

Regular verbs follow a predictable pattern in simple past and past participle forms; irregular verbs are not as predictable. Before we cover the differences between regular and irregular verbs, let's review the terms 'simple past tense' and 'past participle.'

Simple Past Tense

Verbs in the simple past tense express a **past action of the subject** of a sentence.*

Susan **traveled** to Germany last year (regular verb).

I **began** to write my final paper yesterday (irregular verb).

Past Participles

Participles are special forms of verbs that "participate" in one of the situations described below:

1. follow *have, has, or had* to form one of the **perfect tenses***

I *have not* **walked** to that monument in years (regular verb).

This is the best movie I *have* ever **seen** (irregular verb).

2. follow *be, am, is, are, was, were, being, or been* to form the passive voice

Water *is* **boiled** on the stove (regular verb).

The robber *was* **seen** escaping through the back door (irregular verb).

3. be used as an adjective describing nouns or pronouns

She gave me a **puzzled** look after I attempted speaking in a foreign language (regular verb).

A **broken** mirror means seven years of bad luck (irregular verb).

Now that you know what we mean by 'simple past tense' and 'past participle,' refer to the table below, which highlights the differences between regular and irregular verbs.

Regular Verbs

Infinitive	Simple Past	Past Participle
to boil	boiled	boiled
to live	lived	lived
to dream	dreamed	dreamed

Add **-ed** or **-d** to represent simple past tense

Same form for both simple past and past participle

Irregular Verbs

Infinitive	Simple Past	Past Participle
to become	became	become
to begin	began	begun
to bend	bent	bent

Do not follow the add **-ed** or **-d** rule for simple past tense

Can have either same or different forms for simple past and past participle

*Note: See 'Verb Tenses' handout

IRREGULAR VERBS: CONTINUED

These verbs are irregular, so there is no rhyme or reason to their rules. You must memorize their simple past forms as well as their past participle forms. A table of common irregular verbs can be found below. (source <http://www.chompchomp.com/rules/irregularrules01.htm>)

Infinitive	Simple Past	Past Participle
to arise	arose	arisen
to awake	awoke, awaked	awoke, awaked
to be	was, were	been
to beat	beat	beaten
to become	became	become
to bite	bit	bitten, bit
to blow	blew	blown
to choose	chose	chosen
to draw	drew	drawn
to drink	drank	drunk
to eat	ate	eaten
to fly	flew	flown
to forgive	forgave	forgiven
to freeze	froze	frozen
to get	got	got, gotten
to give	gave	given
to go	went	gone

Infinitive	Simple Past	Past Participle
to grow	grew	grown
to hide	hid	hidden
to know	knew	known
to ride	rode	ridden
to ring	rang	rung
to rise	rose	risen
to run	ran	run
to see	saw	seen
to shake	shook	shaken
to shrink	shrank	shrunk
to speak	spoke	spoken
to steal	stole	stolen
to take	took	taken
to tear	tore	torn
to throw	threw	thrown
to write	wrote	written
to wet	wet	wet

Exercises

Now you try! Choose the correct form of the irregular verb. Remember the following tips for choosing the correct form of irregular verbs:

- simple past goes after the subject
- to have + past participle = perfect tense
- to be + past participle = passive verb
- past participle before the noun functions as adjective

1. Julie had _____ the ball behind the fence when she saw a dog approaching.
a)threw b)throwed c)thrown
2. Jeremiah _____ hard last semester.
a)work b)worked c)working
3. Jenna _____ spaghetti last week.
a)eaten b)eated c)ate
4. A _____ lake is easy to cross.
a)freezed b)froze c)frozen
5. Ross was _____ to lead the class debate.
a)chosen b)chose c)choosed
6. Your hair has _____ so much since your last haircut.
a)growed b)grew c)grown

Answer Key

6. c
5. a
4. c
3. c
2. b
1. c