

Simple Past

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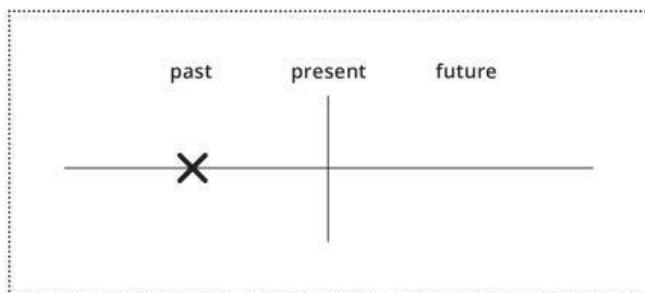
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Grammar Notes

SIMPLE PAST

A. Use

We use the **simple past** to talk about finished actions that happened in the past.



B. Time Markers

Words that show the time of an action are called "time markers."
Common time markers for the simple past are *yesterday*, *last*, *ago*, and *when*.

Time Marker	Examples
yesterday	- I walked my dog yesterday. - He called me yesterday morning.
last	- They went to the movies last night. - Our company hired 20 new employees last year.
ago	- She got a new job two months ago. Six weeks ago, we moved to New York.
when	- My brother learned to ride a bike when he was four years old. When I graduated from university, I applied for many jobs.

Grammar Notes cont.

C. Form

A common way to form the simple past is to add *-ed* to the end of a verb. These verbs are called "**regular** verbs."

Other verbs have many kinds of changes. They are called "**irregular** verbs."

The **Be** verb is a special kind of irregular verb. It has two forms (*was* and *were*). It also has different sentence patterns.

Let's look at regular verbs, irregular verbs, and the *Be* verb in more detail.

D. Regular Verbs

To form the past tense of regular verbs, add *-ed* to the base verb.

Type of Sentence	Pattern	Examples
Positive	base verb + <i>-ed</i>	- I talked to my friends for hours yesterday. - They worked until 7:00 pm last night. - She tried to help me two weeks ago. - My coworkers completed the project.
Negative	did not / didn't + base verb	- He did not study French at school. - My classmates didn't like my speech.
Question	did + subject + base verb	Did you call me last night? Did she go on a trip last year?
Wh- Question	Wh- word + did + subject + base verb	- When did you leave? - How did they know about the test?



Grammar Notes cont.

D. Regular Verbs cont.

How do we spell regular past verbs? Follow these simple rules:

#	Rule	Examples
1	If a verb ends in -e, add -d.	- like → liked - arrive → arrived - decide → decided
2	If a verb ends in consonant + -y, change -y to -i and add -ed.	- carry → carried - try → tried - study → studied
3	If a verb ends in vowel + -y, add -ed.*	- play → played - stay → stayed - enjoy → enjoyed
4	If a verb ends in a consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) pattern, double the final consonant and add -ed.**	- hug → hugged - plan → planned - stop → stopped
5	For all other verbs, add -ed.	- watch → watched - ask → asked - clean → cleaned

*Note:

There are some exceptions to this rule:

- pay → paid
- lay → laid

**Note:

For verbs with more than one syllable, this rule is only true if the stress is on the **last** syllable. Notice the difference below:

- prefer → preferred
- visit → visited

Grammar Notes cont.

E. Irregular Verbs

To form the past tense of an irregular verb, we must make a change (in the middle or ending) to the verb.

Type of Sentence	Pattern	Examples
Positive	various changes*	- She wrote me a long email this morning. - I ate an entire pizza on the weekend. - The staff members met with the boss. - They rode their bikes to school when they were young.
Negative	did not / didn't + base verb	- He did not read the newspaper yesterday. - My neighbours didn't pay their rent last month.
Question	did + subject + base verb	Did you tell her about your accident? Did they go shopping yesterday afternoon?
Wh- Question	Wh- word + did + subject + base verb	- When did you catch a cold? - Why did you sing that song?

***Note:**

For a complete list of irregular verbs, see page 23 in this lesson.

Grammar Notes cont.

F. Be Verb

To form the past tense of the Be verb, use the words *was* or *were*.

Type of Sentence	Pattern	Examples
Positive	I / he / she / it / singular count noun / non-count noun + was	- I was happy when I was in Hawaii. - The teacher was in the classroom.
	you / we / they / plural count noun + were	- We were sick last month. - The children were at the park.
Negative	was not / wasn't	He was not at home last night.
	were not / weren't	We weren't at work yesterday.
Question	was / were + subject	Were you in trouble? Was your sister at school yesterday?
Wh- Question	Wh- word + was / were + subject	- Who was that? - Where were you?

Exercise 1

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Put the correct past tense form of *Be* in the blanks below.

Ex. Eva _____ *was* _____ sick yesterday.

1. We _____ in the same class last year.
2. I _____ tired after a long day at work.
3. The weather _____ beautiful yesterday.
4. My teachers _____ really good last semester.
5. The children _____ hungry after so much exercise.
6. The wind _____ very strong last night.
7. She _____ so happy last week.
8. They _____ nervous on the first day of school.
9. Luckily, the windows _____ closed during the rainstorm.
10. We _____ very happy to get your invitation last week.

Exercise 2

COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

Finish the following sentences using the negative form of *Be* in the past tense.

Ex. I am at work today, but *I wasn't at work yesterday.*

1. It is cold outside today, but _____
2. She is sick today, but _____
3. They are at school today, but _____
4. The TV show is good today, but _____
5. The peaches are sweet today, but _____
6. The class is interesting today, but _____
7. He is angry today, but _____
8. The door is locked today, but _____
9. The exercises are easy today, but _____
10. The children are tired today, but _____

Exercise 3

PAIR WORK

Write the questions using the prompt and the simple past tense.
Then interview your partner. Write down your **partner's answers**.

#	Prompt	Question	Answer
Ex	at home / last night	<i>Were you at home last night?</i>	<i>No, I wasn't.</i>
1	at school / yesterday		
2	at the movies / last weekend		
3	at the gym / last week		
4	at the mall / last month		
5	in another country / last year		
6	tired / last night		
7	angry / last week		
8	sick / last month		
9	excited / about your last birthday		
10	happy / during your last vacation		

Exercise 4

VERB CHART (REGULAR VERBS)

Review the spelling rules on page 4.
Then write the past forms of these regular verbs.

#	Base Form	Past Form
Ex	ask	<i>asked</i>
1	brush	
2	carry	
3	check	
4	clean	
5	cry	
6	dance	
7	decide	
8	hope	
9	hug	

#	Base Form	Past Form
10	laugh	
11	learn	
12	like	
13	listen	
14	plan	
15	play	
16	study	
17	talk	
18	walk	
19	wash	

Exercise 5

CHOOSE THE CORRECT VERB

Choose a verb from the list on the right to complete the following sentences. Write the verb in the past tense. Use each verb only once.

Ex. I visited my friend in the hospital last night.

1. The boys _____ baseball in the field behind the school.
2. Robert _____ his wife wash the dishes.
3. We _____ our living room a soft blue colour.
4. Susan _____ TV for two hours last night.
5. We _____ planes on the way to New York.
6. She _____ for him for 20 minutes at the coffee shop.
7. He _____ how to swim when he was a child.
8. They _____ all around the country three years ago.
9. The students _____ late for class.
10. We _____ to the radio until midnight.

Verb List:

- change
- visit
- paint
- travel
- listen
- help
- arrive
- learn
- watch
- play
- wait

Exercise 6

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

A. Write the Answers

Answer the questions using the simple past tense and the prompt.

#	Question	Prompt	Answer
Ex	Did Anna bake a cake last weekend?	no	<i>No, she didn't.</i>
1	Did the boys play soccer yesterday?	yes	
2	Did she call her mother last night?	no	
3	Did you fix your TV yesterday?	no	
4	Did they play in a band together?	yes	
5	Did he study history at university?	yes	

B. Interview Your Partner

Now write five questions using any regular verbs from the list on page 10.
Then ask your partner the questions and write his or her answers.

#	Question	Answer
Ex	<i>Did you watch TV last night?</i>	<i>Yes, she did.</i>
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Exercise 7

VERB CHART (IRREGULAR VERBS)

Write the past forms of these irregular verbs.
Refer to the list on page 23 if you need help.

#	Base Form	Past Form
Ex	be	<i>was, were</i>
1	begin	
2	bring	
3	catch	
4	choose	
5	do	
6	fall	
7	go	
8	have	
9	know	

#	Base Form	Past Form
10	make	
11	read	
12	run	
13	see	
14	sing	
15	sleep	
16	take	
17	teach	
18	think	
19	write	

Exercise 8

CHOOSE THE CORRECT VERB

Choose a verb(s) from the list on the right to complete the following sentences. Write the verb(s) in the past tense. Use each verb only once.

Ex. She broke a plate when she was washing the dishes.

1. They _____ to Paris in a jumbo jet last week.

2. I _____ the alarm clock for 7:00 yesterday morning, but I
_____ up an hour before the alarm clock _____.

3. I _____ an email to my friend back home.

4. He _____ a five-page essay last night.

5. His mother _____ care of him when he _____ sick.

6. The teacher _____ the mathematics class
and then _____ the students three exercises to do for homework.

7. Matthew _____ his wallet on the way to work yesterday.

He _____ very upset.

8. Angie _____ a bad cold last week. She _____ in bed for three days.

9. The children _____ in the lake behind their house last summer.

10. We _____ a wonderful time at your party last night.

11. I _____ groceries on my way home yesterday and I _____ cash.

12. I _____ three friends at the cafe and
we _____ several cups of coffee together.

Verb List:

- buy
- ring
- lie
- ~~break~~
- teach
- fly
- set
- send
- wake
- swim
- feel
- pay
- meet
- have
- write
- drink
- give
- get
- take
- catch
- lose

Exercise 9

IRREGULAR VERB BINGO

Choose any 24 verbs from the Irregular Verb List on page 23 and write the past tense forms in the squares. Then play Bingo! Draw an ✕ when you hear your teacher call out a matching verb.

		Free Space		