

Unit 111

As (reason) - 'As I was feeling tired, I went to bed early.'

As (time) - 'I watched her as she opened the letter.'

a **As** (reason)

As often means 'because':

- **As** I was feeling tired, I went to bed early. (= because I was feeling tired)
- **As** they live near us, we see them quite often.
- **As** tomorrow is a public holiday, all the shops will be shut.
- **As** we had nothing better to do, we watched television the whole evening.

But we also use **as** to say that two things happened at the same time. See the next sections.

b **As** (time): two things happenings together

You can use **as** when two things happen at the same time or over the same period of time:

- I watched her **as** she opened the letter.
- **As** they walked along the street, they looked in the shop windows.
- Turn off the light **as** you go out, please.

We use **as** especially for two *short* actions happening at the same time:

- George arrived **as** I left. (= he arrived and I left at the same time)
- We all waved goodbye to Tom **as** he drove away in his car.

You can also use **just as** (= exactly at that moment):

- George arrived **just as** I left.
- **Just as** I sat down, the phone rang.

We also use **as** when two *changes* happen over the same period of time:

- **As** the day went on, the weather got worse.
- I began to enjoy the job more **as** I got used to it.

c **As** (time): one thing happening during another

You can say that you did something **as** you were doing something else (= in the middle of doing something else).

When we use **as** in this way, both actions are usually quite short:

- The man slipped **as** he was getting off the train.
- Jill burnt herself **as** she was taking the cakes out of the oven.
- The thief was seen **as** he was climbing over the wall.

You can also use **just as**:

- **Just as** we were going out, it started to rain.
- I had to leave **just as** the conversation was getting interesting.

For the *past continuous* (was getting / were going etc.) see **Unit 12**.

Note that we use **as** only if two actions happen *together*. Do *not* use **as** if one action follows another:

- **When** I got home, I had a bath. (*not* 'as I got home')

