).