

Past simple (I did)

A

Study this example:

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart **was** an Austrian musician and composer. He **lived** from 1756 to 1791. He **started** composing at the age of five and **wrote** more than 600 pieces of music. He **was** only 35 years old when he **died**.

Lived/started/wrote/was/died are all *past simple*.



B

Very often the past simple ends in **-ed** (*regular verbs*):

- I work in a travel agency now. Before that I **worked** in a department store.
- We **invited** them to our party, but they **decided** not to come.
- The police **stopped** me on my way home last night.
- Laura **passed** her exam because she **studied** very hard.

For spelling (**stopped**, **studied** etc.), see Appendix 6.

But many verbs are *irregular*. The past simple does *not* end in **-ed**. For example:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| write → wrote | <input type="checkbox"/> Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music. |
| see → saw | <input type="checkbox"/> We saw Tanya in town a few days ago. |
| go → went | <input type="checkbox"/> I went to the cinema three times last week. |
| shut → shut | <input type="checkbox"/> It was cold, so I shut the window. |

C

In questions and negatives we use **did/didn't** + *infinitive* (**enjoy/see/go** etc.):

I she they	enjoyed saw went	did	you she they	enjoy? see? go?	I she they	didn't	enjoy see go
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- A: **Did** you **go** out last night?
B: Yes, I **went** to the cinema, but I **didn't enjoy** the film much.
- 'When **did** Mr Thomas **die**?' 'About ten years ago.'
- They **didn't invite** us to the party, so we **didn't go**.
- '**Did** you **have** time to do the shopping?' 'No, I **didn't**.'

In the following examples, **do** is the main verb in the sentence (**did ... do / didn't do**):

- What **did** you **do** at the weekend? (*not* What did you at the weekend?)
- I **didn't do** anything. (*not* I didn't anything)

D

The past of **be** (*am/is/are*) is **was/were**:

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

Note that we do not use **did** in negatives and questions with **was/were**:

- I **was** angry because they **were** late.
- Was** the weather good when you **were** on holiday?
- They **weren't** able to come because they **were** so busy.
- Did you go out last night or **were** you too tired?

Exercises

5.1 Read what Laura says about a typical working day:



Laura

I usually get up at 7 o'clock and have a big breakfast. I walk to work, which takes me about half an hour. I start work at 8.45. I never have lunch. I finish work at 5 o'clock. I'm always tired when I get home. I usually cook a meal in the evening. I don't usually go out. I go to bed at about 11 o'clock, and I always sleep well.

Yesterday was a typical working day for Laura. Write what she did or didn't do yesterday.

- | | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------------|----|--|---------------------------|
| 1 | She got up | at 7 o'clock. | 7 | | at 5 o'clock. |
| 2 | She | a big breakfast. | 8 | | tired when home. |
| 3 | She | | 9 | | a meal yesterday evening. |
| 4 | It | to get to work. | 10 | | out yesterday evening. |
| 5 | | at 8.45. | 11 | | at 11 o'clock. |
| 6 | | lunch. | 12 | | well last night. |

5.2 Complete the sentences using the following verbs in the correct form:

buy catch cost fall hurt sell spend teach throw ~~write~~

- Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music.
- 'How did you learn to drive?' 'My father me.'
- We couldn't afford to keep our car, so we it.
- Dave down the stairs this morning and his leg.
- Joe the ball to Sue, who it.
- Ann a lot of money yesterday. She a dress which £100.

5.3 You ask James about his holiday. Write your questions.

Hi. How are things?

Fine, thanks. I've just had a great holiday.

- Where did you go ?
To the U.S. We went on a trip from San Francisco to Denver.
- How ? By car?
Yes, we hired a car in San Francisco.
- It's a long way to drive. How long to get to Denver?
Two weeks.
- Where ? In hotels?
Yes, small hotels or motels.
- good?
Yes, but it was very hot – sometimes too hot.
- the Grand Canyon?
Of course. It was wonderful.

5.4 Complete the sentences. Put the verb into the correct form, positive or negative.

- It was warm, so I took off my coat. (take)
- The film wasn't very good. I didn't enjoy it much. (enjoy)
- I knew Sarah was busy, so I her. (disturb)
- We were very tired, so we the party early. (leave)
- The bed was very uncomfortable. I well. (sleep)
- The window was open and a bird into the room. (fly)
- The hotel wasn't very expensive. It much to stay there. (cost)
- I was in a hurry, so I time to phone you. (have)
- It was hard carrying the bags. They very heavy. (be)