The past simple

The past simple tense, also known as the simple past, is used to talk about completed actions or states that occurred in the past.

Regular verbs: To form the past simple tense of regular verbs, you generally add "-**ed**" to the infinitive form of the verb.

For example:

- **Walk** (infinitive form) -> **Walked** (past simple)
- **Play** (infinitive form) -> **Played** (past simple)
- **Study** (infinitive form) -> **Studied** (past simple)

There are some variations in the spelling rules when adding "-ed" to regular verbs.

For example:

- If the verb ends in a silent "e," drop the "e" before adding "-ed" (e.g., live -> lived).
- If the verb ends in a consonant followed by a single vowel and consonant, double the final consonant before adding "-ed" (e.g., stop -> stopped).

Irregular verbs: regular verbs form their past simple tense by adding "-ed" to the infinitive form of the verb (e.g., "walk" becomes "walked"). However, there are a number of verbs that don't follow this pattern and have irregular forms in the past simple tense. Here are some examples:

- **Go - Went:** Example: I went to the store yesterday.
- **Eat - Ate:** Example: She ate a delicious meal last night.
- **See - Saw:** Example: We saw a movie at the theater.
- **Take - Took:** Example: He took a vacation last month.
- **Give - Gave:** Example: They gave me a present for my birthday.
- **Have - Had:** Example: She had a lot of fun at the party.
- **Drive - Drove:** Example: He drove to work this morning.
- **Break - Broke:** Example: The vase broke when it fell off the shelf.
- **Think - Thought:** Example: I thought about the problem for a long time.
- **Run - Ran: Example:** They ran a marathon last year.

The verb "to be": The past tense of the verb "to be" has two forms: "**was**" and "**were**." "Was" is used with singular subjects (I, he, she, it), while "were" is used with plural subjects (you, we, they).

Examples:

- I **was** happy.
- She **was** excited to receive the news.
- You **were** busy.
- We **were** excited.
- They **were** late to the party.

Note:

The past simple is a tense used to talk about completed actions or events that occurred in the past.

Usage of the Past Simple: The past simple is used to describe **actions** or **states** that happened and were completed in the past. It is often used with specific time expressions or in storytelling.

For example:

- Yesterday, I **walked** to the park.
- We **played** soccer last weekend.
- She **was** scared when she got lost .

Negative and question Forms: To form negative sentences in the past simple, the auxiliary verb "**did**" is used with "**not**" followed by the base form of the verb.

For example:

- I **did not go** to the party.
- They **did not watch** the movie.

In question forms, the auxiliary verb "**did**" is placed at the beginning of the sentence, followed by the subject, and then the base form of the verb.

For example:

- **Did you finish** your homework?
- **Did she call** you yesterday?

It is important to note that irregular verbs have their own unique forms in the past simple and do not follow the regular "-ed" pattern.

Past habits: The past simple is also used to describe past habits or repeated actions.

For example:

- I **studied** for the exam last night.
- They **visited** their grandparents during the holidays.
- We **lived** in that house for ten years.
- She **was** a great dancer when she was younger.

The past simple exercise 1:

Choose the correct answer to complete the sentence.

1.She _____ a book yesterday.
a) reads
b) read
c) reading

2. They _____ a picnic in the park.
a) having
b) have
c) had

3. He _____ a bicycle to school.
a) rode
b) ride
c) rided

4. We _____ a fantastic concert last night.
a) attended
b) attend
c) attending

5. I _____ my friend at the mall.
a) meeted
b) met
c) meet

6.They _____ a delicious meal at the restaurant.
a) enjoy
b) enjoying
c) enjoyed

7. She _____ a new job last month.
a) started
b) start
c) starting

8. We _____ a wonderful time on our vacation.
a) has
b) have
c) had

9. He _____ his homework last night.
a) completing
b) complete
c) completed

10. He _____ his breakfast this morning.
a) ate
b) eat
c) eated

The past simple exercise 2:

Complete the story with the correct past simple form of the verbs in brackets.

Once upon a time, there **(1)**_____ **(be)** a girl named Lily. She **(2)**_____ **(grow)** up in a small village with a difficult upbringing. Her family **(3)**_____ **(struggle)** financially, and there **(4)**_____ **(be)** very little opportunity for her to pursue her passion for music.
However, Lily **(5)**_____ **(have)** a strong determination to overcome the obstacles. She **(6)**_____ **(borrow)** an old keyboard from a neighbor and **(7)**_____ **(teach)** herself how to play. Every day, she **(8)**_____ **(practise)** for hours, immersing herself in the world of music.
As time **(9)**_____ **(pass)**, Lily's talent **(10)**_____ **(become)** evident. She **(11)**_____ **(participate)** in local talent shows and **(12)**_____ **(win)** the hearts of the audience with her mesmerizing performances. Her passion for the piano **(13)**_____ **(drive)** her to dream big.
After many years of hard work and perseverance, Lily **(14)** _____ **(receive)** a scholarship to a prestigious music school. There, she **(15)**_____ **(refine)** her skills and **(16)**_____ **(learn)** from renowned musicians.
Eventually, Lily **(17)**_____ **(start)** performing in concerts all around the world. Her music **(18)**_____ **(touch)** the hearts of people from different cultures and backgrounds. She **(19)**_____ **(become)** a symbol of hope and inspiration.
Today, Lily is a famous pianist, known for her soulful melodies and her ability to convey emotions through her music. She **(20)**_____ **(use)** her success to support music programs for underprivileged children, believing in the power of music to change lives.



The past simple exercise 3:

Complete the sentences/questions with the correct past simple form of the verbs in brackets.

1. She _____ to the party last night. **(go)**

2. We _____ a delicious dinner at the restaurant. **(have)**

3. _____ you _____ your homework? **(do)**

4. They _____ their new car yesterday. **(buy)**

5. He _____ his keys. **(lose)**

6. They _____ a fantastic concert last weekend. **(attend)**

7. I _____ my best to help him. **(try)**

8. She _____ her friend at the mall. **(meet)**

9. They _____ a great time at the concert. **(have)**

10. _____ you _____ your sister at the park? **(see)**

11.The students _____ the test. **(pass)**

12. He _____ the book on the shelf. **(put)**

13. We _____ the movie last weekend. **(watch)**

14. _____ they _____ you a birthday gift? **(give)**

15. She _____ her favorite song on the radio. **(hear)**

16. She _____ a book at the library yesterday. **(borrow)**

17. The weather _____ really nice yesterday. **(be)**

18. He _____ his bike to school every day. **(ride)**

19. They _____ a party at their house. **(throw)**

20. _____ she _____ the message? **(receive)**

The past simple exercise 4:

Complete the story with the verbs below.

attempted, departed, forged, travelled, encountered, sailed, witnessed, was, discovered, turned

Once upon a time, there **(1)**_____ a brave sailor named Tom. He **(2)**_____ the vast oceans with his sturdy ship, seeking adventure and discovery. Tom **(3)**_____ from his hometown and **(4)**_____ across the globe.
During his journey, Tom **(5)**_____ many storms and fascinating creatures of the sea. He **(6)**_____ exotic islands, each with its own unique culture and traditions. The sailor **(7)**_____ to communicate with the locals, learning new languages along the way.
Months **(8)**_____ into years as Tom journeyed across oceans and distant lands. He admired breathtaking sunsets and **(9)**_____ the beauty of nature. The sailor **(10)**_____ friendships with fellow seafarers, sharing stories and experiences.

Past simple: answer key

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Where two or more answers are given, any of them is correct.

Exercise 1

1. b) read
2. c) had
3. a) rode
4. a) attended
5. b) met
6. c) enjoyed
7. a) started
8. c) had
9. c) completed
10. a) ate

Exercise 2

(1) was
(2) grew
(3) struggled
(4) was
(5) had
(6) borrowed
(7) taught
(8) practised
(9) passed
(10) became
(11) participated
(12) won
(13) drove
(14) received
(15) refined
(16) learned
(17) started
(18) touched
(19) became
(20) used

Exercise 3

1. went
2. had
3. Did … do
4. bought
5. lost
6. attended
7. tried
8. met
9. had
10. Did … see
11. passed
12. put
13. watched
14. Did … give
15. heard
16. borrowed
17. was
18. rode
19. threw
20. Did … receive

Exercise 4

(1) was
(2) sailed
(3) departed
(4) travelled
(5) encountered
(6) discovered
(7) attempted
(8) turned
(9) witnessed
(10) forged