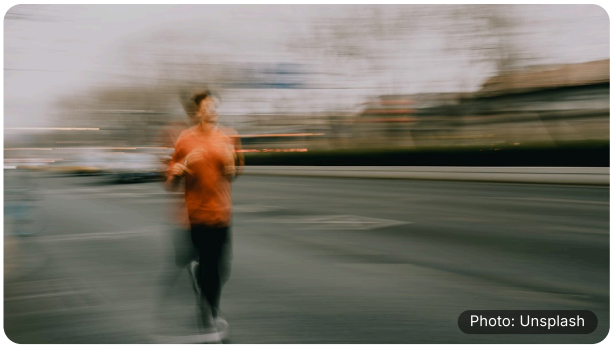
Runaway horse stopped before Santa Fe parade

LEVEL A2/B1


Photo: Unsplash

I. WARM-UP

1. Have you ever seen a parade? What was it like?
2. What animals live near your town or city?
3. What should you do if you see a loose animal?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

parade
a public event where people march or ride along a street

escape
to get away from a place or person

unharmed
not hurt or injured

motorbike
a two-wheeled vehicle with an engine

corner
to force a person or animal into a place with no way out

lasso
a long rope with a loop, used to catch animals

cowboy
a person who works with cattle and horses, often on a ranch

department
a part of an organisation, such as the police in a city

III. READING

People were waiting for a parade in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on 13 September, when a horse escaped from its owner. The horse ran through the streets, but it was unharmed. Police officers followed it on motorbikes and tried to guide it away from traffic. After a short chase, the officers cornered the horse.

A cowboy arrived with a lasso and caught it safely. The horse was given a drink of water and calmed down. The Santa Fe Police Department said in a Facebook post that the horse was walked back to the start of the Desfile de la Gente parade. The event was about to begin when the escape happened. Thanks to the quick work, the horse and people nearby were safe, and the parade could go ahead.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **BBC News***: "Runaway horse captured by police on motorbikes". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where did the horse run away?
2. When did the horse escape?
3. How did the police follow the horse?
4. Who used a lasso to catch the horse?
5. Where was the horse taken after it was caught?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Would you like to watch this parade? Why or why not?
2. What is the best way to calm a scared animal?
3. Should police use motorbikes for animal chases? Why?
4. What public events are popular in your country?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Past continuous

Use the past continuous (was/were + verb-ing) to describe actions that were in progress at a specific time in the past. It often appears with while/when/as to show an action happening when something else occurred.

"People **were waiting** *for a parade in Santa Fe on 13 September."*

"We **were eating** *lunch when the parade began."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

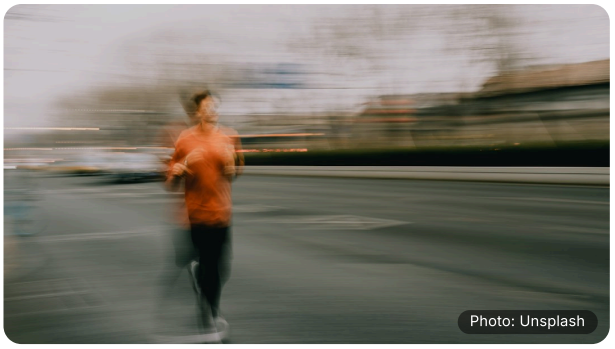
Complete the sentences with the correct past continuous form.

1. Officers (ride) ___ motorbikes while they chased the horse. _____
2. The cowboy (hold) ___ a lasso when he arrived. _____
3. As the horse ran, officers (try) ___ to keep it away from cars. _____
4. I (watch) ___ TV when I saw the news about the horse. _____
5. My friends (stand) ___ near the street when the horse ran past. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Unsplash

I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8 minutes warm-up, 8–10 minutes vocabulary, 10–12 minutes reading, 8–10 minutes comprehension, 8 minutes grammar, 10 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach with pictures or gestures: parade, motorbike, lasso, cowboy, corner (verb), unharmed. Drill pronunciation and stress.
- Reading procedure: first gist (What happened?), then scan for when/where/how details. Pair-check answers before whole-class feedback.
- Differentiation: stronger students write a two-sentence timeline; others sequence three teacher-made picture cards of the chase.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Take a quick show of hands, then ask for one clear reason from both sides.
2. Elicit simple actions (stay calm, give water, keep distance). Note ideas on the board.
3. Run a quick pros/cons debate in pairs, then swap partners to compare lists.
4. Do a pair-share first, then build a class list of events and useful words.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Role-play: In pairs, perform a 45-second briefing: an officer explains to the crowd what happened.

Writing: Write a 60-word safety notice for parade day about animals and crowds.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

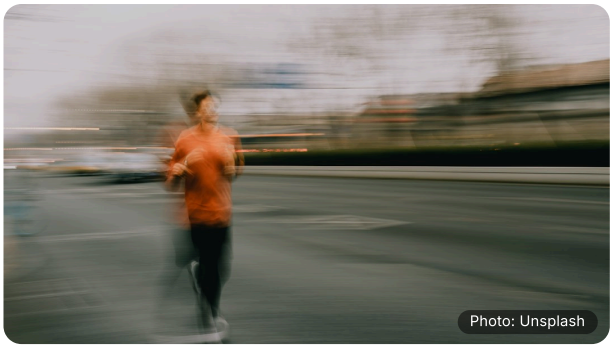
Grammar exercise: Past continuous

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

TEACHERS ONLY

These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Unsplash

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where did the horse run away?
   In Santa Fe, New Mexico.
2. When did the horse escape?
   On 13 September, before the parade began.
3. How did the police follow the horse?
   They followed it on motorbikes.
4. Who used a lasso to catch the horse?
   A cowboy did.
5. Where was the horse taken after it was caught?
   Back to the start of the Desfile de la Gente parade.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete the sentences with the correct past continuous form.

1. Officers ___ motorbikes while they chased the horse. **were riding**
2. The cowboy ___ a lasso when he arrived. **was holding**
3. As the horse ran, officers ___ to keep it away from cars. **were trying**
4. I ___ TV when I saw the news about the horse. **was watching**
5. My friends ___ near the street when the horse ran past. **were standing**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use the past continuous (was/were + verb-ing) to describe actions that were in progress at a specific time in the past. It often appears with while/when/as to show an action happening when something else occurred. (Example 2 constructed.)

> *"People **were waiting** for a parade in Santa Fe on 13 September."*
>
> *"We **were eating** lunch when the parade began."*