

GRAMMAR

The past simple: to be and to have

LEVEL

Beginner (A1)

NUMBER

EN_A1_2093G

LANGUAGE

English

Learning outcomes

- I can form the past simple of the verbs 'to be' and 'to have'.
- I can use the past simple forms of the verbs 'to be' and 'to have' in a simple sentence.



Yesterday **was** sunny and
warm.

I **had** dinner at a local
restaurant.





The past simple of *to be*

- Use the **past simple** to talk about **finished actions** in the past.

present simple

past simple

I **am**

I **was**

He **is**

He **was**

She **is**

She **was**

It **is**

It **was**



The past simple of *to be*

- The past simple of *to be* with *you, we* and *they* is **were**.

present simple

past simple

You **are**

You **were**

We **are**

We **were**

They **are**

They **were**



Talking about the past

1



I **was** asleep!

2



It **was** sunny yesterday!

3



We **were** in Brazil last year.

4



They **were** on holiday in March.



The weather

What was the weather like yesterday in your city? Tell a partner.





Fill in the gaps

Use the correct form of *to be* to fill in the gaps.



Where _____ you last week?

I _____ on holiday.



Very nice! What _____ the weather like?



Complete the sentences

Use the correct form of *to be* to complete the sentences.

1 He _____ in France last week.

2 They _____ tired last night.

3 It _____ cloudy and cold yesterday.

4 We _____ at the museum a few days ago.

5 I _____ so tired after work yesterday.





The past simple of *to have*

- Use the **past simple** to talk about **finished actions** in the past.

present simple

past simple

I **have**

I **had**

You **have**

You **had**

He **has**

He **had**

She **has**

She **had**



The past simple of *to have*

- Use the **past simple** to talk about **finished actions** in the past.

present simple

We **have**

They **have**

past simple

We **had**

They **had**



Talking about the past

1



I **had** a great time on holiday!

2



She **had** a cold last week.

3



We **had** dinner together last night.

4



He **had** a dog when he was little.



Complete the sentences

In breakout rooms or together as a class, **complete the sentences** with the correct form of *to have*.

- 1 I _____ a meeting with my boss yesterday.
- 2 You _____ a coffee this morning.
- 3 She _____ an amazing vacation.
- 4 We _____ a great time in New York last month.
- 5 My brother _____ a pet frog when we were kids.

Fill in the gaps

Use the correct form of *to be* or *to have* to complete the text.

I _____ in Canada last year with my husband. It
_____ amazing to see snow for the first time!
The weather _____ cold, but we _____
prepared! We _____ lots of warm clothes. We
_____ a great time!





We had a great time!

lovely

wonderful

fantastic



We had a **lovely** time!

I had a **wonderful** time!

They had a **fantastic** time!



Lovely, wonderful and **fantastic** are three adjectives you can use to describe a positive experience.



Transform the sentences

Change the sentences from the present simple to the past simple.

1 It is sunny.



It was sunny.

2 It is interesting.



3 He has three children.



4 They have a meeting.



5 I m on holiday.



6 We are very happy.



Asking questions in the past simple

- Forming questions in the past simple is not much different from forming questions in the present simple.
- The structure of the question stays the same. The only difference is the tense of the verb.

present simple

Are you cold?

What time **is** it?

Am I married?

Are we happy?

Where **is** Simon?

past simple

Were you cold?

What time **was** it?

Was I married?

Were we happy?

Where **was** Simon?

Asking questions in the past simple

- One of the most important verbs for asking questions is the verb **to do**. It is an **irregular verb**.

present simple

past simple

I **do**

I **did**

You **do**

You **did**

He, she, it **does**

He, she, it **did**

We **do**

We **did**

They **do**

They **did**



Past simple questions with *to do*

Do you know?



Did you know?

Does he have a dog?



Did he have a dog?

- Which word changed from the present simple question to the past simple question?
- Did any other verb change?

The verb **to do** is used for many different kinds of questions in English, especially in the **past simple**.

The **structure** of the sentence **stays the same** when you are posing questions in the past simple. All you need to **change** is the tense of the verb **to do**. The second verb stays in the **infinitive**.



Make questions

Write a question for each answer. Your questions might be different from your classmates'.

1 I had a great time, thanks!



Did you have a good time?

2 I think she was at the beach.



3 They had a dog when they were kids.



4 It was okay. Nothing special.



5 Yes, he had to go to school.



6 No, I didn't like it.







Your last holiday

Talk about your last holiday, or the last time you did something exciting. Talk about where you were, how you felt and what you did. Talk about the weather, the food, the people...



It was...

I had...

I did...

We were...



End of the lesson

Idiom

jump on the bandwagon

Meaning: joining something that has become very popular, usually only after it has become popular or successful

Example: I finally jumped on the bandwagon and bought a new laptop.



Additional practice



Fill in the gaps



What _____ you do yesterday?

I _____ at home all day because I _____ a cold.



Oh no! The weather _____ so nice!

I know! What a shame.



was

did

was

had



Complete the table with the past simple forms

| | |
|---------|-------|
| I am | _____ |
| You are | _____ |
| He is | _____ |
| We have | _____ |
| I do | _____ |
| He does | _____ |





Talking about a holiday

Your friend Claire has shown you these photos from her latest holiday. Answer the questions about each picture.



Where was she?
What did she do there?
How did she feel?



Talking about the past

Guess what your classmates or your teacher did **yesterday**. Are you right?



*I think Sue had a meeting
yesterday.*

*Yes, that's right. I had a
meeting with my boss.*

*Marco was at home
yesterday.*

No, I was at work yesterday.

...



Answer key

P.8: was, were, was

P.9: 1) was, 2) were, 3) was, 4) were, 5) was

P.13: 1) had, 2) had, 3) had, 4) had, 5) had

P.14: was, was, was, were, had, had

P.16: 2) It was interesting. 3) He had three children. 4) They had a meeting. 5) I was on holiday. 6) We were very happy.



Answer key



P.25: did, was, had, was

P.26: I was, you were, he was, we had, I did, he did



Summary

The past simple of *to be* and *to have*:

- Use the **past simple** to talk about **finished actions** in the past.
- *I was, you were, he/she/it was, we were, they were*
- *I had, you had, he/she/it had, we had, they had*

Asking questions in the past simple:

- Forming questions in the past simple is not much different from forming questions in the present simple. The structure of the question stays the same. The only difference is the tense of the verb.
- *Were you in Berlin? Where was Simon?*

To *do* in the past simple and in past simple questions:

- One of the most important verbs for asking questions is the verb **to do**. It is an **irregular verb**.
- The **structure** of the sentence **stays the same** when you are posing questions in the past simple. All you need to **change** is the tense of the verb **to do**. The second verb stays in the **infinitive**.
- *Did you go there? Did they have a dog?*



Vocabulary

was

were

had

did

past simple

yesterday



Notes

