

Past Simple

The Past Simple tells us about something that happened in the past, and very often the time is important:

I played tennis yesterday.

† To make the Past Simple, you have to add –ed for a regular verb:

Play -> Played

However, for irregular verbs, you have to learn their past simple form:

Go -> Went

Eat -> Ate

Be -> Was / Were

Have -> Had

Write -> Wrote

Do -> Did

There are some key words that tell you that you have to use the Past Simple. These include:

Yesterday, last week, ago, recently ... anything to do with TIME

- If the sentence is negative, then you often have to add the verb “do” + “not”. Look at what happens:

I didn't play tennis yesterday

He didn't help like he promised to do

Exceptions: could, would, should (e.g. He couldn't help her because he was too busy)

The verb “play” doesn't change, but “do” becomes “did”!

? To ask a question in the Past Simple, you use did + verb:

Did he go to the cinema?

Did she have her phone when her bag was stolen?

Exceptions: could, would, should (e.g. Could he help her?)