

Name: _____ Date: _____

Master Verb-Tense Consistency

A verb's *tense* indicates when the action that it describes takes place—in the past (*I ran*), in the present (*I run*), or in the future (*I will run*).

The verb tense you use should remain *consistent*, or the same, throughout sentences, throughout paragraphs, and throughout the entire body of whatever you are writing—unless you have a good reason to change it. For example:

Incorrect: During tomorrow's performance, we **will dance** and **sang**.
(*Will dance* is in the future tense, and *sang* is in the past tense—and there is no good reason for the shift.)

Correct: During tomorrow's performance, we **will dance** and **sing**.
(Both verbs are in the future tense.)

So what IS a good reason to change the verb tense you are using? Change tenses when you are describing events that happen at different times. For example:

Correct: My mom **drove** an SUV last year, but now she **drives** a small hybrid car.
(You are describing the car that your mom previously drove, and you are also describing the car she currently drives. The verb tenses should be different.)

Correct: Tomorrow we **are going** to a baseball game, and yesterday we **went** to a hockey game.
(You are describing what will happen in the future, and you are also describing something that happened in the past.)

Directions: Rewrite the sentences below so that the verb tenses are correct. Remember that in some sentences, verb tenses can be different.

1. Ariana Grande is my favorite singer now, but when I was in fifth grade, I like Justin Bieber. _____

2. I need to go to the dentist tomorrow, because I miss my appointment today. _____

3. When my dad was in middle school, he surfs with his friends every day after school. _____

4. The school dance was a total catastrophe. First, we dance to bad music. Then the photographer did not show up. After that, I will spill chocolate cake all over my pink dress. Then my best friend slips on the cake and twisted his ankle. What a nightmare! _____

5. When I missed the layup, I will lose the basketball game for my team. My teammates were so cool about it, though. They will tell me to stop beating myself up and that I would get a chance to redeem myself at the next game. _____

Directions: Rewrite the paragraph below so that the verb tense is consistent. If you shift the verb tense at any point, make sure you have a good reason for doing so!

Storm clouds darkened the blue sky as I ride my bike home from the park. I had never seen clouds like that before, and the wind will shake the trees violently. I couldn't seem to pedal fast enough. Up ahead, I saw my house and breathe a sigh of relief. As soon as I walked in the door, I knew something was up. My mother explains that news reports will be saying that a big storm is coming. Suddenly, I hear a loud pop! Then there was another pop! And another! I will race to look out the window and saw hail the size of golf balls falling all over my street. I am so thankful I made it home before it will start falling!

