▶ Preterite: BE + –ING

Main use: action in the past, which was being done, when another short action interrupted it.

Syntax: auxiliary BE (was/were) + Verb + –ING

Examples:
Were they playing football when you saw them yesterday?

Answers:
Yes, they were playing football when I saw them yesterday.
= Yes, they were.

No, they weren't playing football when I saw them yesterday.
= No, they weren't.

▶ TEST

Please choose the correct tense: simple past or BE+–ING?
I _____ (1: have) a bath yesterday when the phone _____ (2: ring). "That must be my mother," I _____ (3: think). As I _____ (4: get) out of the bath, I _____ (5: put) my foot on my watch and I _____ (6: break) it. The phone _____ (7: still/ring). I _____ (8: run) out of the bathroom and I _____ (9: hit) my head on the door. It _____ (10: hurt) terribly and I _____ (11: want) to sit down for a moment, but the phone _____ (12: still/ring). "Please wait a minute, mother," I _____ (13: think). The cats _____ (14: sit) at the top of the stairs. I _____ (15: not/see) them and I _____ (16: fall). At the bottom of the stairs I _____ (17: get up). My right leg _____ (18: hurt) more than my head. The phone _____ (19: still/ring). At last I _____ (20: answer) it. It _____ (21: be) my mother. "Hello, dear. Is evrything all right?" she _____ (22: say).

ANSWERS:
1: was having | 2: rang | 3: thought | 4: was getting | 5: put | 6: broke | 7: was still ringing | 8: ran | 9: hit | 10: hurt | 11: wanted | 12: was still ringing | 13: thought | 14: were sitting | 15: didn't see | 16: fell | 17: got up | 18: was hurting | 19: was still ringing [20: answered | 21: was | 22: said