ENGLISH GRAMMAR · DEEP DIVE

Irregular Verbs and Their Families

The two hundred verbs that refuse to take -ed are not random: they fall into a dozen sound patterns, and learning the families is far faster than learning the list.

A2 · irregular verbs · past participle · verb families

No change

All three forms are the same.

cut · cut · cut

also put, let, hit, cost, shut

Two forms

Past simple and past participle are the same.

buy · bought · bought

also think, teach, meet, send

Three forms

Every form is different; the vowel moves.

sing · sang · sung

also take/took/taken, write/wrote/written

FORM	WHEN YOU USE IT	EXAMPLE
past simple	alone, for a finished event	She **went** to the shops.
past participle	after have (perfect) and be (passive)	She has **gone** out. It was **broken**.
lie / lay	lie, lay, lain = recline; lay, laid, laid = put something down	I **lay** down. She **laid** the table.
rise / raise	rise (rose, risen) takes no object; raise is regular and takes one	The sun **rose**. I **raised** my hand.

1 Three forms

Write the past simple and the past participle of each verb.

1 go · _____ · _____

2 buy · _____ · _____

3 sing · _____ · _____

4 take · _____ · _____

5 cut · _____ · _____

6 write · _____ · _____

7 come · _____ · _____

8 teach · _____ · _____

9 see · _____ · _____

10 spend · _____ · _____

2 Past simple or past participle?

Put the verb in brackets in the right form.

1 She _____ (go) to the shops this morning.

2 She has _____ (go) to the shops already.

3 The window was _____ (break) by the storm.

4 I have _____ (write) to him three times.

5 We _____ (meet) at university in 2015.

6 Have you ever _____ (drink) coconut milk?

7 The tickets _____ (cost) thirty pounds last year.

8 He has _____ (become) a doctor.

9 I _____ (lie) on the sofa all afternoon yesterday.

10 She _____ (lay) the plates on the table.

3 Spot the mistake

Each sentence has one mistake. Write the correct sentence on the line.

1 I have saw that film twice.

2 She has began a new job.

3 My phone was stole last night.

4 He bringed some flowers for his mother.

5 They have ran a marathon.

6 I have seen her yesterday.

Remember Learn all three forms, aloud and in the same order: take, took, taken. After have and be you always need the third form.

4 A short story

Put the verbs in brackets in the right form.

Last year my uncle [1] _____ (fly) to Canada for the first time. He [2] _____ (take) lots of photos and [3] _____ (send) them to us every day. He has [4] _____ (be) back for a month now, but he hasn't [5] _____ (find) his suitcase yet: it was [6] _____ (lose) at the airport. He has [7] _____ (write) three letters to the airline, and yesterday they finally [8] _____ (ring) him.

5 Which family?

Write each verb in the right box.

cost · catch · drink · shut · build · give · let · meet · know

no change	two forms	three forms

Where are the answers?

The answers, with an explanation for each one, are in the LinguaBite app. Open this Deep Dive and scroll to Downloads at the bottom of the article: once you have downloaded this worksheet, its answers appear there after a couple of days, so you do the exercises first. You can choose 1, 2 or 3 days in the app's Settings.

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