OVERLAPPING ACTION
I was walking to the station when I met John.
Use with: when + past simple, two o'clock, 7pm.

STORY BACKGROUND
The birds were singing and the sun was shining. Amy sat down.
Use with: the past simple.

SOME PAST HABITS
She was constantly singing.
Use with: always, forever, constantly, at that time, in those days.

PAST CONTINUOUS

EMPHASIS OF LENGTH OF ACTION
I was working in the garden all day.
Use with: all day, all evening, for hours.