AILET

Tenses for CLAT: Introduction, Types of Tenses, Rules, and Formulas

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This article focuses on Tenses for CLAT English section and other law entrances.

Introduction to tenses for CLAT

A tense may be defined as that form of a verb which indicates the time and the state of an action or event.

Tenses on the basis of time can be divided into 3 parts viz. past tense, present tense, and future tense.

Present Tense

This form of tense indicates the happening or non-happening of an action or event in the present time.

Types of Present Tense:

1. Present Indefinite Tense
2. Present Continuous Tense
3. Present Perfect Tense
4. Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Present Indefinite Tense

This tense is generally used to denote habit, custom, practice, repeated action, permanent activity, general truth etc. Also, it is used to make a statement in the present showing permanent nature and activity of the subject.

Eg. a) The cow gives milk.

1. b) Aditi often gets late for school.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject + Ist form of Verb + s/es + Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + do/does + not + Ist form of Verb + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – Do/does + Subject + Ist form of Verb + object + ?

Present Continuous Tense

This tense is generally used for an action in progress that is temporary in nature in the present at the time of speaking.

Eg. It is raining today.

It also expresses future action or a definite arrangement in the near future.

Eg. she is coming tomorrow.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject + is/am/are + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + is/am/are + not + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – Is/am/are + Subject + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + ?

Present Perfect Tense

This tense generally indicates an action that has been completed sometime before the present moment, with a result that affects the present situation.
Eg. He has finished the work.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject +has/have + IIIrd form of Verb + Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + has/have + not + IIIrd form of Verb + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – Has/Have + Subject + IIIrd form of Verb + object + ?

Present Perfect Continuous Tense

This tense generally indicates an action that started in the past and is continuing at the present time.
Eg- He has been sleeping for an hour.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject +has/have + been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time.

NEGATIVE – Subject +has/have + not been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time.

INTERROGATIVE –Has/have + subject + been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time + ?

Past Tense

This form of tense indicates the happening or non-happening of an action or event in the past time.

Types of Past Tense:

1. Past Indefinite Tense
2. Past Continuous Tense
3. Past Perfect Tense
4. Past Perfect Continuous Tense

Past Indefinite Tense

This tense is generally used as a part of a habit. Also, it is used for a single act completed in past.

Eg. a) Meghna bought a phone two years ago.

1. b) Aditi did not go to school yesterday.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE

Subject + IInd form of Verb + Object.

Or

Subject + IInd form of Helping Verb + Ist form of Main Verb+ Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + did + not + Ist form of Verb + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – Did + Subject + Ist form of Verb + object + ?

Editor's Note: Keep practising along with reading to master tenses for CLAT.

Past Continuous Tense

This tense is generally used for past action in progress that is temporary in nature in the present at the time of speaking.

Eg. It was raining when the train reached the station.

It also expresses a definite arrangement for the future in the past.

Eg. she was leaving that night.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject + was/were + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + was/were + not + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – was/were + Subject + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + ?

Past Perfect Tense

This tense generally indicates an action in the past that had been completed before another time or event in the past.
Eg- He had exercised before it started to rain.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject +had + IIIrd form of Verb + Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + had + not + IIIrd form of Verb + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – Had + Subject + IIIrd form of Verb + object + ?

Past Perfect Continuous Tense

This tense generally indicates an action in the past that took place before another time or event in the past and continued during the second event/time point in the past.
Eg- At that time, he had been writing a novel for two months.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject +had + been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time.

NEGATIVE – Subject +had + not been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time.

INTERROGATIVE –Had + subject + been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time + ?

Future Tense

This form of tense indicates the happening or non-happening of an action or event in the future time.

Types of Future Tense:

1. Future Indefinite Tense
2. Future Continuous Tense
3. Future Perfect Tense
4. Future Perfect Continuous Tense

Future Indefinite Tense

This tense is generally used to indicate an action that will take place after the present time and that has no real connection with the present time.
Eg- She will visit her ailing grandmother soon

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject +will/shall + Ist form of Verb + s/es + Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + will/shall + not + Ist form of Verb + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – Will/Shall + Subject + Ist form of Verb + object + ?

Future Continuous Tense

This tense is generally used for an action that will be in progress with a point of time in future.

Eg. He will be walking when it starts to rain

It also expresses definite future arrangement.

Eg. She will be going tomorrow to school.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject + will/shall + be + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + will/shall + not be + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – Will/Shall + Subject + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + ?

Future Perfect Tense

This tense generally indicates an action in the future that will have been completed before another time or event in the future.
Eg- By the time we arrive, he will have studied.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject +will/shall + have + IIIrd form of Verb + Object.

NEGATIVE – Subject + will/shall +not + have + IIIrd form of Verb + Object.

INTERROGATIVE – Will/Shall+ Subject + have been + IIIrd form of Verb + object +?

Future Perfect Continuous Tense

This tense generally indicates an action in the future that will have been continuing until another time or event in the future.
Eg- He will have been exercising an hour at 2:00.

RULES:

AFFIRMATIVE – Subject +will/shall + have been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time.

NEGATIVE – Subject +will/shall + not + have been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time.

INTERROGATIVE – Will/Shall + subject + have been + Ist form of Verb + ing + Object + for/since + period/time + ?

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First published on November 26, 2019.