

was, were, wasn't, weren't

Being somewhere in the past

6 Exercises • Duration: 20 min.

Photos on the wall

English

Read & listen online ↗



Being somewhere in the past

The past tense of **be** is **was** with **I/he/she/it** and **were** with **you/we/they**. It is the same for a male or female speaker: **I was at home**.

Negatives are **wasn't** and **weren't**. For a question, put the verb first: **Was Jack here?, Were you at home?** Do not add **did** to questions with past **be**.

Time words give the past context: **yesterday, last year, when I was ten**. Learn **I was born on the tenth of July 1995** as a useful life-information phrase.

Form	Example	Meaning
was	I was at home yesterday.	State your past location.
were	You were at home yesterday.	State the listener's past location.
was	The flat was Jack's.	Say who owned the flat before.
Was	Was Jack here?	Ask about Jack's past location.
weren't	We weren't hungry.	Say our group was not hungry.
born	I was born in 1995.	Use the fixed phrase for a birth year.

I was at home yesterday.

State your past location.

You were at home yesterday.

State the listener's past location.

The flat was Jack's.

Say who owned the flat before.

Was Jack here?

Ask about Jack's past location.

We weren't hungry.

Say our group was not hungry.

I was born in 1995.

Use the fixed phrase for a birth year.

GRAMMAR

G1) NOTICE THE PATTERNS

Underline the form described in this unit.

1 I was at home yesterday.

Meaning: State your past location.

2 You were at home yesterday.

Meaning: State the listener's past location.

3 The flat was Jack's.

Meaning: Say who owned the flat before.

4 Was Jack here?

Meaning: Ask about Jack's past location.

5 We weren't hungry.

Meaning: Say our group was not hungry.

6 I was born in 1995.

Meaning: Use the fixed phrase for a birth year.

G2) CHOOSE THE FORM

Choose the right word for the gap.

1 I _____ at home yesterday.

- ☐ A was
- ☐ B am
- ☐ C were

Meaning: State your past location.

2 You _____ at home yesterday.

- ☐ A were
- ☐ B are
- ☐ C was

Meaning: State the listener's past location.

3 The flat _____ Jack's.

- ☐ A were
- ☐ B was
- ☐ C is

Meaning: Say who owned the flat before.

4 _____ Jack here?

- ☐ A Were
- ☐ B Did
- ☐ C Was

Meaning: Ask about Jack's past location.

5 We _____ hungry.

- ☐ A weren't
- ☐ B didn't
- ☐ C wasn't

Meaning: Say our group was not hungry.

6 I was _____ in 1995.

- ☐ A born
- ☐ B bear
- ☐ C birth

Meaning: Use the fixed phrase for a birth year.

G3) COMPLETE A SHORT MESSAGE

Fill the gaps with the words from the box.

were was

I _____ at home yesterday.

Meaning: State your past location.

was were

You _____ at home yesterday.

Meaning: State the listener's past location.

were was

The flat _____ Jack's.

Meaning: Say who owned the flat before.

Were Was

_____ Jack here?

Meaning: Ask about Jack's past location.

wasn't weren't

We _____ hungry.

Meaning: Say our group was not hungry.

birth born

I was _____ in 1995.

Meaning: Use the fixed phrase for a birth year.

G4) BUILD USEFUL SENTENCES

Put the words in order.

- 1 at yesterday. I was home

Meaning: State your past location.

- 2 were at You home yesterday.

Meaning: State the listener's past location.

- 3 flat The Jack's. was

Meaning: Say who owned the flat before.

- 4 Jack Was here?

Meaning: Ask about Jack's past location.

- 5 We hungry. weren't

Meaning: Say our group was not hungry.

- 6 was born in I 1995.

Meaning: Use the fixed phrase for a birth year.

G5) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Choose the right words for the situation.

- 1 State your past location. You say:

- (A) I were at home yesterday.
(B) I was at home yesterday.

- 2 State the listener's past location. You say:

- (A) You was at home yesterday.
(B) You were at home yesterday.

3 Say who owned the flat before. You say:

- (A) The flat was Jack's.
- (B) The flat were Jack's.

4 Ask about Jack's past location. You say:

- (A) Was Jack here?
- (B) Were Jack here?

G6) CONNECT MESSAGES AND MEANINGS

Match the pairs.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| (1) I was at home yesterday. | (A) Say who owned the flat before. |
| (2) I was born in 1995. | (B) Say our group was not hungry. |
| (3) Was Jack here? | (C) Ask about Jack's past location. |
| (4) The flat was Jack's. | (D) State your past location. |
| (5) You were at home yesterday. | (E) Use the fixed phrase for a birth year. |

- ⑥ We weren't hungry. ⑦ State the listener's past location.