

The Preterite Tense

Expressions to talk about the past:

anoche - Last night anteayer - The day before yesterday la semana pasada - Last week el fin de semana pasado - Last weekend	el año pasado - Last year el mes pasado - Last month ayer por la mañana - Yesterday morning ayer por la tarde - Yesterday afternoon
--	--

The preterite tense is used for completed actions in the past.

REGULAR VERBS THAT END IN -AR

To conjugate the regular verbs that end in -ar in the preterite tense, you must remove the -ar ending and replace it with the following endings:

Yo -é Tú -aste	Nosotros -amos
Él Ella -ó Usted	Ellos Ellas -aron Ustedes

Here is an example:
 Let's conjugate the verb **Hablar** (to speak, to talk)

Yo hablé (I spoke) Tú hablaste (You spoke)	Nosotros hablamos (We spoke)
Él Ella habló (She spoke) Usted (You spoke) polite form	Ellos hablaron (They spoke) masc. Ellas hablaron (They spoke) fem. Ustedes (You all spoke)

Preterite Tense of the verbs that end in -car, -gar and -zar

The -ar Verbs that end in -car, -gar and -zar have an irregular 'yo' form.

-car : Change the c to qu -Ejemplo: practicar – yo practiqué (I practiced)
-gar : Change the g to gu -Ejemplo: jugar – yo jugué (I played)
-zar : Change the z to c -Ejemplo: empezar – yo empecé (I began)

Some examples of -ar verbs that end in -car, -gar and -zar:

Verbs that end in -car buscar – to look for marcar – to dial practicar – to practice sacar – to take out tocar – to touch, to play (an instrument)	Verbs that end in -gar jugar – to play (a sport or game) llegar – to arrive pagar – to pay	Verbs that end in -zar almorzar – to eat lunch cruzar – to cross empezar – to begin organizar – to organize
---	---	--

REGULAR VERBS THAT END IN -ER and -IR

To conjugate the regular verbs that end in -er and -ir in the preterite tense, you must remove the -er or the -ir ending and replace it with the following endings.

Yo	-í	Nosotros	-imos
Tú	-iste		
Él		Ellos	
Ella	-ió	Ellas	-ieron
Usted		Ustedes	

Here is an example:

Let's conjugate the verb **Comer** (to eat)

Yo	com <u>í</u>	(I ate)	Nosotros	com <u>imos</u>	(We ate)
Tú	com <u>iste</u>	(You ate)			
Él		(He ate)	Ellos		(They ate) masc.
Ella	com <u>ió</u>	(She ate)	Ellas	com <u>ieron</u>	(They ate) fem.
Usted		(You ate) Polite form	Ustedes		(You all ate)

Here is an example:

Let's conjugate the verb **Escribir** (to write)

Yo	escrib <u>í</u>	(I wrote)	Nosotros	escrib <u>imos</u>	(We wrote)
Tú	escrib <u>iste</u>	(You wrote)			
Él		(He wrote)	Ellos		(They wrote) masc.
Ella	escrib <u>ió</u>	(She wrote)	Ellas	escrib <u>ieron</u>	(They wrote) fem.
Usted		(You wrote) polite form	Ustedes		(You all wrote)