

Sentence structures for the verb "to be" in past tense.

In the simple past, sentences that use the verb "to be" as the main verb are useful to express what and how we were, where we were, how we felt and behaved, in a time before the present. Let's see the sentences (or grammatical structures) used to express this information:

Estructuras de oraciones para el verbo "to be" en tiempo pasado.

En pasado simple, las oraciones que usan el verbo "to be" como verbo principal son útiles para expresar: qué y cómo éramos, dónde estábamos, y cómo nos sentíamos y nos comportábamos, en un tiempo anterior al presente. Veamos las oraciones (o estructuras gramaticales) utilizadas para expresar esta información:

The first structure is the affirmative sentence.

Here you are going to put the subject first, it can be a personal pronoun or a proper name.

After that, you are going to add the verb to be, depending on the subject. For example, if you are going to talk about singular persons like "I, he, she, it", you are going to use was. But if you are going to talk about a plural person like "we, you, they", you are going to use were.

Be careful with the singular second person "you", it doesn't matter if it is singular, you are going to use "were". And after the verb "to be" you are going to put the complement or the rest of the information in the sentence; for example, you can use an adjective that talks about how you felt in the past, for example "I was happy", "Yo era feliz". Or you can use a noun that signifies a place to talk about the previous location that someone had, for example "You were at school", "Tú estabas en la escuela". Or you can use a noun to talk about the previous occupation or profession that someone had, for example "She was a waitress", "Ella era una mesera". Or you can use an adjective to talk about the appearance that someone had in the past or a physical attribute, for example "You were skinny", "Ustedes eran delgados".

The second structure is the negative sentence.

Here you are going to use the negative particle "not" and you are going to put it right next to the verb "to be". It's the same structure as the affirmative sentence, the only thing is that you are going to put the negative particle "not" right next to the verb "to be". You can also use a contraction. If you don't use the contraction, you are going to pronounce it, for example "was not", and with the contraction "wasn't".

With "were" you're going to pronounce it "were not", and if you use the contraction, it will be "weren't". For example, "I wasn't sad", "Yo no estaba triste"; "He wasn't hungry", "Él no estaba hambriento"; "She wasn't an actress", "Ella no era una actriz".

And with "weren't" you can say "We weren't in the park", "Nosotros no estábamos en el parque"; or you can say "We were not...", like here: "We were not in the park", "Nosotros no estábamos en el parque". It means the same thing: "Weren't" is the same as "Were not".

La primera estructura es la oración afirmativa.

Aquí vas a poner primero el sujeto, puede ser un pronombre personal o un nombre propio.

Después de eso, agregarás el verbo "to be", según el sujeto. Por ejemplo, si vas a hablar de personas singulares como "I, he, she, it", vas a usar "was". Pero si vas a hablar de una persona en plural como "we, you, they", vas a usar "were".

Ten cuidado con la segunda persona del singular "you", no importa si es singular, vas a usar "were". Y después del verbo "to be" vas a poner el complemento o el resto de la información en la oración; por ejemplo, puedes usar un adjetivo que hable de cómo te sentiste en el pasado, por ejemplo "I was happy", "Yo era feliz". O puedes usar un sustantivo que indique un lugar para hablar sobre la ubicación anterior que alguien tuvo, "You were at school", "Tú estabas en la escuela". O se puede utilizar un sustantivo para hablar de la ocupación o profesión anterior que tuvo alguien, por ejemplo "She was a waitress", "Ella era una mesera". O puedes utilizar un adjetivo para hablar de la apariencia que tenía alguien en el pasado o de un atributo físico, por ejemplo "You were skinny", "Ustedes eran delgados".

La segunda estructura es la oración negativa.

Aquí vas a usar la partícula negativa "not" y la vas a poner justo al lado del verbo "to be". Es la misma estructura que la oración afirmativa, lo único es que vas a poner la partícula negativa "not" justo al lado del verbo "to be". También puedes utilizar una contracción. Si no usas la contracción, vas a pronunciar, por ejemplo "was not", y con la contracción "wasn't".

Con "were", vas a pronunciar "were not", y si usas la contracción, será "weren't". Por ejemplo, "I wasn't sad", "Yo no estaba triste"; "He wasn't hungry", "Él no estaba hambriento"; "She wasn't an actress", "Ella no era una actriz".

Y con "weren't" puedes decir "We weren't in the park", "Nosotros no estábamos en el parque"; o puedes decir "We were not...", como aquí: "We were not in the park", "Nosotros no estábamos en el parque". Significa lo mismo: "Weren't" es lo mismo que "Were not".

Then you have the interrogative structures, but here we have two types of questions. We have "Closed Questions" or "Yes or No Questions", and we have "Information Questions" or "Open Questions".

We are going to start with the yes or no questions.

Here you are going to put first the verb "to be". It's not like in the affirmative sentence that you have the subject first and then the verb "to be", here you're going to put it backwards. You're going to put first the verb "to be" and then the subject.

It's very different from Spanish because in Spanish we have the same structure, the only thing that changes is how you say it, the tone of your voice. For example, an affirmative sentence in Spanish "Ella era inteligente", you are affirming that, you are saying that that is true, but then if you want to ask about that, "¿Ella era inteligente?", it's the same order for the words, the only thing that changes is your tone: "Ella era inteligente", "¿Ella era inteligente?".

But in English the order of the words actually changes. For example, an affirmative sentence "She was intelligent", but the question: "Was she intelligent?". Another example, "They were students", that's the affirmation, "Ellos era estudiantes". But if you want to ask about that, you are going to ask: "Were they students?", "Ellos eran estudiantes".

You have a short answer or two short answers for this: "Yes, they were", that in Spanish means: "Sí"; or "No, they weren't", that in Spanish means: "No". This is the short answer, or you can give the long answer: "Yes, they were students" or "No, they weren't students". Or if you don't use the contractions: "No, they were not students".

Luego tienes las estructuras interrogativas, pero aquí tenemos dos tipos de preguntas. Tenemos "Preguntas Cerradas" o "Preguntas de Sí o No", y tenemos "Preguntas de información" o "Preguntas Abiertas".

Vamos a empezar con las preguntas de sí o no.

Aquí vas a poner primero el verbo "to be". No es como en la oración afirmativa que primero tienes el sujeto y luego el verbo "to be", aquí lo vas a poner al revés. Vas a poner primero el verbo "to be" y luego el sujeto.

Es muy diferente al español, porque en español tenemos la misma estructura, lo único que cambia es cómo lo dices, el tono de tu voz. Por ejemplo, una oración afirmativa en español "Ella era inteligente", estás afirmando eso, estás diciendo que eso es cierto, pero luego si quieres preguntar sobre eso, "¿Ella era inteligente?", es el mismo orden para las palabras, lo único que cambia es tu tono: "Ella era inteligente", "¿Ella era inteligente?".

Pero en inglés, el orden de las palabras en realidad cambia. Por ejemplo, una oración afirmativa "She was intelligent", pero la pregunta: "Was she intelligent?". Otro ejemplo, "They were students", esa es la afirmación, "Ellos eran estudiantes". Pero si quieres preguntar sobre eso, vas a preguntar: "Were they students?", "Ellos eran estudiantes".

Tienes una respuesta corta o dos respuestas cortas para esto: "Yes, they were", que en español significa: "Sí"; o "No, they weren't", que en español significa: "No". Esta es la respuesta corta, o puedes dar la respuesta larga: "Yes, they were students" o "No, they weren't students". O si no usa las contracciones: "No, they were not students".

For the information questions, it's exactly the same structure as "Yes or No Questions" but you're going to put at the beginning of the sentence or at the beginning of the question a "WH word".

The difference between a "Yes or No Question" and an "Information Question" is that a "Yes or No Question", like its name says, is asking for you to confirm or deny something. You only have these two options to answer, "yes" or "no". But an "Information Question" is asking for information, for a fact or some data.

In this case you are going to put the exact same structure as a "Yes or No Question", but you're going to add the "WH word" that you need for you to ask that piece of information. It can be "Where?", if you are asking about a place; it can be "Why?", if you are asking about a reason; it could be "When?", if you're asking about, I don't know, time.

So you can say "Where was she yesterday?", "¿Dónde estaba ella ayer?"; or "Where was he yesterday?", "¿Dónde estaba él ayer?".

"Why were they angry?"... "Why were they angry?", "¿Por qué ellos estaban enojados?".

"When were you a student?"... "When were you a student?", "¿Cuándo eras tú un estudiante?".

And that is all for today's class. Thank you very much. This was the class about "Sentence structures for the verb "to be" in past tense.

Para las "Preguntas de información", es exactamente la misma estructura que las "Preguntas de Sí o No", pero vas a poner al principio de la oración o al principio de la pregunta una "palabra WH-".

La diferencia entre una "Pregunta de Sí o No" y una "Pregunta de información" es que una "Pregunta de Sí o No", como su nombre lo dice, te pide que confirmes o niegues algo. Solo tienes estas dos opciones para responder, "sí" o "no". Pero una "Pregunta de Información" está pidiendo información, un hecho o algún dato.

En este caso, vas a poner exactamente la misma estructura que una "Pregunta de Sí o No", pero vas a agregar la "palabra WH-" que necesitas para preguntar por esa información. Puede ser "Where?", si estás preguntando por un lugar; puede ser "Why?", si estás preguntando por un motivo; podría ser "When?", si estás preguntando sobre, no sé, tiempo.

Entonces puedes decir "Where was she yesterday?", "¿Dónde estaba ella ayer?"; o "Where was he yesterday?", "¿Dónde estaba él ayer?".

"Why were they angry?"... "Why were they angry?", "¿Por qué ellos estaban enojados?".

"When were you a student?"... "When were you a student?", "¿Cuándo eras tú un estudiante?".

Y eso es todo por la clase de hoy. Muchísimas gracias. Esta fue la clase sobre "Estructuras de oraciones para el verbo "to be" en tiempo pasado.

