

# English Ladder

## Student Workbook

## Understanding Events & Tenses in English

A polished self-study handout designed for print or tablet use. Read the concept, notice the pattern, and then complete the matching practice set on your own.



Grammar Concepts #14

Key Points

### Visual anchor

Use the concept poster to spotlight the main language pattern in **Understanding Events & Tenses in English** and keep the explanation visible during practice and discussion.

**ENGLISH LADDER**

Concept #14 ► **Events & Tenses**

Here are a few examples of ways to talk about two events from different temporal (time) perspectives.

**2018** Martin graduated 5 years prior to marrying.  
Martin married 5 years after he graduated.  
Martin married 3 years ago and graduated 8 years ago.

**2015** Martin will marry 5 years after his graduation.  
Martin graduated 5 years before he plans to marry.

**2013** Martin graduated 3 years ago. He'll marry 2 years from now.  
It has been 3 years since Martin's graduation.  
Two years from now, Martin will marry.

**2010** Martin will graduate 5 years before he marries.

**2008** Martin will marry 5 years after he graduates.  
Martin will graduate in 2 years and marry 7 years from now.

Remember that if the reference point is now, we use **ago** and **from now/in**. For other times we use **before/prior to** and **after**.

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## Core Idea

In English, expressing events in relation to one another in time can be challenging, especially for non-native speakers. This guide will help you understand how to talk about two events from different temporal (time) perspectives, using examples from the image provided.

### Quick reference

Past Events	Martin graduated 5 years prior to marrying. Explanation: Martin's graduation happened 5 years before his marriage. Similar Example: Maria learned Spanish 3 years prior to moving to Spain.
Future Events	Martin will marry 5 years after his graduation. Explanation: Martin's marriage will occur 5 years after he graduates. Similar Example: Sarah will travel to Japan 1 year after she gets her passport.
Combining Past and Future Events	Martin will graduate 5 years before he marries. Explanation: Martin's graduation will occur 5 years before his future marriage. Similar Example: Lucy will finish her book 2 years before it gets published.
Key Points to Remember	Ago: Used for events that happened before the current time (e.g., "3 years ago").

## Key Points

### Past Events

When discussing events that have already occurred, we often use terms like ago, before, after, and since. Here are some examples:

- Martin graduated 5 years prior to marrying. Explanation: Martin's graduation happened 5 years before his marriage. Similar Example: Maria learned Spanish 3 years prior to moving to Spain.
- Martin married 5 years after he graduated. Explanation: Martin's marriage occurred 5 years after his graduation. Similar Example: Alex started his business 2 years after finishing college.
- Martin married 3 years ago and graduated 8 years ago. Explanation: Martin's marriage happened 3 years ago from now, and his graduation happened 8 years ago from now. Similar Example: Julia visited Paris 2 years ago and graduated from university 5 years ago.

### Future Events



When talking about events that will happen in the future, we use terms like in, before, after, and from now. Here are some examples:

- Martin will marry 5 years after his graduation. Explanation: Martin's marriage will occur 5 years after he graduates. Similar Example: Sarah will travel to Japan 1 year after she gets her passport.
- Martin graduated 5 years before he plans to marry. Explanation: Martin's graduation occurred 5 years before the future point of his marriage. Similar Example: David bought a house 2 years before he plans to retire.
- Martin graduated 3 years ago. He'll marry 2 years from now. Explanation: Martin's graduation happened 3 years ago from now, and he plans to marry 2 years in the future from now. Similar Example: Emily started her job 4 years ago. She plans to start her own business 3 years from now.
- It has been 3 years since Martin's graduation. Explanation: 3 years have passed since Martin graduated. Similar Example: It has been 6 months since Anna moved to New York.
- Two years from now, Martin will marry. Explanation: Martin's marriage will happen 2 years from the current time. Similar Example: Two weeks from now, I will start my new job.

### Combining Past and Future Events

When combining both past and future events, understanding the relationship between different points in time is crucial. Here are some examples:

- Martin will graduate 5 years before he marries. Explanation: Martin's graduation will occur 5 years before his future marriage. Similar Example: Lucy will finish her book 2 years before it gets published.
- Martin will marry 5 years after he graduates. Explanation: Martin's marriage will happen 5 years after his graduation. Similar Example: John will travel to Europe 1 year after he completes his degree.
- Martin will graduate in 2 years and marry 7 years from now. Explanation: Martin's graduation is set to happen in 2 years from now, and his marriage is planned for 7 years from now. Similar Example: Lisa will finish her training in 6 months and start her own practice 1 year from now.

### Key Points to Remember

- Ago: Used for events that happened before the current time (e.g., "3 years ago").
- Before/Prior to: Used for events that occurred earlier in relation to another event (e.g., "5 years before he plans to marry").
- After: Used for events that occurred later in relation to another event (e.g., "5 years after he graduated").
- Since: Used to measure the time from a past event to the present (e.g., "3 years since Martin's graduation").
- From now/In: Used to indicate the time from the present moment to a future event (e.g., "2 years from now").

By understanding and practicing these concepts, you can accurately describe the timing of events in relation to one another, making your English communication more precise and clear.



## Practice Check

Answer the quiz questions below with responses consistent with the grammar concepts taught on the left.

### ITEM 01

Maria learned Spanish 3 years \_\_\_\_\_ to moving to Spain.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 02

Alex started his business 2 years \_\_\_\_\_ finishing college.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 03

Julia visited Paris 2 years \_\_\_\_\_ and graduated from university 5 years \_\_\_\_\_.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 04

Sarah will travel to Japan 1 year \_\_\_\_\_ she gets her passport.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEM 05

David bought a house 2 years \_\_\_\_\_ he plans to retire.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



## ITEM 06

Emily started her job 4 years \_\_\_\_\_. She plans to start her own business 3 years \_\_\_\_\_ now.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 07

It has been 6 months \_\_\_\_\_ Anna moved to New York.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 08

Two weeks \_\_\_\_\_ now, I will start my new job.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 09

Lucy will finish her book 2 years \_\_\_\_\_ it gets published.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 10

John will travel to Europe 1 year \_\_\_\_\_ he completes his degree.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 11

Lisa will finish her training in 6 months and start her own practice 1 year \_\_\_\_\_ now.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



## ITEM 12

Martin will marry 5 years \_\_\_\_\_ his graduation.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 13

Martin graduated 5 years \_\_\_\_\_ he plans to marry.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 14

Martin graduated 3 years \_\_\_\_\_. He'll marry 2 years \_\_\_\_\_ now.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 15

It has been 3 years \_\_\_\_\_ Martin's graduation.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 16

Two years \_\_\_\_\_ now, Martin will marry.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 17

Martin will graduate 5 years \_\_\_\_\_ he marries.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



## ITEM 18

Martin will marry 5 years \_\_\_\_\_ he graduates.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 19

Martin will graduate in 2 years and marry 7 years \_\_\_\_\_ now.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 20

John graduated 3 years \_\_\_\_\_, and he will start his master's degree 2 years \_\_\_\_\_ now.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 21

Alice will complete her project 6 months \_\_\_\_\_ now and present it 3 months \_\_\_\_\_ she finishes.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 22

It has been 2 years \_\_\_\_\_ he last visited his hometown.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 23

Tom will graduate in 1 year and start his job 2 years \_\_\_\_\_ now.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**ITEM 24**

**It has been 4 years \_\_\_\_\_ I moved to this city.**

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



## Self-check Answer Key

Use the key after you have completed every item on your own.

**ITEM 01**

Maria learned Spanish 3 years prior to moving to Spain.

**ITEM 02**

Alex started his business 2 years after finishing college.

**ITEM 03**

Julia visited Paris 2 years ago and graduated from university 5 years ago.

**ITEM 04**

Sarah will travel to Japan 1 year after she gets her passport.

**ITEM 05**

David bought a house 2 years before he plans to retire.

**ITEM 06**

Emily started her job 4 years ago. She plans to start her own business 3 years from now.

**ITEM 07**

It has been 6 months since Anna moved to New York.

**ITEM 08**

Two weeks from now, I will start my new job.

**ITEM 09**

Lucy will finish her book 2 years before it gets published.

**ITEM 10**

John will travel to Europe 1 year after he completes his degree.

**ITEM 11**

Lisa will finish her training in 6 months and start her own practice 1 year from now.

**ITEM 12**

Martin will marry 5 years after his graduation.

**ITEM 13**

Martin graduated 5 years before he plans to marry.

**ITEM 14**

Martin graduated 3 years ago. He'll marry 2 years from now.



ITEM 15

It has been 3 years since Martin's graduation.

ITEM 16

Two years from now, Martin will marry.

ITEM 17

Martin will graduate 5 years before he marries.

ITEM 18

Martin will marry 5 years after he graduates.

ITEM 19

Martin will graduate in 2 years and marry 7 years from now.

ITEM 20

John graduated 3 years ago, and he will start his master's degree 2 years from now.

ITEM 21

Alice will complete her project 6 months from now and present it 3 months after she finishes.

ITEM 22

It has been 2 years since he last visited his hometown.

ITEM 23

Tom will graduate in 1 year and start his job 2 years from now.

ITEM 24

It has been 4 years since I moved to this city.