Unit 9a: Past continuous statements
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Was or were + gerund

✓ I was coming back at 7 p.m.

✓ My parents were cooking last Sunday morning.

✓ Isabel was dancing in her prom party last month.

It is used to describe actions in past
We need specification in time.

You were studying for 3 hours last night.

Was Maria sleeping at this time yesterday?  
Yes, she was.

What were your parents doing 2 hours ago?  
They were cleaning up the house.
However

We can use simple past to indicate:

A time frame
I was taking a nap when you called me last night.
The rodriquez’s were coming back to huancayo when the accident took place.

We can use it to indicate that an event interrupted an action.
While josé was celebrating his birthday, his mother called to say she wouldn’t go.
When the doctor was writing the prescription, the patient suffered a heart attack.

WHEN or WHILE are used with past continuous
When there is interaction between the past continuous and the past simple...

- **While** I was talking to you, the dog ran away.

Or

- The dog ran away **while** I was talking to you.

- **When** my father was trying a suit on, his boss called him on the phone.

Or

- My father’s boss called him on the phone **when** he was trying a suit on.
Some common verbs

To use in the past continuous tense, but not the only ones

Talk
Do
Go
Say
Try
Get
Tell

When we weren’t sleeping yet, the lights went out.

While my sister was saying her prayers before bed, my mother arrived home from work.
Some other forms of interaction

We can use connectors as well as adverbs to get past continuous interact with past simple

Julieta was cooking our dinner, and José decided to leave the table.

My father said something important, but I wasn’t paying attention at that moment.

The president visited us. He was visiting different cities around this area then.
When we ask questions

There are 2 books here. Which one is yours?
   The blue one is mine, the other one is Julissa’s.

Those are too many bags to carry. Which ones will you take with you?
   Definitely, I’ll take the white ones, those are heavy and you can’t take heavy load with you.

Which one is your house?
   My house is the one on the left, the ones to your right are my cousins’ houses.
Thank you