

# Past Simple

## FORM Simple Past

[VERB+ed]

### EXAMPLES:

I visited my friends.

I often visited my friends.

**NOTE:** When you are using a verb tense with only one part such as Simple Past (visited), adverbs usually come before the verb (often visited). Please remember this is different from verbs with more than one part such as Present Continuous.



## USE 1 Completed Action in the Past

Use the Simple Past to express the idea that an action started and finished at a specific time in the past. Sometimes the speaker may not actually mention the specific time, but they do have one specific time in mind.

### EXAMPLES:

I saw a movie yesterday.

I didn't see a movie yesterday.

Last year, I traveled to Japan.

Last year, I didn't travel to Japan.

She washed her car.

She didn't wash her car.



## USE 2 A Series of Completed Actions

We use the Simple Past to list a series of completed actions in the past. These actions happen 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th...

### EXAMPLES:

I finished work, walked to the beach, and found a nice place to swim.

He arrived from the airport at 8:00, checked into the hotel at 9:00, and met the others at 10:00.



### USE 3 Single Duration

The Simple Past can be used with a duration which starts and stops in the past. A duration is a long action often used with expressions like "for two years," "for five minutes," "all day" or "all year."

#### EXAMPLES:

I lived in Brazil for two years.

Shauna studied Japanese for five years.

They sat at the beach all day.

We talked on the phone for thirty minutes.

How long did you wait for them?

We waited for one hour.



### USE 4 Habit in the Past

The Simple Past can also be used to describe a habit which stopped in the past. It can have the same meaning as "used to". To make it clear that we are talking about a habit we often use expressions such as "always," "often," "usually," "never," "...when I was a child" or "...when I was younger" in the sentence.

#### EXAMPLES:

I studied French when I was a child.

He played the violin.

She worked at the movie theater after school.

They never went to school, they always skipped.

### IMPORTANT "When clauses" happen first

Clauses are groups of words which have meaning but are not complete sentences. Some clauses begin with the word *when* such as "When I dropped my pen..." or "When class began..." These clauses are called "when clauses" and they are very important. The examples below contain "when clauses."

**EXAMPLES:**

When I paid her one dollar, she answered my question.

She answered my question, when I paid her one dollar.

"When clauses" are important because they always happen first when both clauses are in the Simple Past. Both of the examples above mean the same thing. First, I paid her one dollar, and then, she answered my question. However, the example below has a different meaning. First, she answered my question, and then, I paid her a dollar.

**EXAMPLE:**

I paid her a dollar, when she answered my question.

**ACTIVE / PASSIVE Simple Past**

**EXAMPLES:**

Tom repaired the car. **ACTIVE**

The car was repaired by Tom. **PASSIVE**