

## English Language Resource Center

### Changing Sentences: Present to Past

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**Directions:** Pretend that this story happened a year ago. Change the verbs so that they are in the past tense. Rewrite each of the sentences in the space below. (Reading and rewriting will help your English improve quickly.)

When you are finished, check the answer key provided to see the answer.

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#### A Story of a Cat

**Original:** I have a cat. Her name is May.

**Changed version:** I had a cat. Her name was May.

1. She is very small; she weighs only 11 pounds.

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**Story Line:** I got her from New York City when she was found under a car in extremely cold weather. My boss, Richard Rosenwald, took her in and kept her in the office; however, he had asthma and had to give her to me.

2. My husband is not fond of the cat.

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3. Little things seem to irritate him such as her using the sofa as a scratching post, getting hair all over the house, and bringing cat litter on our bed.

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4. He is being uncooperative and inconsiderate of my feelings.

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5. May seems to avoid him when he comes into a room.

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6. Our clothes are visibly full of white fur, and everyone seems to know we have a cat.

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7. My husband's eyes seem to tear and he often sneezes

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8. When the cat gets in his way, she shows her claw and hisses at him.

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9. Sometimes she takes a swat at him and tears his pants.

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**Story Line:** One night, we had invited a friend to dinner.

10. I have baked a cake as well as an apple pie and have set the table with plates, napkins and utensils.

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11. Then I go out of the dining room to answer the door.

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12. I welcome our visitor, and then take his coat and hang it in the closet.

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13. As I enter the dining room, my cat is on the table eating our dinner.

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14. I am so embarrassed; what will my guest think?

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15. Will he eat dinner in spite of the fact there are paw prints in this gourmet feast?

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16. This seems to be a problem for my husband, but I have prepared enough food for everyone.

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17. Occasionally, I arrange a play date for my cat. His name is Butch.

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18. He has the attitude: feed me and there won't be any violence.

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19. Butch and May enjoy each other's company.

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20. My husband has an office in the house.

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21. It is furnished with a very expensive leather couch.

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22. While my husband is on the phone talking to his client, Butch suddenly jumps onto the couch and gives a defiant look; then he urinates all over the costly sofa.

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23. My husband is enraged and leaps for the couch to catch the cat.

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24. He slips, and his knee falls right into the wet puddle.

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25. Needless to say, there are no more play dates with Butch.

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**Story Line:** Soon after that May was adopted by another family. We now have a stuffed animal that purrs.

## Answer Key

1. She was very small; she weighed only 11 pounds.
2. My husband was not fond of the cat.
3. Little things seemed to irritate him such as her using the sofa as a scratching post, getting hair all over the house, and bringing cat litter on our bed.
4. He was being uncooperative and inconsiderate of my feelings.
5. May seemed to avoid him when he came into a room.
6. Our clothes were visibly full of white fur, and everyone seemed to know we had a cat.
7. My husband's eyes seemed to tear and he often sneezed.
8. When the cat got in his way, she showed her claw and hissed at him.
9. Sometimes she took a swat at him and tore his pants.
10. I had baked a cake as well as an apple pie and had set the table with plates, napkins and utensils.
11. Then I went out of the dining room to answer the door.
12. I welcomed our visitor, and then took his coat and hung it in the closet.
13. As I entered the dining room, my cat was on the table eating our dinner.
14. I was so embarrassed; what would my guest think?
15. Will he eat dinner in spite of the fact there are paw prints in this gourmet feast?
16. This seemed to be a problem for my husband, but I had prepared enough food for everyone.
17. Occasionally, I arranged a play date for my cat. His name was Butch.
18. He had the attitude: feed me and there won't be any violence.
19. Butch and May enjoyed each other's company.
20. My husband had an office in the house.
21. It was furnished with a very expensive leather couch.
22. While my husband was on the phone talking to his client, Butch suddenly jumped onto the couch and gave a defiant look; then he urinated all over the costly sofa.
23. My husband was enraged and leaped for the couch to catch the cat.
24. He slipped, and his knee fell right into the wet puddle.
25. Needless to say, there were no more play dates with Butch.