

Grammar Explanation

Using verb tenses correctly in your writing

- Use the present or past tenses consistently, both within one sentence and from one sentence to the next.
 - Example: *After deliberating for a whole day, the jury **acquitted** the defendant. That **made** the prosecuting attorney furious and he **vowed** to appeal the verdict.*
- If the situation you are writing about requires a change of tense, use a time expression to alert your reader.
 - Example: *Whenever the economy **is** in bad shape, incumbent presidents **have** a hard time winning an election. **In 1992**, President George Bush **lost** the election because voters **were** nervous about the weak economy.*
- When writing about events or ideas presented by another writer in stories or articles, use the present tense.
 - Example: *In an article published in a sociology journal two weeks ago, the author **discusses** several factors that **contribute** to the alarming rise in teenage pregnancy.*

Excerpted from: Verb Tenses: Exercise 1