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Grammar Reference

1 Construction of the preterite

- The **preterite** of **regular verbs** is constructed by adding **-ed** or **-d** to the verb in the infinitive. The verbs that end with **-y** have a preterite ending of **-ied**.

Example: Yesterday I **watched** a movie.
The baby **cried** a lot last night.

- The construction of **irregular verbs** in the **preterite** **does not have a precise rule**, they must therefore be learned by heart.

Example: When **did** (to do) you first meet him?
I first **met** (to meet) him yesterday.
I **went** (to go) to Spain 15 years ago.

2 Question-tags

- One calls **question-tags** the little **questions** (auxiliary + subject pronoun) that are placed **at the end** of a sentence.
- Usually, an **affirmative** sentence is followed by a **negative question-tag** and a **negative** sentence by a **positive question-tag**.

Example: You're American, **aren't you**?
We **can't** go this way, **can we**?
She **won't** take the plane, **will she**?

Note. When there is **no auxiliary** in the first part of the sentence, one uses **do** in the tag.

Example: He **lives** in Wales, **doesn't he**?

3 'The same . . . as'

'**The same . . . as**' expresses **comparison** and commonly takes the following forms.

- '**the same**' + noun or noun phrase + '**as**' + noun or noun phrase

Example: His shirt is **the same** color **as** my dress.

- '**the same**' + noun or noun phrase + '**as**' + dependent clause

Example: That is **the same** lamp **as** the one I bought.

With **personal pronouns**, '**the same . . . as**' is used as follows.

- in everyday language:

'**the same**' + noun or noun phrase + '**as**' + object pronoun

Example: I live in **the same** house **as her**.

- less often (usually in very formal language):

'**the same**' + noun or noun phrase + '**as**' + subject pronoun

Example: I live in **the same** house **as she**.

Note. '**The same (as)**' is another common form.

Example: Friday is going to be **the same as** today.
It's always **the same**.
It's **the same** in America.