

A2 TEENS · GRAMMAR · LESSON 06

Yesterday's biggest mistake

"I **forgot** to charge my phone." "I **sent** the message to the wrong person." "I **ate** all my sister's chocolate." The Past Simple is how we tell stories about things that already happened — good, bad, and embarrassing.

🕒 45 min · ✓ CEFR A2 · ♦ Past Simple · ▶ Stories & Mistakes

01

WARM-UP

Confession time... what did you do?

Think about yesterday...

Answer in full sentences. Don't worry about the grammar yet — just tell the story!

- 01** What time did you wake up yesterday? What did you eat for breakfast?
- 02** Did you do anything you shouldn't have? (A small mistake is fine!)
- 03** What was the funniest thing that happened to you last week?
- 04** What did you buy with your own money for the last time?

02

GRAMMAR FOCUS

The Past Simple — telling the story

Regular verbs: add -ed

Most verbs are regular: add **-ed** to the base form. Three spelling rules to know:

RULE 1 — JUST ADD -ED	RULE 2 — ENDS IN "E", ADD -D	RULE 3 — Y → -IED
play → played	live → lived	study → studied
play → played	live → lived	study → studied
watch → watched	like → liked	cry → cried
talk → talked	dance → danced	try → tried
help → helped	move → moved	carry → carried

⚠️ Irregular verbs — you have to learn them!

Many common verbs don't follow the -ed rule. They change in funny ways. You'll use these every day, so memorise them:

go → **went**see → **saw**have → **had**do → **did**eat → **ate**buy → **bought**come → **came**take → **took**make → **made**get → **got**forget →
forgotsend → **sent**break →
brokelose → **lost**find → **found**tell → **told**think →
thoughtsleep → **slept**

The verb "to be" — was / were

◆ Past of am / is / are

WAS — SINGULAR

I was at home yesterday.
He was tired after school.
She was happy about the news.
It was a cold morning.

WERE — PLURAL

You were late again!
We were at the beach last Sunday.
They were my best friends.
The tests were really hard.

Negatives and Questions — did / didn't

⊖ Negatives: **didn't** + **BASE form**

For negatives, use **didn't** (did not) with the **base form** — not the past form!

- ✓ I **didn't go** to school yesterday. (*not "didn't went"*)
- ✓ She **didn't eat** breakfast this morning.
- ✓ They **didn't understand** the question.

Exception: With *was/were*, use **wasn't** / **weren't** (no "did"):

I **wasn't** tired. · They **weren't** home.

? Questions: **Did** + **subject** + **BASE form**

For questions, start with **Did** and use the **base form**:

Did you see the film last night? — Yes, I did. / No, I didn't.

What did she **eat** for lunch?

When did they **arrive**?

Exception: With *was/were*, just invert (no "did"):

Were you at the party? · **Was it** fun?

Time markers that signal the past

★ When you see these, think Past Simple!

These words and phrases tell your listener (and your brain) that we're talking about the past:

yesterday · last night · last week · last month · last year · last Friday · two days ago · a week ago · in 2020 · when I was 10 · this morning · just now

03

KEY VOCABULARY

Words for mistakes and stories

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
mistake noun	something you do wrong by accident	<i>I made a big mistake yesterday.</i>
accident noun	something bad that happens suddenly	<i>I dropped the glass by accident.</i>
on purpose phrase	when you do something because you want to	<i>He broke it on purpose — he was angry.</i>
embarrassing adjective	making you feel shy in front of others	<i>Falling was so embarrassing.</i>
actually adverb	in reality / surprisingly	<i>I thought he was angry, but actually he was tired.</i>
realise verb	to suddenly understand something	<i>I realised I was wearing two different socks.</i>
suddenly adverb	very quickly and unexpectedly	<i>Suddenly, the lights went out.</i>
lucky adjective	having good things happen by chance	<i>I was lucky — nobody saw me.</i>
unlucky adjective	having bad things happen by chance	<i>My phone fell in the water.</i>
promise verb/noun	to say you will definitely do something	<i>I promised I wouldn't tell anyone.</i>

04

READING

Four teens, four unforgettable mistakes

TRUE STORIES · ISSUE 06

Yesterday's *Biggest Mistakes*

The small disasters teens survived last week

We asked four teenagers: "What was the biggest mistake you made last week?" Their answers are funny, a little bit painful, and all in the Past Simple.

ALEX, 15, USA*Embarrassment level: 9/10*

"Last Tuesday, I **walked** to school with headphones on. I **didn't hear** anything. I **sang** very loudly. I **thought** nobody was around. But when I **turned** the corner, I **saw** my entire maths class. They **were** all laughing. One person **filmed** me. The video **got** 200 views in one day. I **didn't go** to school for two days."

YARA, 16, LEBANON*Embarrassment level: 7/10*

"Last Friday, I **sent** a long message about my annoying little brother. But I **didn't send** it to my best friend — I **sent** it to my brother by accident. He **read** it. He **was** really hurt. I **felt** terrible. I **bought** him chocolate and I **wrote** him a real letter to say sorry. It **took** three days, but we **made** up."

KENJI, 14, JAPAN*Embarrassment level: 10/10*

"Two weeks ago, my family **went** to a wedding. I **wore** my best suit. My mother **gave** me a special bag for the gift. I **didn't look** inside — I **just took** it. At the wedding, I **gave** the bag to the happy couple. They **opened** it... and it **was** empty. I **forgot** to put the envelope with money inside! My face **was** bright red for an hour."

PRIYA, 17, INDIA*Embarrassment level: 6/10*

"Last Sunday, I **studied** all night for a big exam. In the morning, I **drank** three cups of coffee. I **ran** to school. I **sat down**. The teacher **gave** me the exam paper. I **looked** at it... and I **didn't understand** anything. Actually, I **was** in the wrong classroom! My real exam **was** next door. I **made** it to my real exam just in time."

The lesson: Mistakes make the best stories. Notice the mix of regular verbs (walked, turned, wanted, filmed, studied) and irregular verbs (sang, saw, sent, went, wore, gave, took, was/were). Time markers (last Tuesday, two weeks ago, in the morning) tell the reader *when*. Now you try!

05

PRACTICE

Put the verb in the past

★ Each question shows a verb. Choose the correct Past Simple form. The hint tag tells you what kind: REGULAR / IRREGULAR / WAS-WERE / NEGATIVE / QUESTION.

- 1 Alex _____ to school with his headphones on. (walk) REGULAR
 walked walkt walking
-
- 2 Yara _____ the message to the wrong person. (send) IRREGULAR
 sended sent sended it
-
- 3 The kids _____ at the park all morning. WAS/WERE
 was were are
-
- 4 I _____ to the party last night. (not go) NEGATIVE
 didn't went not went didn't go
-
- 5 Priya _____ all night for her exam. (study) REGULAR
 studyed studied studyd
-
- 6 _____ the new film yesterday? QUESTION
 Did you saw Did you see You did see
-
- 7 Kenji _____ to put the envelope in the gift bag. (forget) IRREGULAR
 forgetted forget forgot
-
- 8 We _____ ready for the test. WAS/WERE
 wasn't didn't weren't

06 **SPEAKING**
Tell me your story

Interview your partner about their week

Ask and answer these questions. Use the Past Simple for everything — regular, irregular, was/were. Then swap and answer your partner's questions!

- ▶ What did you do last weekend? Tell me three things.
- ▶ When was the last time you were really happy? What happened?
- ▶ Did you make any mistakes this week? Tell me a small one!
- ▶ Where did you go on your last holiday? What did you see?
- ▶ What did you eat for dinner yesterday? Was it good?

EXAMPLE CONVERSATION

- A:** What did you do last weekend?
B: I went to my grandma's house on Saturday. We ate lunch together, and she showed me old photos.
A: Nice! Did you stay the whole day?
B: No, I didn't stay. I came back home at 4 p.m. because I had homework.
A: Did you finish it?
B: Honestly? I didn't. I watched a film instead. My teacher wasn't happy!

07 **WRITING**
Your own "yesterday" story

Write a short Past Simple story (70-100 words)

Like the four teens in the reading, tell a story about something that happened to you last week. It can be a mistake, a happy moment, a surprise — anything. Just keep everything in the Past Simple!

- at least 3 regular verbs (-ed form: walked, watched, studied...)
- at least 3 irregular verbs (went, saw, had, came, took, ate...)
- at least one sentence with was or were
- at least one time marker (yesterday, last week, two days ago...)

Blank writing area with three horizontal lines and a vertical margin line on the left.

08

QUIZ

Check your understanding

Circle the correct answer. Check your answers at the end.

1. Choose the CORRECT Past Simple form of 'study':

- A. studied
- B. studyd
- C. studied
- D. study

2. Which is the Past Simple of 'go'?

- A. goed
- B. went
- C. gone
- D. going

3. Choose the CORRECT sentence:

- A. I didn't went to school yesterday.
- B. I didn't go to school yesterday.
- C. I no went to school yesterday.
- D. I wasn't go to school yesterday.

4. Complete: 'She ____ at home last night.'

- A. were
- B. was
- C. did
- D. is

5. How do you make a question with 'go' in the Past Simple?

- A. Did you went to the park?
- B. Went you to the park?
- C. Did you go to the park?
- D. You did go to the park?

6. Which sentence is WRONG?

- A. They were at the cinema last week.
- B. We weren't hungry.
- C. He didn't ate breakfast.

D. I saw a great film.

7. Choose the CORRECT irregular past form:

- A. buyed
- B. bought
- C. buyd
- D. buyt

8. From the reading: What did Kenji forget to put in the gift bag?

- A. a card
- B. an envelope with money
- C. chocolate
- D. his phone

ANSWER KEY

Fill in the blanks:

1. walked · 2. sent · 3. were · 4. didn't go
5. studied · 6. Did you see · 7. forgot · 8. weren't

Quiz:

1. C · 2. B · 3. B · 4. B · 5. C · 6. C · 7. B · 8. B

Great storytelling! Next lesson: Past Continuous — "What were you doing when...?"