

FORM

Past Simple

Positive: past simple form of verb: *I arrived*, etc. (regular)
I came, etc. (irregular)

Negative and question form: **did** + infinitive

Short answer: **did**

USE

- Completed actions.

To talk about events and actions in the past that are now finished.

The past simple refers to the complete event. The time or approximate time that the event took place is stated or is understood from the context. It may be in the very recent past:

*Your mother **phoned** a few minutes ago.*

*Who **opened** this window?*

or it may be in the more distant past:

*I never **learnt** to swim as a child.*

- Past habit or regular event.

To talk about a regular, repeated or habitual event:

*We **went out** for a meal every evening on holiday.*

*He **got up** at 7 o'clock every morning to go to work.*

or a past habit or situation of some duration:

*He **smoked** for most of his life.*

*She **worked** there for twenty years.*

- Past situation at a point in time.

With stative verbs, to talk about a situation that existed at a certain time in the past:

*In 1950, there **were** fewer than 50 million cars in use around the world.*

*At the time, I **had** a poorly-paid job in the local shop.*