

## THEME 7 NEWS STORIES GRAMMAR

### The Simple Past Tense and the Past Continuous Tense

We often use the simple past tense and the past continuous tense together in a sentence.

- We use the past continuous tense for the longer, unfinished action and the simple past tense for the shorter, interrupting action.
- We use *when, while, as, just* as to join the sentences.

when = at that time

while / as = during that time

#### \*\*\* while / as + past continuous, past simple

While I was trying to put my baby to sleep, the doorbell rang.

Someone knocked the door while the teacher was checking our exam papers.

As I was walking along the street, it suddenly started to rain.

#### \*\*\* when + past simple, past continuous

When I saw Sue, I was waiting for the bus.

- We also use the past continuous with “*while*” to talk about two actions in progress at the same time in the past.

My mother was chopping the meat while I was peeling the potatoes.

- We use the simple past tense with “*when*” to say that one thing happened after another.

When my father arrived, we had our dinner. (First my father arrived and then we started to have our dinner).

**Attention:** We don't use the past continuous tense with stative verbs (know, want, love etc...)

*They were good friends. They knew each other well.*

### The Simple Past Tense and the Past Perfect Tense

We usually use the past perfect tense with the simple past together with these common conjunctions:

#### **WHEN + simple past, past perfect**

When our guests came, my mother had already laid the table.

#### **Simple past, BECAUSE + past perfect**

I went straight to bed, because I had been really tired.

#### **AFTER + past perfect, simple past**

After Karen had had her breakfast, she left home for school.

#### **BEFORE + simple past, past perfect**

Before the police arrived the crime scene, the thief had run away.

#### **AS SOON AS + past perfect, simple past**

As soon as she had opened the door, she went straight to the kitchen and prepared something to eat.

#### **BY THE TIME + simple past, past perfect**

By the time the fire brigade arrived, a large part of the building had burnt.

