

# Simple Past (*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 *simple past*.



**B**

Very often the simple past 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 for speeding.
- She passed her exam because she studied very hard.

For spelling (stopped, studied, etc.), see Appendix 5.

But many verbs are *irregular*. This means that the simple past does not end in *-ed*.

For example:

- |               |                                               |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| write → wrote | ■ Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music. |
| see → saw     | ■ We saw Rosa in town a few days ago.         |
| go → went     | ■ I went to the movies three times last week. |
| cost → cost   | ■ This house cost \$89,000 in 1996.           |

For a list of irregular verbs, see Appendix 1.

**C**

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

I enjoyed	did you enjoy?	I enjoy
she saw	she see?	she didn't see
they went	they go?	they go

- A: Did you go out last night?  
B: Yes, I went to the movies, but I didn't enjoy the film much.
- "When did Mr. Thomas die?" "About ten years ago."
- They didn't invite her to the party, so she didn't go.
- "Did you have time to write the letter?" "No, I didn't."

Be careful when *do* is the main verb in the sentence.

- 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  
we/you/they were/weren't

was I/he/she/it?  
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 vacation?
- 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 Debbie says about a typical working day:



DEBBIE

I usually get up at 7:00 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 5:00. I'm always tired when I get home. I usually make dinner at night. I don't usually go out. I go to bed at about 11:00. I always sleep well.

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

- |                               |                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. <u>She got up at 7:00.</u> | 7. _____ at 5:00.               |
| 2. She _____ a big breakfast. | 8. _____ tired when _____ home. |
| 3. She _____.                 | 9. _____ dinner.                |
| 4. It _____ to get to work.   | 10. _____ out last night.       |
| 5. _____ at 8:45.             | 11. _____ at 11:00.             |
| 6. _____ lunch.               | 12. _____ well last night.      |

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

buy catch cost drink fall hurt sell spend teach throw win write

- Mozart wrote more than 600 pieces of music.
- "How did you learn to drive?" "My mother \_\_\_\_\_ me."
- We couldn't afford to keep our car, so we \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- I was very thirsty. I \_\_\_\_\_ the water very quickly.
- Sam and I played tennis yesterday. He's much better than I am, so he \_\_\_\_\_ easily.
- Dave \_\_\_\_\_ down the stairs this morning and \_\_\_\_\_ his leg.
- Jim \_\_\_\_\_ the ball to Sue, who \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- Jessica \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of money yesterday. She \_\_\_\_\_ a dress that \_\_\_\_\_ \$200.

## 5.3 A friend has just come back from vacation. Ask him about it. Write your questions.

- (where / go?) Where did you go?
- (go alone?) \_\_\_\_\_
- (food / good?) \_\_\_\_\_
- (stay / at a hotel?) \_\_\_\_\_
- (rent / a car?) \_\_\_\_\_
- (the weather / nice?) \_\_\_\_\_
- (what / do in the evenings?) \_\_\_\_\_

## 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 movie wasn't very good. I didn't enjoy it very much. (enjoy)
- I knew Sarah was very busy, so I \_\_\_\_\_ her. (bother)
- I was very tired, so I \_\_\_\_\_ to bed early. (go)
- The bed was very uncomfortable. I \_\_\_\_\_ very well. (sleep)
- We went to Kate's house, but she \_\_\_\_\_ at home. (be)
- It was a funny situation, but nobody \_\_\_\_\_. (laugh)
- The window was open, and a bird \_\_\_\_\_ into the room. (fly)
- The hotel wasn't very expensive. It \_\_\_\_\_ very much. (cost)
- I was in a hurry, so I \_\_\_\_\_ time to call you. (have)
- It was hard work carrying the bags. They \_\_\_\_\_ very heavy. (be)