

6. Past Tense Verbs and Past Participles

Past Tense Verb Endings

The following passage is in the simple past tense. Underline the verbs in the sentences, and then circle the subjects. (See Unit 3 for help with identifying verbs and subjects.)

Last year Sherry lived at home and commuted to school. Because the buses were often late, she sometimes arrived late for classes and missed the beginning of several lectures. This annoyed her very much. Also, she often wanted to stay at school in the evening for movies and concerts, but her parents refused. They worried about her being on the bus after dark. Sherry's parents also showed their protectiveness in other ways. They allowed her to date only boys from church or from their neighborhood.

Sherry rebelled against these conditions during her sophomore year. Without the knowledge or permission of her parents, Sherry applied for a job at a Stonestown store, and she landed a position in the cosmetics department of a small department store. She rented a room near campus for \$300 a month, but since the landlady didn't provide cooking facilities, Sherry ended up spending a lot of money on restaurants for every meal. Sherry's mother and father disapproved of her moving out, but they agreed to let Sherry go. Sherry escaped from her parents, but she worked such long hours to pay for her room and meals that she never found the time to go to a movie or a concert.

1. Find three combinations of singular subjects (*I-you-he-she-it*) and verbs (example: *Sherry lived*) and write them here:

2. Find three combinations of plural subjects (*we-they-you*) and verbs (example: *they agreed*) and write them here:

3 Is there any difference between the endings on verbs with singular subjects and the endings on verbs with plural subjects? _____

What do the verbs have in common? _____

Regular Verbs:

If a verb is a **regular** verb, we add a *-d* or an *-ed* ending to show past tense, or to make the correct form after *have* or *has* (the past participle form).

Examples: Now that I'm in college, I learn something every day. (present tense)
Yesterday, I learned about capitalism. (past tense)
I have learned a lot this semester. (*have* form)

Exercise 1

Fill in each blank with the correct past tense form of the verb given.

Example: PLAY We played baseball all afternoon.

- FRY 1. We _____ the fish we caught over the open fire.
- STUDY 2. All of us _____ hard for the chemistry exam.
- CRY 3. Mary _____ on his shoulder all through the movie.
- MARRY 4. She _____ him on Saturday and left the following Monday.
- TRY 5. Although the tickets were sold out weeks in advance, John _____ to get in the concert by posing as a photographer.
- SHOP 6. Anthony _____ for all his Christmas presents at the art fair last summer.
- ADMIT 7. No one _____ that he was tired.
- PLAN 8. Nancy and Jim _____ their divorce as if they were going on vacation.

TERRIFY 9. The fireworks _____ the younger children.

COMPILE 10. The teachers _____ the materials into a handbook.

Exercise 2

Rewrite the following sentences, changing the verbs from present to past tense so that they show the correct time or tense.

Example: I listen to the radio.

Yesterday, I listened to the radio.

1. Jane likes John.

When she was a child, _____.

2. Marie looks terrific in her yellow dress.

_____ yesterday

3. My grandparents live in San Jose.

Before they moved to San Francisco, _____

4. Lucy plays tennis more often than Fred.

When they were roommates, _____

5. After a victory, the quarterback talks to reporters.

After last week's victory, _____

6. Usually women care for the children.

In the 1800s, _____

Last summer, _____

8. The lawyers discuss the case.

After the trial, _____

9. The dog growls at salesmen and snarls at Avon ladies.

Before it went to Obedience School, _____

10. Many students graduate from high school.

_____ last year.

ALERT: Though we can't hear the *-d* ending in speech, *supposed to* and *used to* always have a *-d* ending!

Examples: She was supposed to show her identification.

They used to go dancing every Friday night.

I am supposed to be home in an hour.

He is used to taking a walk after dinner.

Exercise 3

In each of the following sentences, underline any verbs that should have *-ed* or *-d* endings and supply the missing letters. Watch for time expressions (*last week*, *yesterday*, *years ago*) that indicate past time.

incorrect: The committee vote to adjourn yesterday.

correct: The committee voted to adjourn yesterday.

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1. The elephant ask Mary for a ride last week.
 2. Fred use to live in Berkeley when he was a college student.
 3. Kathy studied all the time and so she graduate from college last year.
 4. College students are suppose to attend every class meeting.
 5. Last Sunday, Laura listen to the drummers in the park.
 6. Until I started school, I work fifty hours a week and party the rest of the time.
 7. Finally Jan's cat return home.

8. As soon as the cat returned, her dog, who is suppose to be man's best friend, disappear for three weeks.
9. Several years ago, I witness a crime and identify the criminal.
10. Virginia serve us tacos for dinner, but she realize too late that she forgot to pick up a can of refried beans when she shop for groceries last week.

Irregular Verbs:

If a verb is **irregular**, we change its form, instead of adding an *-ed* ending, to show past tense or make the correct form after *have* or *has* (the past participle form).

Example: Ken takes a test almost every week. (present tense)
 Yesterday, he took a history test. (past tense)
 He has taken many tests this semester. (have form)

You know most of the past tense and *have* forms of irregular verbs, but if you are unsure of the correct past or *have* form of an irregular verb, you can look it up in a dictionary. Look up the base form; after the correct pronunciation of the word is given, you will see the verb information in bold type:

(Base Form)	(Past)	(Past Participle— <i>have</i> form)	(Present Participle— <i>ing</i> form)
take	took	taken	taking

Exercise 4

In the following exercise, all of the underlined verbs in the first sentence are irregular. Change the verbs first to simple past tense and then to the *have* form.

Example: Diana sings in the church choir.

Last year, Diana sang in the church choir.

She has sung in the church choir since she was 11 years old.

1. Eric takes piano lessons.

Eric _____ piano lessons last year.

Eric has _____ piano lessons since he was 10 years old.

2. I know how to repair transmissions.
I _____ how to repair transmissions when I was a teenager.
I have _____ how to repair transmissions since I was 13 years old.
3. Tina drives to school every day.
Tina _____ to school every day last week.
Tina has _____ to school ever since she was a freshman.
4. My sister regularly breaks promises.
She _____ a promise to me yesterday.
She has _____ many promises to me over the years.
5. I write many essays for my history class.
Last week, I _____ a ten-page paper about Columbus.
I have _____ five essays since the semester began.
6. Matt reads as much as he can.
He _____ an entire novel yesterday.
He has _____ four novels since last Saturday.
7. The president often flies in his private jet.
Last week, he _____ to Florida.
He has _____ across the United States several times this year.
8. Katy and Kris know how to speak Spanish.
Katy and Kris _____ how to speak Spanish when they were children.
Katy and Kris have _____ how to speak Spanish for many years.

Other Uses of -Ed Endings

You know that we add *-ed* endings to regular verbs, or change the form of irregular verbs to show past tense. In the last exercise, you also practiced using the past participle after *have* or *has*. We also use *-ed* endings in two other patterns:

Pattern 1: Verb forms following the helping verbs *be* and *get*.

Some verbs have two parts, first a helping verb—a form of *to be* or *to get*—and then a main verb. The main verb has an *-ed* or *-ed* ending (the past participle), no matter what tense the helping verb is.

- Examples:
- a. In my favorite restaurant, the meals *are served* quickly.
 - b. Last year an award *was given to* the restaurant, and the chef *was thrilled when* his innovative recipes won the award.
 - c. Laura *got bored* with her job as a secretary.
 - d. Laura *was hired* by a restaurant.
 - e. Now Laura *gets paid* very well for her work.

Reminder: In each of the sentences, the time of the action—the tense—is shown by the form of *to be* or *to get* (the helping verb). The main verb always has a past participle ending: *are served* and *was given*, for example.

In all of the above sentences, the subject does not do the action in the verb; rather, the subject receives the action in the verb. If we made the subject the doer of the action in the verb, we would write the sentences differently. Compare the following lists:

<u>Subject Does the Action</u>	<u>Subject Receives the Action</u>
a. The waiter served the meals.	The meals <i>are served</i> .
b. Someone gave an award to the restaurant.	The award <i>was given</i> .
c. The award thrilled the chef.	The chef <i>was thrilled</i> .
d. Her secretarial job bored Laura.	Laura <i>got bored</i> .
e. A restaurant hired Laura.	Laura <i>was hired</i> .
f. The new boss pays her well.	Laura <i>gets paid</i> well.

When the subject receives the action in the verb, we use a form of the helping verb *be* or *get* followed by the past participle.

Exercise 5

First underline any forms of *have*, *be* or *get*, and make sure that the main verbs following them have *-ed* endings or irregular past participle endings.

incorrect: I was hire by the phone company, but I haven't begin the job jet.

correct: **I was hired** by the phone company, but I haven't **begun the job** yet.

1. I always get bore during the lectures in my economics class.
2. A whole family of mice has occupied my kitchen.
3. Many adults are prejudice against the music their children listen to.
4. The city's plan to build a new baseball stadium has backfire.
5. Rock singers are often stereotype as stupid and rebellious.
6. In my role as a student, I try to be well-prepare for classes, quizzes and tests.
7. In his new apartment, Jim won't be disturb by the neighbors because the ceilings have been soundproof.
8. Carla has took many books out of the library, but she hasn't return any of them.
9. Sometimes I get frustrate when I try to write term papers.
10. The new stadium will be pay for with municipal bonds.

Pattern 2: Adjectives Formed from Verbs

Some words with *-ed* endings (past participles) actually work like adjectives, and modify nouns. In the sentence

The chef tossed the salad,

tossed is the verb, the word that shows the time or tense. But the same word may also be an adjective:

We enjoyed the *tossed* salad at dinner last night.

In the above sentence, *tossed* is no longer a verb because it doesn't show time or tense in the sentence. *Tossed* modifies or describes the noun *salad*, so it is an adjective.

Adjectives formed from verbs may come before the nouns they modify:

The *assigned* homework was difficult.

Or they may come after the nouns they modify:

The homework *assigned by the teacher* was very difficult.

Whether they come before or after the noun, these adjectives formed from verbs normally keep their *-ed* or irregular past participle endings.

Look over this list of commonly-used adjectives formed from verbs; you'll recognize many of them. Notice that all of the adjectives come from past tense verbs or past participles.

scared children

concerned citizens

torn magazines

frightened children

confused patient

polished furniture

terrified children

satisfied customers

broken glass

bored students

frozen yogurt

framed pictures

determined students

ground coffee beans

unidentified flying object

tired students

fried bananas

complicated problems

motivated workers

baked apples

densely-populated cities

informed voters

canned peas

polluted rivers

prejudiced people

medicated cough drops

congested freeways

well-known politicians

used books

stalled cars

Exercise 6

In the following exercise, make the verb in the first sentence into an adjective modifying a noun in the second sentence.

Example: The class bored the students.

The bored students fell asleep.

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1. A tornado recently damaged many homes.

- The _____ homes were costly to repair.
2. Some people abandoned their homes.
- The _____ homes were often uninhabitable.
3. The tornado terrified people living in its path.
- The _____ people went into their storm cellars.
4. The news of the tornado shocked my cousin.
- My _____ cousin had never experienced a tornado before.
5. The tornado frightened the children
- The _____ children stayed close to their parents.
6. The work of repairing the homes exhausted the workmen.
- The _____ workmen sat down to rest.
7. Finally, the workers repaired the houses.
- The _____ houses looked like homes again.
8. But the possibility of another tornado still concerned the homeowners.
- The _____ homeowners purchased tornado insurance.

Exercise 7

Find all of the words in the following sentences which need *-ed* endings (or irregular past participle endings) and fill in the missing letters. Look especially for verb forms following *be*, *have* or *get*, and for *-ed* ending adjectives formed from verbs.

incorrect: The students were concern because no one came to the schedule meeting.

correct: The students were **concerned** because no one came to the **scheduled** meeting.

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1. Many of the sale items were purchase quickly by the numerous customers.
2. Student fees were raise this semester, and many irritate students have protest to the administration.

3. The room was examine for clues, but the frighten witnesses refused to help the detective in his efforts to solve the crime.
4. Twenty-five points were score by the visiting team by the second quarter, and the frustrate fans of the home team knew that they wouldn't win.
5. The SPCA has express concern about the large number of abandon pets, and they have claimed that the number of pets who are abuse by their owners is on the rise as well.
6. The flight was delay because of poor weather conditions, but after a few hours, the plane took off.
7. The tests have to be score by hand, so the teacher is upset because he wants them to be return tomorrow.
8. The firemen were concern because the abandon building was a fire hazard.

Sometimes writers who are trying to use *-ed* endings correctly use them when they shouldn't. In the two patterns that follow, the verb form never takes an *-ed* ending:

1. If the verb follows the word *to*.

incorrect: We wanted *to crowned* him king.

correct: We wanted *to crown* him king.

2. If the verb form immediately follows one of the modals, or helping verbs, below:

<i>could</i>	<i>must</i>	<i>should</i>
<i>will</i>	<i>might</i>	
<i>would</i>	<i>do / does / did</i>	

incorrect: *Did he studied* for the test?

correct: *Did he study* for the test?

incorrect: We *can walked* to the movie theater.

correct: We *can walk* to the movie theater.

Exercise 8

Proofread the following passage for correct use *-d* or *-ed* endings or irregular past participle endings. Some words should not have *-ed* endings.

Last week Tom and his wife witness a horrible robbery. As they were walking along the street one evening, they pass a dark alley. When Tom pause to glanced into the alleyway, he notice that a man had been push up against a wall of a building. Another man stood in front of him holding a load gun. Tom watch as the terrify victim hand over his wallet filled with credit cards, pieces of identification, and some cash. Tom's wife turn to see what he was looking at, and she suddenly scream. The robber turn, quickly stuff the wallet into the pocket of his coat, then fire at them with the gun, but fortunately miss them. The frighten couple ran to help the robbery victim. The man was scare; still, they were glad to discover that he was basically unharm. A reward has been offer for the capture of the robber. Tom and his wife were ask by the police to give as much information as they could remembered, but since it had been so dark, their description was fill was contradictions. No one could identified the robber, so the police haven't caught him yet.

Proofreading Tips

Always begin proofreading by reading your work out loud, reading exactly what you have written. Often we can catch missing or incorrectly-used *-ed* endings when we hear the error. Then follow this process:

1. If you have a problem with *-ed* endings on regular or irregular verbs, try following these steps:
 - a) To see if you have used simple past tense *-ed* endings correctly, go through your essay and underline any verbs. Ask yourself what time period you want to refer to. If the time is in the past, the verb should have an *-ed* ending or irregular past ending.
 - (b) Now look at any forms of *have* (*has, have, had, having*), *be* (*am, is, are, was, were, be, been, being*) and *get* (*get, got*).
Are any of them followed by another verb form?
If so, does the main verb—the verb form that comes after *have, be, or get*—need an *-ed* or irregular past participle ending?
2. To catch missing *-ed* endings on adjectives formed from verbs, look at each word describing, or modifying, a noun.
Can the adjective be made into a verb?
Can the noun receive the action in the verb?
If the answer to both questions is "yes," almost always the adjective should have an *-ed* ending.
3. Finally, check to make sure that you haven't added an *-ed* ending to a verb form that should not have an *-ed* ending: verb forms after *to*, and verb forms after the modals (*do, does, did, can, could, will, would, should, may, might, must* and *shall*).