

Exercises for Tutorial 6. Past Tense Verbs

Principle I: Even if the sentence does not say *when*, the simple past tense of both regular and irregular verbs shows that an action (or a state of being or having) *began* and *ended* at a single, specific time in the past.

Exercise 1

Instructions: Read through the passage below and underline the verbs. Then, go back and put [brackets] around the subjects. The example below shows the steps of identifying verbs and subjects that are covered in the *Introductory Tutorial: Identifying Verbs and Subjects*. If you have completed the tutorial, you will remember that the way to find the verb is to change the time of the sentence by temporarily adding *today*, *yesterday* and *tomorrow*, and the word that changes tense in response to these time shifts is the verb. Since it is already written in one of these tenses, the verb will only change one of three times.

Example: On her way to school, Yi traveled 90 mph in her little red sports car through residential neighborhoods.

Step One: To find the verb, temporarily change the time of the sentence:

(Tomorrow) Yi will travel 90 mph in her little red sports car through residential neighborhoods.

(Today) Yi travels 90 mph in her little red sports car through residential neighborhoods.

The word that changes is the verb, “traveled,” so underline traveled.

Step Two: To find the subject, ask “who or what” does the action of the verb and put brackets around the subject. That is, who or what travels in her little red sports car?

The answer to this question is the subject, “Yi,” so put brackets around Yi.

Result: On her way to school, [Yi] traveled 90 mph in her little red sports car through residential neighborhoods.

Type, write, or copy-paste the passage into the answer box that follows. Then add underlines and brackets.

When she arrived at school late for the fifth time in January, Yi cringed as her Political Science professor, Dr. Murillo, asked her to stay after class. As she approached Dr. Murillo’s desk at the end of the hour, Yi smiled and attempted to look innocent without much success. Worse, when Murillo asked her why she showed up late so often, Yi decided to lie, thinking that the truth, that she just liked to stay in bed until noon, would not be a very good excuse. She explained that her sick parents needed special care because they both suffered from chronic illness. At the end of the story, Dr. Murillo excused all of Yi’s tardies. In reality, Yi’s “chronically ill” parents worked in the local bank and never missed a day of work.

Principle II: To form the simple past tense of a regular verb that does not end with “e,” add “ed.” If the verb ends with “e,” add “d.” No matter what the subject is, the simple past tense for regular verbs always ends in “ed.”

Exercise 2

Instructions: Using Principle II, write the correct simple past tense form of the regular verb provided. The first one has been done for you. *Type or write in the answer spaces.*

1. Lindsay ignored the construction workers. (IGNORE)
2. Texaco _____ rights to drill for oil in my yard. (OBTAIN)
3. Jaime _____ the best table at Macaroni Grill for his date. (RESERVE)
4. Ann _____ to break the tie by making the free throw. (ATTEMPT).
5. You _____ your options for not paying this parking ticket. (EXHAUST)
6. My dog _____ the sound of leaves blowing in the wind. (FEAR)
7. Antoine's story _____ his mother deeply. (AFFECT)

Exercise 3

Instructions: Some of the regular verbs in the following exercise are correct, but others are written in an incorrect verb tense. First, by changing the time of the sentence, identify each verb and underline it. Then, using Principles I and II, decide which verbs should be written in the simple past tense, and if the verb is incorrect, write the correct form of the verb (one with a "d" or "ed" ending). The first one has been done for you. *Type, write, or copy-paste each sentence into its answer box. Then add the underline(s). Make any needed correction after an underlined verb using **bold**.*

1. In the 19th century many people believe in the lost island of Atlantis.

In the 19th century many people believe **believed** in the lost island of Atlantis.

2. The last time that you arrived at the shop, the electrician repairs your car's wiring.

3. Last year, on his twenty-sixth birthday, Leopold explores the Grand Canyon.

4. Juan Carlo's tricks work whenever he uses them.

5. Caitlin and Tommy like to go on road trips.

6. Many young Americans idolize Elvis Presley in the 1950s.

7. Last Halloween, the Great Pumpkin appear on Halloween, and Hassan photograph it.

Exercise 4

Instructions: Write an original sentence of your own using the simple past tense for each of the regular verbs listed below. The first one has been done for you. *Type or write in the answer boxes.*

1. WASTE

Takumi, Tanisha and Karen wasted a lot of time before they worked on their math project.

2. REMEMBER

3. PERSUADE

4. ORDER

5. APPLAUD

6. CHEAT

Principle III: There is no single rule that explains forming the simple past tense of irregular verbs since they are formed in a variety of ways. To find the past tense of an irregular verb, look up the present-tense form of the verb in a dictionary. The dictionary will provide the simple past tense.

Exercise 5

Instructions: Using Principle III and the chart, write the simple past tense of the irregular verb provided. If you are uncertain about the past tense form of the irregular verb, look it up in a dictionary. The first one has been done for you. *Fill in the blanks.*

1. Martin builds his house every weekend.
Martin **built** his house last year.
2. Mold grows on cream cheese.
When you left it out last night, mold _____ on the cream cheese.
3. My physics professor finds my excuses for failing pretty weak.
Yesterday, my physics professor _____ my excuses for failing pretty weak.
4. Yuri is a little tired today.
Yesterday Yuri _____ a little tired.
5. Lakisha and Habib are in their first year of college at CSM.
Rachel and Ruth _____ students at CSM last year.
6. You sometimes lose your temper with authority figures.
Last week, you _____ your temper with the dean.
7. My Aunt Maria sends me a Christmas card every July.
Last year, she _____ me a Hanukkah card in August.

Principle IV: When using “supposed to” and “used to” in a sentence, don’t forget to add the silent “d.”

Exercise 6

Instructions: Using Principles I, II, II and IV, change every regular and irregular verb that is not written in the correct tense. *Type, write, or copy-paste the passage into the answer box. Then underline the verbs; make any corrections in **bold**.*

Carlos never use to worry about fixing his car until yesterday when he find that the mechanic at the garage cheated him. He was suppose to take his car into the garage because his girlfriend, who drive it the day before, say that the brake pedal go all the way to the floor. Yesterday morning when he take it to the clinic, the scruffy owner tell him that it need entirely new brakes and brake wiring, and the cost of the repair is two thousand dollars. Carlos gasp and stare at the ground for a minute. But he mistakenly trust the owner of the clinic and leave his car there overnight. When he drive it the next day, Carlos notice that the car still make the same sounds. After he attempt to stop at a stop sign, he slam into the SUV in front of him because the brakes were still bad. Looking back, he now realize what a terrible mistake he make that day by trusting the mechanic.