Past Simple vs Progressive: Exercises

1. **Past Simple vs Progressive**
   Fill in only the Past Simple (Simple + Simple) or the Past Progressive (Progressive + Progressive)!

   **Examples:** I (to take) took a shower, then I (to get dressed) got dressed and (to leave) left.
   I (to eat) was eating cornflakes while dad (to read) was reading the newspaper.

   a) First we (to have) ______ some sandwiches, then we (to buy) ______ some milk.

   b) When Shirley (to lie) ______ in bed with the flu, her friends (to play) ______ soccer.

   c) While little Ann (to play) ______, Tom and Mary (to prepare) ______ lunch.

   d) I (to switch off) ______ the TV and the lights and (to go) ______ to bed.

   e) When Sarah (to come) ______ home she (to do) ______ her homework, ______ supper and then (to go) ______ to cinema with a friend of hers.

   f) We (to have) ______ breakfast, while Tom (to take) ______ a shower.

   g) When he (to hear) ______ she was ill he (to call) ______ her at once.

   h) He (to take) ______ his driving licence last month and (to buy) ______ a car only two days later.

   i) While Mr & Ms Brown (to talk) ______ to Troy’s teacher, their son (to wait) ______ outside.

   k) While the police (still / to search) ______ the flat the murderer (to seek) ______ a hiding-place on the Continent.

2. **Past Simple vs Progressive**

   Example: Susan (to fall) fell asleep while she (to do) was doing her homework.

   a) When I (to walk) ______ to the office yesterday, I (to meet) ______ John.

   b) It (to start) ______ to rain when we (to play) ______ in the garden.

   c) When we (to watch) ______ TV last night, Susan (to ring) ______ us and (to tell) ______ us she (to have) ______ a party at the same time.

   d) I (to want) ______ to visit you last night, but you (not to be) ______ at home. What (you / to do) ______ at about 8 pm?

   e) He (to recognize) ______ me, although I (to wear) ______ sunglasses.

   f) When the schoolgirl (to cross) ______ the street, a bicycle (to hit) ______ and (to injure) ______ her.
3. Past Simple vs Progressive – translate:

a) Der Kommissar fragte den Verdächtigen: Was haben Sie gestern um acht Uhr gemacht?

   The inspector __________ the suspect: “_________________________________________?”

b) Als der Spielfilm (movie) anfing, war Mutter (mum) immer noch am Kochen (to cook).

   ____________________________________________.

c) Onkel Georg rief an (to ring), als wir gerade fernsahen (to watch TV).

   ____________________________________________.

d) Als ich John kennenlernte (to meet), spielte er Gitarre (the guitar) in einem Nachtklub.

   ____________________________________________.

e) Während ich der Musik lauschte (to listen to), stolperte er über (to stumble over) ein Kabel.

   ____________________________________________ a cable.

f) Als ich den Club verließ (to leave), sprach John mich an (to address).

   ____________________________________________.

6x2=12

4. Past Simple vs Progressive

   Past (2. Stammform: had, saw, went etc.) or Progressive (was/were having, was/were going etc.)?

   Last year I (a. to provide) ________________ first aid for the first time when I (b. to be)
   _____ in Reading to visit a friend of mine. We (c. to sit) ________________ in John’s garden
   when we suddenly (d. to hear) ________________ a squeal of tyres (‘Reifenquietschen’) and
   a bang. Then there (e. to be) ___________ a lot of shouts and cries. I immediately (f. to know)
   ___________ what (g. to go on) ________________ . I (h. to rush) ________________ through
   the garden gate, and when I (i. to reach) ________________ the car I (k. to see) ____________
   two injured persons: The driver (l. to sit) ________________ behind the steering wheel, and
   blood (m. to run) _______ ___________ from a wound to his head; his wife (n. to lie)
   ________________ on the ground beside the open left-hand door. Some neighbours or passers-
   by (o. to help) ________________ her, so I (p. to open) ________________ the other door and
   carefully (q. to drag) ________________ him out of the car and (r. to put) ________________ him in a
   side position. I (s. to talk) ________________ to him and (t. to try) ________________ to stop the
   20 blood with a paper hanky when the ambulance (u. to arrive) ________________ .