

El Pretérito - The Preterite

- When you want to describe an action or event which took places in the past, you use a verb in a past tense.
- In Spanish, one past tense is the preterite, el pretérito.

Las Palabras de Cue - Cue Words

1. El (day) pasado - Last (day)
2. Entonces - Then
3. Luego - Then
4. A tiempo - On time
5. Ayer - Yesterday
6. Tarde - Late
7. Temprano - Early
8. Hasta - Until
9. Durante - During
10. Al mismo tiempo - At the same time

Ir – to go

Ir is irregular in the preterite tense.

Yo	fui	I went	Modelos:	I went to the park.
Tú	fuiste	You went		(Yo) fui al parque.
Él	fue	He went		
Noso.	fuiimos	We went		We went to the town square.
Voso.	fuisteis	You all went		(Noso.) fuimos al zócalo.
Ellos	fueron	They went		

Terminaciones de –Ar

To conjugate regular –Ar verbs in the preterite, simply drop the ending (-ar) and add one of the following:

Yo	é	Modelo:	hablé
Tú	aste		hablaste
Él	ó		habló
Nosotros	amos		hablamos
Vosotros	asteis		hablasteis
Ellos	aron		hablaron

Terminaciones de –Er/-Ir

To conjugate regular –Er/-Ir verbs in the preterite, simply drop the ending (-er/-ir) and add one of the following:

Yo	í	Modelos:	comí	viví
Tú	iste		comiste	viviste
Él	ió		comió	vivió
Nosotros	imos		comimos	vivimos
Vosotros	isteis		comisteis	vivisteis
Ellos	ieron		comieron	vivieron

Verbs que terminan en -car, -gar y -zar

In the preterite, verbs ending in -car, -gar, -zar have a spelling change which only occurs in the YO form.

-car	c = qu	Modelo:	buscar	Yo busqué el libro.
-gar	g = gu		pagar	Yo pagué dos dólares por el libro.
-zar	z = c		empezar	Yo empecé este libro.

Some verbs ending in -car, -gar, -zar: almorzar (have/eat lunch), buscar (search/look for), cruzar (cross), empezar (begin), comenzar (begin), jugar (play -sports), llegar (arrive), marcar (dial), pagar (pay), pescar (fish), practicar (practice), sacar (get/take), tocar (play -instrument)

Dar y Ver

In the preterite, dar and ver take the endings of the -er and -ir verbs. Except the accent mark is not used on the yo and the él forms.

dar - to give	di diste dio dimos disteis dieron
ver - to see	vi viste vio vimos visteis vieron

Caer, Creer, Leer, y Oír

In the preterite, these verbs are irregular. The l of the endings ALWAYS has an accent mark. In the él and ellos forms, the i = y.

caer - to fall	caí caíste cayó caímos caísteis cayeron
creer - to believe	creí creíste creyó creímos creísteis creyeron
leer - to read	leí leíste leyó leímos leísteis leyeron
oír - to hear	oí oíste oyó oímos oísteis oyeron

Stemchangers in the preterite

The -ar and -er verbs which have a stem change in the present tense de NOT have this change in the preterite. The -ir verbs which have a stem change in the present tense (and only these verbs) also have a stem change in the preterite. The change is only in the él and ellos form of the verb.

e = i
o = u

some verbs: divertirse (have fun), dormir (sleep), pedir (ask for/order), preferir (prefer), sentir(se) (feel), servir (serve)

