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Grammar Reference

Past simple

Use: We use past simple to talk about:

1. something that happened in the past and finished in the past

Example:

She **met** her husband in 1993.

We **went** to Siem Reap for our holidays.

2. something that happened again and again in the past (habit)

Example:

When I **was** a student, I went to school by bus every day.

They always **visited** their grandparents every year.

3. something that was true for some time in the past

Example:

I **lived** in the U.S. for five years.

They **played** a lot of soccer when they were younger.

Form:

Subject + verb (past simple) +

Questions and negatives

To make questions with past simple, “did” is used.

Example:

When **did** she **meet** her husband?

Where **did** they **go** for their holidays?

Form

WH-word + did + subject + verb (base form) + ... ?

To make negatives, “did not/didn’t” is used.

Example:

We **didn’t go** to Siem Reap for our holidays.

They **didn’t play** a lot of soccer when they were younger.

Form

Subject + did not/didn’t + verb (base form) + ...

Spelling rules for verbs (past simple):

1. Add “-ed” at the end of most regular verbs. If the verb ends in “e”, we add only “d”.

Example:

watch

watched

| | |
|-------|----------------|
| lived | lived |
| touch | touched |

2. Double the consonant when the one-syllable verb ends in consonant + vowel + consonant.

Example:

| | |
|------|----------------|
| stop | stopped |
| plan | planned |
| shop | shopped |

3. For two-syllable verbs, double the consonant when the stress is in the last syllable.

Example

| | |
|--------|------------------|
| refer | referred |
| prefer | preferred |
| regret | regretted |

4. For two-syllable verbs, do not double the consonant when the stress is not in the last syllable.

Example:

| | |
|--------|-----------------|
| visit | visited |
| answer | answered |

5. Some verbs are irregular

| Verb (base form) | Verb (past simple) |
|------------------|--------------------|
| be | was/were |
| break | broke |
| build | built |
| buy | bought |
| catch | caught |
| come | came |
| do | did |
| drive | drove |
| eat | ate |
| find | found |
| forget | forgot |
| grow | grew |
| make | made |
| run | ran |
| send | sent |
| swim | swam |
| say | said |
| wear | wore |
| write | wrote |