

8A Past of *be*, *there was/there were*, and simple past: irregular verbs

We use the past of *be* and the simple past to talk about completed actions and situations in the past.

The past forms of the verb *be* are *was* and *were*.

Life was difficult in the 1930s.

Our house wasn't very big.

We were very happy.

We weren't rich.

8.2	I / he / she / it	you / we / they
+	I was busy last week.	We were busy last week.
-	He wasn't busy yesterday.	They weren't busy yesterday.

there was/there were

We use *there was/there were* to say that something existed in the past.

There was a TV in our living room.

There were two rooms in our apartment.

8.3	Singular	Plural
+	There was a fridge in our kitchen.	There were a lot of books in my bedroom.
-	There was no/There wasn't any freezer.	There weren't any CDs.

Simple past: irregular verbs

The verb *be* is irregular in the past. A lot of common verbs have an irregular simple past form, too.

We made a cake yesterday.

I had an English class last week.

We make the negative simple past form of all verbs with *didn't* + the base form of the verb.

We didn't make bread yesterday.

I didn't have a French class last week.

8.5	I / you / he / she / it / we / they
+	I bought a lot of books in the 1990s.
-	I didn't buy expensive clothes.

For a full list of irregular verbs, see page 176.

1 Complete the sentences with *was*, *wasn't*, *were*, or *weren't*.

1 I _____ born in the U.S. I'm Canadian.

2 Chris _____ at my house yesterday. He was at home.

3 It _____ Friday yesterday. Today is Saturday.

4 We _____ at the movies last night. We left at 10.00 p.m.

5 The stores _____ open, so we didn't buy anything.

6 There _____ any tickets, so we didn't go to the concert.

7 Lucia _____ born in Uruguay in 1978.

8 The market _____ busy this morning. It was so crowded.

2 Write the sentences in the negative.

1 I had breakfast this morning.

2 We read the newspapers yesterday.

3 My dad made dinner last night.

4 We bought a color TV in the 1970s.

5 I was at home on Saturday.

6 My parents were on vacation last week.

3 Complete the text with the past of *be* or the simple past of the verbs in parentheses.



In the 19th century, life ¹ _____ (be) difficult for a lot of people. Usually homes ² _____ (be) pretty small. There usually ³ _____ (not be) a bathroom in the house. People ⁴ _____ (not have) modern inventions like TVs or radios. They ⁵ _____ (not buy) many things, and there ⁶ _____ (not be) any computers. But people ⁷ _____ (read) books and children ⁸ _____ (have) toys.