

# Preterite: Part I

In the last lesson, you learned that the preterite is used for past actions that are seen as completed. You also learned how to conjugate regular -ar verbs. In this lesson, you will learn how to conjugate -er and -ir verbs, and become more familiar with the uses of the preterite.

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

é  
aste  
ó  
amos  
asteis  
aron

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

í  
iste  
ió  
imos  
isteis  
ieron

Here are all three regular preterite verb forms together:

HABLAR	COMER	VIVIR
hablé	comí	viví
hablaste	comiste	viviste
habló	comió	vivió
hablamos	comimos	vivimos
hablasteis	comisteis	vivisteis
hablaron	comieron	vivieron

NOTE: the *nosotros* forms for -ar and -ir verbs are the same in both preterite and present tenses: **hablamos**, **vivimos**.

The preterite is used for actions that can be viewed as single events.

**Ella caminó por el parque.**

She walked through the park.

**Ellos llegaron a las ocho.**

They arrived at eight o'clock.

The preterite is used for actions that were repeated a specific number of times, or occurred during a specific period of time.

**Ayer escribí tres cartas.**

Yesterday I wrote three letters.

**Vivimos allí por cuatro años.**

We lived there for four years.

The preterite is used for actions that were part of a chain of events.

**Ella se levantó, se vistió, y salió de la casa.**

She got up, dressed, and left the house.

The preterite is used to state the beginning or the end of an action.

**Empezó a nevar a las ocho de la mañana.**

It began to snow at eight in the morning.

The above examples all fall within our general rule for using the preterite:

**The preterite is used for past actions that are seen as completed.**

Let's add two more flashcards for regular -er and -ir verbs in the preterite tense:

#### Verb Flashcards

##### 41. Preterite: regular -er

-í

-iste

-ió

-imos

-isteis

ieron

comí, comiste, comió, comimos, comisteis, comieron

##### 42. Preterite: regular -ir verbs

-í

-iste

-ió

-imos

-isteis

ieron

viví, viviste, vivió, vivimos, vivisteis, vivieron