

07 The past simple

The past simple is used to talk about completed actions that happened at a fixed time in the past. It is the most commonly used past tense in English.

See also:

Past simple negative **8** Past simple questions **9**
Present perfect simple **11**

7.1 REGULAR VERBS IN THE PAST SIMPLE

To form a regular verb in the past simple, “-ed” is added to the base form.



TUESDAY



TODAY

Walter **washed** his car on Tuesday.

The verb ends in “-ed.”

Fixed point in the past.

HOW TO FORM

Most verbs in the past simple do not change with the subject.

SUBJECT

I / You / He
She / We / They

PAST VERB

played

REST OF SENTENCE

tennis yesterday.

The same form is
used for all subjects.

FURTHER EXAMPLES



Last night, I **watched** a documentary about Italy.

Heather **cleaned** her bedroom last weekend before the party.



Last Friday I **danced** with friends.

Tom **shaved** off his beard yesterday.



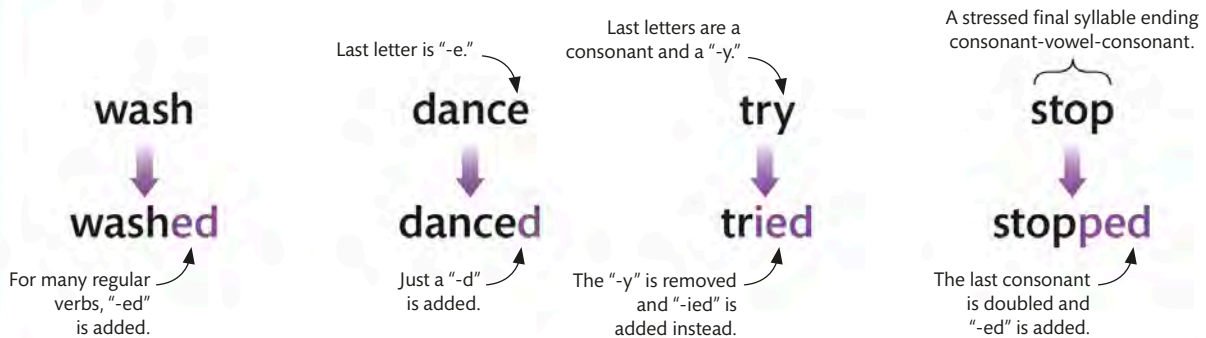
Tom usually drives to work, but yesterday he **walked** instead.

After work, Nia **listened** to music and **started** reading a new book.



7.2 SPELLING RULES FOR THE PAST SIMPLE

The past simple of all regular verbs ends in “-ed,” but for some verbs, there are some spelling changes, too.



FURTHER EXAMPLES




jump
↓
jumped



arrive
↓
arrived



carry
↓
carried



drop
↓
dropped



work
↓
worked



save
↓
saved



cry
↓
cried



hop
↓
hopped



play
↓
played



decide
↓
decided



hurry
↓
hurried



step
↓
stepped

7.3 IRREGULAR VERBS IN THE PAST SIMPLE

Some verbs do not take "-ed" to form the past simple. There are no specific rules about how to form irregular verbs in the past simple.



COMMON IRREGULAR VERBS IN THE PAST SIMPLE

go	have	do	put	come	see
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
went	had	did	put	came	saw

FURTHER EXAMPLES

I **swam** in the 500m race.



Sam **ate** two pizzas.



I **came** to the US in 1980.



We **went** to the zoo last week.



We **saw** some rare birds.



They **drank** all the lemonade.



I **did** really well in school.



They **had** a great vacation.



Steve **put** his cup on the table.



Sheila **drove** to the park.



7.4 "BE" IN THE PAST SIMPLE

The past simple of "be" is completely irregular. It is the only verb in the past simple which changes depending on the subject.

The traffic **was** bad, so we **were** late to school.



PAST

NOW

HOW TO FORM

The past simple of "be" changes with the subject.

SUBJECT	"BE"	REST OF SENTENCE
I	was	late to school.
You	were	
He / She	was	
We / They	were	

FURTHER EXAMPLES

He was a doctor for 40 years.



We were at the library yesterday.



She was a Broadway star in the 1960s.



There were lots of people at the party.



There was a party last night.



They were at the movies last week.



07 The past simple

The past simple is used to talk about completed actions that happened at a fixed time in the past. It is the most commonly used past tense in English.



7.1 FILL IN THE GAPS USING THE PAST SIMPLE VERBS IN THE PANEL

After work, Phil listened to music.

- 1 I _____ my bedroom this morning.
- 2 We _____ football in the afternoon.
- 3 After his dinner, Alex _____ a movie on TV.
- 4 My wife _____ her parents yesterday.
- 5 Lucia _____ with her friends at the party.

played

~~listened~~

watched

visited

danced

cleaned



7.2 MATCH THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SENTENCES TO THE CORRECT ENDINGS

After I finished work

so I checked my email.

1 Terry usually takes the metro to work,

the old town and visited the museum.

2 I arrived at work early

I decided to go for a swim.

3 In the morning we walked to

but yesterday he walked instead.

4 Angela cried when she

after she finished her dinner.

5 We usually go to France

then started reading his new book.

6 Jemma washed the dishes

heard the sad news.

7 Roger listened to some music

but last year we traveled around Russia.



7.3 REWRITE THE SENTENCES, PUTTING THE WORDS IN THE CORRECT ORDER

hurried catch The last to the children bus.

The children hurried to catch the last bus.

1 so felt to she Amy doctor. sick, went the

2 walk I but to usually the yesterday I café, drove.

3 laughed Martin's she joke. Mia heard when





7.4 CROSS OUT THE INCORRECT WORD IN EACH SENTENCE



Jason ~~stepped~~ / **stepped** off the bus and headed toward the café.

1  Simone ~~tryed~~ / **tried** to open the door, but it was completely stuck.

2  Elena ~~decideed~~ / **decided** to wear a nice dress to the dinner party that evening.

3  Chan ~~washed~~ / ~~washd~~ the dishes after she and Dan had eaten.

4  Stephan and Klara ~~hurried~~ / **hurried** to catch the last train home.

5  The waiter ~~dropped~~ / **dropped** the dishes onto the floor.

6  Megan ~~carryed~~ / **carried** the files into the office.



7.5 FILL IN THE GAPS BY PUTTING THE VERBS IN THE PAST SIMPLE

When I was a kid I had (have) two hamsters named Kim and Star.

- 1 Marilyn _____ (go) with Clive to the exhibition at the gallery.
- 2 I _____ (see) Phil and Dan at the party last night.
- 3 Sheila _____ (swim) across the lake to the island.
- 4 I _____ (drink) a large bottle of water after the race.
- 5 We _____ (drive) to a beautiful resort in the mountains.
- 6 Carol _____ (put) her cup down on the table.
- 7 Seb _____ (do) his homework on the bus to school.
- 8 Omar _____ (buy) a scarf for his wife at the market.
- 9 She _____ (draw) a beautiful picture of a cherry tree.



7.6 FILL IN THE GAPS USING "WAS" OR "WERE"

Irena and Jon were students together in Madrid.

- 1 You _____ at Paulina's party on Saturday.
- 2 Joanna _____ very tired after the flight to Australia.
- 3 My parents _____ delighted when I passed all my exams.
- 4 There _____ so many people waiting to buy a ticket.
- 5 I _____ upset when I lost my purse.
- 6 Liam _____ a pilot for more than 40 years.
- 7 There _____ a loud bang in the kitchen.
- 8 My cousins _____ famous dancers in the 1990s.
- 9 We _____ at the convention last year.



7.7 REWRITE THE SENTENCES USING THE PAST SIMPLE

Sam **goes** running with friends in the local park.

Sam went running with friends in the local park.



1 Robin **wants** to go skiing in the winter.



2 Julie and Scott **drink** a lot of coffee at the café.



3 Eli **goes** camping in the woods last summer.



4 Jon **plays** rugby on Saturday afternoon.



5 I **watch** TV dramas until late last night.



6 We **go** to a jazz club to listen to live music.



7 Sadiq's dog **barks** in the yard all evening.



8 The pollution in my city **is** very bad.



9 Angelo **eats** an apple for his lunch.



10 Kyle **makes** his bed after getting up in the morning.



11 Tina **plays** the piano with her little brother.



7.1

- ① I **cleaned** my bedroom this morning.
- ② We **played** football in the afternoon.
- ③ After his dinner, Alex **watched** a movie on TV.
- ④ My wife **visited** her parents yesterday.
- ⑤ Lucia **danced** with her friends at the party.

7.2

- ① Terry usually takes the metro to work, **but yesterday he walked instead.**
- ② I arrived at work early **so I checked my email.**
- ③ In the morning we walked to **the old town and visited the museum.**
- ④ Angela cried when she **heard the sad news.**
- ⑤ We usually go to France **but last year we traveled around Russia.**
- ⑥ Jemma washed the dishes **after she finished her dinner.**
- ⑦ Roger listened to some music **then started reading his new book.**

7.3

- ① Amy felt sick, so she went to the doctor.
- ② I usually walk to the café, but yesterday I drove.
- ③ Mia laughed when she heard Martin's joke.

7.4

- ① Simone **tried** to open the door, but it was completely stuck.
- ② Elena **decided** to wear a nice dress to the dinner party that evening.
- ③ Chan **washed** the dishes after she and Dan had eaten.
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7.6

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