

Teaching tenses with a World Cup theme

present simple: general facts, routines

I usually watch as many games as possible

present continuous: what's happening at the moment

I'll call you back later, I'm watching the football

present perfect: not a definite time, unfinished time, relation to the present

So far I've watched every game of the tournament

present perfect continuous: action continuing until the present and possibly into the future

They've been playing for 40 minutes and their hasn't been a single shot on goal

past simple: finished action, happened at a definite time, no relation to the present

I watched the Italy game last night, it was very exciting

past continuous: what was happening at a particular point in time

I was watching the Italy game when the power went out

past perfect: present perfect in the past, what happened before another thing happened

Germany hadn't lost a game for two years before yesterday's 0-5 thrashing by England

past perfect continuous: present perfect continuous in the past, an activity that was ongoing until a point in the past

Why did they take Ronaldo off? I thought he had been playing quite well.

future with going to: plans for the future

I'm going to watch all the England and Germany games

future with present continuous: arrangements already made (stuff in your calendar)

We're watching the Brazil game at Bar Sport tonight. Do you want to come?

future with will: predictions about the future, spontaneous decisions

I'll probably watch the final at home. It's on late and I have to get up early the next day.

What's that? Work is cancelled? Great, I'll watch it in the pub then.

future continuous: what will be happening at a particular point in the future

By the time England win the World Cup again, people will be living on Mars