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## Grammar Reference

### 1. The preterite continuous

#### A - Formation

The **preterite continuous** is formed using '**were**' or '**was**' (preterite of 'to be') + '**-ing**'.

#### B - Use

The **preterite continuous** refers to **sustained** actions in the **past**.

*Example:*

When he arrived, I **was** cooking.

What **were** you **doing** up so late at night?

### 2. When 'that' may be left out

The relative pronoun '**that**' is often **omitted** in subordinate clauses.

*Example:*

The book he gave me makes me fall asleep.  
(or The book **that** he gave me makes me fall asleep.)

The CD-ROM I told you about is really fun.  
(or The CD-ROM **that** I told you about is really fun.)

### 3. A little' - 'A bit'

- '**A little**' is used with **uncountable nouns** to designate a small quantity. It may also replace nouns to avoid repetition.

*Example:* We wanted **a little** fresh air.  
Do you want some coffee?  
**A little**, please.

- '**A little**' is also an adverb of degree used before **adjectives** and after **verbs**.

Example: We're **a little** busy today.  
This tooth aches **a little**.

- '**A bit**' often replaces '**a little**' in speech.

Example: It's **a bit** bright but it looks nice.

Note. '**A bit**' is followed by '**of**' before **nominal groups** and **pronouns**.

Example: I have **a bit of** work to do.  
Do you want some cake?  
I still have **a bit of** it.