Using Different Verb Tenses & Sentence Combining

The **tenses** of a verb express time. They show and convey whether an action, process, or event takes place in the present, past, or future.

The **perfect tenses**, which indicate completed action, are present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect. They are formed by adding the helping verbs *have* (or *has*), *had*, and *will have* to the past participle.

**Directions for Practice 1**: Revise the following sentences, changing each verb from the present tense to the tense indicated.

**EXAMPLE**: I **know** the right answer.
**PAST TENSE**: I **knew** the right answer.

**Use the following chart to guide you through the different tenses of verbs.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Irregular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>He talks</td>
<td>He goes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>He talked</td>
<td>He <strong>went</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>He <strong>will</strong> talk</td>
<td>He <strong>will</strong> go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>He <strong>has</strong> talked</td>
<td>He <strong>has</strong> gone</td>
</tr>
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1. Allison **loses** the sales to competitors.

**PAST**: _______________________________________________________________

2. Malcolm **talks** to his friends at the community college.

**PRESENT PERFECT**: _____________________________________________
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3. The microscope enlarges the cell.

**PRESENT PERFECT:** ________________________________

4. Reports follow a standard format.

**FUTURE:** ________________________________

5. Meg Ryan receives excellent evaluations.

**FUTURE PERFECT:** ________________________________

6. Juanita writes a computer program.

**PAST:** ________________________________

7. Juanita writes a computer program.

**PRESENT PERFECT:** ________________________________

8. The movie stars Brad Pitt.

**FUTURE:** ________________________________

9. Many celebrities donate money to AIDS research.

**PRESENT PERFECT:** ________________________________
10. My nephew travels to Michigan’s Upper Peninsula on business.

PAST PERFECT: ______________________________________________________

Part II: Review the following techniques to combine sentences and use different types of sentences.

5 Techniques for Varying Sentences:

1. Avoid stringing simple sentences together with coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, so, etc.) Instead, use an infinitive phrase (to + a verb--to make, to go.)

SIMPLE: I set my alarm for 7 A.M., so I could eat breakfast before school.

VARIED: To eat breakfast before school, I set my alarm for 7 A.M.

2. Begin some sentences with a prepositional phrase. A preposition shows relationships between things (during, over, toward, before, with, inside, over, above). Many prepositions suggest time, direction, or location (at, in, on, by, to).

During the concert the fire alarm rang.
Inside the theater the crowd waited expectantly.

3. Begin some sentences with a present or past participle (a verb with an -ing or past tense ending--cooking, broken)

Barking and jumping, the dogs greeted their master.
Still laughing, two girls left the movie.
Tired and exhausted, the mountain climbers fell asleep quickly.

4. Begin some sentences with a dependent clause introduced by a subordinating conjunction (Although, Because, While, If, After, When, Until).

Because I ate shellfish, I developed hives.

5. Begin some sentences with a conjunctive adverb or transitional word (Therefore, Thus, Consequently, Ultimately, Accordingly, However, In fact, Nevertheless)

Consequently, we decided to have steak for dinner.
**Practice 1:** Choose any **EIGHT** of the following pairs of simple sentences to combine into one sentence using the technique suggested in brackets.

**EXAMPLE:**

a. The dog barked and howled.
b. The dog warned a stranger away.
[Use present participle (-ing verb).]

**COMBINED:** Barking and howling, the dog warned a stranger away.

1. a. Professor Clark has a Civil War battlefield model.
   b. He has it in his office.
   [Use prepositional phrase.]

2. a. Toby went to Disneyland for the first time.
   b. He was very excited.
   [Use past participle (verb with an -ed ending).]

3. a. Teresa received a full scholarship.
   b. She does not need to worry about paying her tuition.
   [Use subordinating conjunction.]

4. a. Lance answered the phone.
   b. He was in his car.
   [Use a prepositional phrase.]
5. a. The truck choked and sputtered.
   b. The truck pulled into the garage.
   [Use present participle (verb with an -ing ending).]

6. a. Rich programmed his DVR.
   b. He knew he would miss his favorite show.
   [Use subordinating conjunction.]

7. a. The postal carrier placed a package outside my door.
   b. The package had a foreign stamp on it.
   [Use prepositional phrase.]

8. a. The instructor asked the students to take their seats.
   b. She was annoyed.
   [Use present participle (verb with an -ing ending) or a subordinating conjunction.]

9. a. Shayla stood outside the student union.
   b. She waited for her boyfriend.
   [Use present participle (verb with an -ing ending) or a subordinating conjunction.]
10. a. Bo walked to the bookstore.
    b. He was going to buy some new highlighters.
    [Use the infinitive (to) phrase.]