



Past Simple: Time Expressions & Context

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- I ____ (meet) her two years ____.
a) meet, ago
b) met, past
c) met, before
d) met, ago
- She ____ (graduate) from university ____ June.
a) graduated, at
b) graduates, in
c) graduated, in
d) graduated, on
- We ____ (go) to Italy ____ summer.
a) went, last
b) went, the last
c) go, last
d) went, past
- He ____ (call) me ____ at 10 pm.
a) call, yesterday
b) called, tomorrow
c) calls, yesterday
d) called, yesterday
- The accident ____ (happen) ____ Monday morning.
a) happened, in
b) happened, on
c) happens, on
d) happened, at
- They ____ (get married) ____ 2015.
a) got married, in
b) get married, in
c) got married, on
d) got married, at
- When I lived abroad, I ____ (not/see) my family ____ two years.
a) don't see, for
b) didn't see, since
c) didn't see, for
d) haven't seen, for
- She ____ (live) in London ____ she was a child.
a) was living, when
b) live, when
c) lived, when
d) lived, while
- ____ night, I ____ (have) a strange dream.
a) Past, had
b) The last, have
c) Yesterday, had
d) Last, had
- The company ____ (open) its first store ____ the 1990s.
a) opens, in
b) opened, in
c) opened, on
d) opened, at
- I ____ (start) learning English five years ____.
a) start, ago
b) have started, ago
c) started, ago
d) started, before

12. We ___ (move) to this house ___ 1st April.
 a) moved, at
 b) moved, on
 c) moved, in
 d) move, on
13. The train ___ (leave) at 9:15 ___ morning.
 a) left, this
 b) leaves, this
 c) left, the
 d) left, on the
14. My grandfather ___ (be) born ___ the Second World War.
 a) was, during
 b) is, during
 c) were, during
 d) was, while
15. She ___ (work) here ___ three years, then she ___ (leave).
 a) worked, since, left
 b) worked, for, left
 c) works, for, leaves
 d) has worked, for, left
16. I ___ (first/meet) him ___ we were at university.
 a) met first, when
 b) first meet, when
 c) firstly met, while
 d) first met, when
17. ___ that time, mobile phones ___ (not/exist).
 a) In, didn't exist
 b) At, don't exist
 c) At, didn't exist
 d) On, didn't existed
18. He ___ (become) CEO ___ the age of 35.
 a) becomes, at
 b) became, at
 c) became, in
 d) became, on
19. The film ___ (come out) ___ week and I ___ (see) it immediately.
 a) came out, the last, saw
 b) comes out, last, see
 c) came out, last, saw
 d) come out, last, saw
20. Once upon a time, there ___ (be) a king who ___ (rule) a great kingdom.
 a) were, ruled
 b) was, rules
 c) is, ruled
 d) was, ruled



Answers

1. d) met, ago
2. c) graduated, in
3. a) went, last
4. d) called, yesterday
5. b) happened, on
6. a) got married, in
7. c) didn't see, for
8. c) lived, when
9. d) Last, had
10. b) opened, in
11. c) started, ago
12. b) moved, on
13. a) left, this
14. a) was, during
15. b) worked, for, left
16. d) first met, when
17. c) At, didn't exist
18. b) became, at
19. c) came out, last, saw
20. d) was, ruled



Explanations

1. “met, ago” (d)

'Ago' is used with past simple to indicate time before now: two years ago.

2. “graduated, in” (c)

Use 'in' with months and years: in June, in 2020. Past simple for completed action.

3. “went, last” (a)

'Last' + time period is used with past simple: last summer, last year.

4. “called, yesterday” (d)

'Yesterday' indicates past time. Past simple is required.

5. “happened, on” (b)

Use 'on' with days: on Monday. Past simple for completed events.

6. “got married, in” (a)

Use 'in' with years: in 2015. 'Get married' → 'got married' in past.

7. “didn't see, for” (c)

'For + time period' with past simple describes a completed period in the past. 'When I lived abroad' establishes a finished time frame.

8. “lived, when” (c)

'When' introduces a time clause. Past simple describes a past state.

9. “Last, had” (d)

'Last night' is a common time expression. Have → had (irregular).

10. “opened, in” (b)

Use 'in' with decades: in the 1990s.

11. “started, ago” (c)

'Ago' always goes after the time period: five years ago.

12. “moved, on” (b)

Use 'on' with specific dates: on 1st April, on Christmas Day.

13. “left, this” (a)

'This morning' (earlier today) uses past simple for completed actions.

14. “was, during” (a)

'During' is used with nouns (events/periods): during the war.

15. “worked, for, left” (b)

'For + duration' with past simple indicates a completed period. Both actions are finished.

16. “first met, when” (d)

'When' introduces a time clause. 'First met' is natural word order.

17. “At, didn't exist” (c)

'At that time' is a time expression referring to a specific point in the past.

18. “became, at” (b)

Use 'at' with ages: at the age of 35, at 10 years old.

19. “came out, last, saw” (c)

'Last week' indicates past time. 'Come out' (be released) → 'came out'.

20. “was, ruled” (d)

'Once upon a time' is a story opener. Past simple is used for narratives.