

English

Important Rules & Exceptions of Tenses – SSC CGL Special

Tense	Rule	Usage Example	Common Exceptions / Notes
Simple Present	For general truths, habits, regular actions	He goes to school every day.	With 'if', 'unless', 'as soon as', use simple present for future events.
Present Continuous	Action happening now or planned future actions	She is writing a letter.	Not used with stative verbs (e.g., know, believe, own).
Present Perfect	Action completed recently or with present relevance	I have finished my work.	Do not use with specific past time (e.g., yesterday, last year).
Present Perfect Continuous	Action started in past and still continuing	He has been studying since morning.	Use since for point of time, for for period of time.
Simple Past	Completed action in the past at a specific time	She went to Delhi yesterday.	Avoid using present perfect with definite past time.
Past Continuous	Past action in progress when another action occurred	I was reading when he came.	Often used with while and when .
Past Perfect	Action completed before another past action	He had left before I arrived.	Use only if two past actions are compared.
Past Perfect Continuous	Past action continuing up to a point in the past	She had been crying for hours before help came.	Rare in use; typically with for/since + point of time .
Simple Future	Action that will happen in the future	They will come tomorrow.	Use shall with "I/We" in formal usage (rare in modern English).
Future Continuous	Action that will be ongoing at a future time	I will be working at 5 PM tomorrow.	Not used with time clauses (e.g., when, after, before).
Future Perfect	Action that will be completed before a certain time in the future	She will have reached by 10 AM.	Often used with time expressions (by then, before, etc.).
Future Perfect Continuous	Action continuing until a certain time in the future	By June, he will have been working here for 5 years.	Rarely asked but useful for elimination in options.

TENSE: Important Rules & Exceptions

Tense / Category	Advanced Rule / Exception	Example
1. Simple Present	Used for scheduled future events (esp. transport, timetables, fixed programs).	The train leaves at 6 AM tomorrow.
	Used in commentaries, narratives, and instructions .	Dhoni hits a six! / First, mix the batter.
2. Present Continuous	Can express annoyance or irritation with "always," "constantly," etc.	She is always interrupting me!
3. Present Perfect	Used in news headlines to imply recent actions even when the time is known.	India has won the match. (headline use, even though time is implied)
	Sometimes used with " just now " in Indian English, but it's ungrammatical in standard English.	✗ I have seen him just now. ✓ I saw him just now.
4. Simple Past	Used for imaginary / hypothetical situations in conditional sentences.	If I knew , I would help.

	After “ wish ” and “ as if ,” even present/future ideas take past tense .	I wish I had a car. / He talks as if he were a king.
5. Past Perfect	Not necessary if sequence is clear through connectors like “before,” “after,” “when.”	✓ He left before I arrived. (Past Simple is fine here too)
	Past Perfect is used in reported speech to backshift present/present perfect.	He said he had completed the task.
6. Future Tenses	“ Will ” is not used in clauses starting with time expressions: “when,” “as soon as,” “before,” “after.”	✓ I will call you when he comes . ✗ I will call you when he will come .
	Future Perfect is also used for assumptions about completed actions .	He will have reached by now. (assumption, not future event)
7. Future Continuous	Used to indicate polite inquiries about someone’s plans.	Will you be joining us for dinner?
8. Mixed Tense Usage	Sentences can mix tenses when referring to different time frames.	I know he was lying. / She said she wants to help.
9. Stative Verbs	Stative verbs (like know, love, believe) usually do not take continuous tenses — but exceptions exist in informal usage .	✓ I am loving this movie! (informal)
10. Historical Present	Used in storytelling or literature to make events feel immediate, even if in the past.	So, he goes to the king and says , “I need help.”

Tense-wise Rules of Voice Conversion

Tense	Active Voice Structure	Passive Voice Structure	Example (Active → Passive)
Simple Present	S + V1 + O	O + is/am/are + V3 + by + S	She writes a letter. → A letter is written by her.
Present Continuous	S + is/am/are + V1+ing + O	O + is/am/are + being + V3 + by + S	He is painting a wall. → A wall is being painted by him.
Present Perfect	S + has/have + V3 + O	O + has/have + been + V3 + by + S	They have finished the work. → The work has been finished by them.
Simple Past	S + V2 + O	O + was/were + V3 + by + S	She cleaned the room. → The room was cleaned by her.
Past Continuous	S + was/were + V1+ing + O	O + was/were + being + V3 + by + S	They were watching a movie. → A movie was being watched by them.
Past Perfect	S + had + V3 + O	O + had + been + V3 + by + S	He had completed the task. → The task had been completed by him.
Simple Future	S + will/shall + V1 + O	O + will/shall + be + V3 + by + S	She will read the book. → The book will be read by her.
Future Perfect	S + will/shall + have + V3 + O	O + will/shall + have + been + V3 + by + S	He will have written a letter. → A letter will have been written by him.

Tenses Without Passive Voice

Tense	Reason
Present Perfect Continuous	Cannot be changed due to continuous duration emphasis
Past Perfect Continuous	No direct passive form exists
Future Continuous	Passive structure is not used in English
Future Perfect Continuous	No acceptable passive structure

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