

03 Past simple and past continuous

Past simple

- 1 Some examples of the **past simple**:
*I **walked** to college yesterday.*
*She **didn't phone** me last week.*
*When **did** you **arrive** in this country?*

2 Forms of the **past simple**:

POSITIVE

I/you/he/she/it/we/they **finished**

NEGATIVE (did not / didn't + verb)

I/you/he/she/it/we/they **did not / didn't finish**
 NOT **didn't finished**

QUESTIONS (did + subject + verb)

did I/you/he/she/it/we/they **finish**
 NOT **did it finished**

3 **Regular verbs** (positive forms):

We form the **past simple** by adding **-ed** to the verb:

walk → walked visit → visited

For verbs ending with **-e**, we add **-d**:

live → lived love → loved

For verbs ending with a consonant and **-y**, we take away **-y** and add **-ied**:

carry → carried try → tried

For many verbs ending with one vowel and one consonant, we double the last letter and add **-ed**.

stop → stopped plan → planned

(For more regular past simple forms, see p. 130.)

4 **Irregular verbs**:

Many very common verbs are irregular:

go → went	come → came	do → did
speak → spoke	run → ran	have → had
take → took	see → saw	buy → bought
think → thought	leave → left	make → made

(For more irregular past simple forms, see p. 131.)

5 The **past simple** forms of **be**:

I/he/she/it **was/was not/wasn't**
 you/we/they **were/were not/weren't**
was I/he/she/it
were you/we/they

Grammar in action

- 1 We use the **past simple** to talk about actions completed in the past, for example when we describe a sequence of events:
*He **came out** of the door, **locked** it, **got into** his car and **drove away**.*



- 2 We use the **past simple** to talk about past situations (situations that are not true now). For example, we can use it to describe earlier times in our lives:
*I **was** a waiter when I **lived** in Spain.*
- 3 With the **past simple**, we often say when something happened. Sometimes we don't say when something happened because we understand what point in time in the past we are talking about:
*What **did** you **do** last night? ~ I **listened** to some music, I **read** a book and then I **went** to bed.
 (= last night)*

A Family history

Complete this description using the past simple forms of the verbs in brackets.

My name is Gurnam and my family originally came⁰ (come) from India. My grandparents¹ (move) to Britain in 1975 and they went to live in the city of Leicester. My grandfather² (open) a restaurant there and he³ (become) very successful. He⁴ (not speak) much English when he⁵ (arrive) in Britain but he⁶ (learn) very

quickly. Lots of people⁷ (eat) at his restaurant. He⁸ (work) very hard for many years and he⁹ (make) plenty of money. My father¹⁰ (be) born in Leicester and he¹¹ (go) to school there. He¹² (do) very well at school and¹³ (pass) all his exams. Then he¹⁴ (study) at university for three years and¹⁵ (get) a Business degree. After that, he¹⁶ (set) up his own business. At first he¹⁷ (sell) clothes in a shop near the city centre, and after a few years he¹⁸ (own) five shops all over the city. When I was a small child, we¹⁹ (live) in a small house but my father²⁰ (buy) a bigger one two years ago.

B An unpleasant journey

Complete this story about a journey, using the past simple and the correct verbs from the box. Use short forms for negatives.

get not stay drive be (x2) shout not speak come not go make
not start not say arrive start go not arrive want

Yesterday I went⁰ on a day trip. My friend Liam¹ with me. The day² well because Liam³ at my house late. He⁴ why he⁵ late and I⁶ at him. Then we⁷ our journey. I⁸ the car. A bit later, we⁹ lost. We¹⁰ to go to the seaside but we¹¹ a bad mistake and we¹² in the right direction. We¹³ at the beach until very late in the day, so we¹⁴ for a long time. On the way home, we¹⁵ to each other at all. We¹⁶ both very angry.

C The road to fame

Complete this interview with a famous singer, using the past simple and the correct words from the box.

offer play you feel happen appear be not earn
you become help it happen see leave enjoy buy want make
~~you start~~ take ask know have

INTERVIEWER When did you start⁰ singing in the band?
MIA Well, I¹ 19 years old. The original singer² the band and the others³ me to replace him.
INTERVIEWER⁴ successful very quickly?
MIA No, it⁵ a long time. We⁶ in small clubs for many years and we⁷ much money.
INTERVIEWER⁸ unhappy then?
MIA No, we⁹ ourselves. We¹⁰ a great time. But we¹¹ to succeed.
INTERVIEWER How¹²?
MIA Well, a manager¹³ us playing in a small club and he¹⁴ to be our manager. He¹⁵ a lot about the music business and he¹⁶ us a lot. Because of him, we¹⁷ on a TV show. Then we¹⁸ a record and lots of people¹⁹ it. Everything²⁰ very quickly then.

