

Chapter 6

Preterit Tense of Regular Verbs



The preterit tense is used to narrate an action or event in the past.

[1] REGULAR -AR VERBS

- a. The preterit tense of regular *-ar* verbs is formed by dropping the infinitive ending *-ar* and adding the personal endings *-é, -aste, ó, amos, -asteis, and -aron*. The preterit tense has the following meanings in English:

Ud. bailó *you danced, you did dance*
 Yo conté *I counted, I did count*

	bailar <i>to dance</i>	contar <i>to count</i>
yo	bailé	conté
tú	bailaste	contaste
Ud., él, ella	bailó	contó
nosotros, -as	bailamos	contamos
vosotros, -as	bailasteis	contasteis
Uds., ellos, ellas	bailaron	contaron

- b. In the preterit, the *nosotros* ending (*-amos*) is the same as in the present tense: *regresamos* (we return, we returned).
- c. Most verbs that are stem-changing (*o* to *ue*; *e* to *ie*) do not change the stem in the preterit tense:
- (contar) Present: cuento Preterit: conté
- d. Verbs that end in *-car, -gar, and -zar* have a spelling change in the *yo* form. In *-car* and *-gar* verbs, this change occurs to keep the original sound of the *c* and *g*, respectively. The change occurs in *-zar* verbs because *z* rarely precedes *e* or *i* in Spanish.

tocar yo toqué
 llegar yo llegué
 comenzar yo comencé

[2] FREQUENTLY USED -AR VERBS IN THE PRETERIT

aceptar <i>to accept</i>	colgar <i>to hang</i>	encontrar <i>to find, to meet</i>
acompañar <i>to accompany</i>	comprar <i>to buy</i>	enviar <i>to send</i>
acostarse <i>to go to bed</i>	contar <i>to count</i>	espantar <i>to frighten, to scare</i>
admirar <i>to admire</i>	conversar <i>to converse</i>	estudiar <i>to study</i>
asar <i>to roast</i>	copiar <i>to copy</i>	examinar <i>to examine</i>
cerrar <i>to close</i>	cortar <i>to cut</i>	hablar <i>to speak</i>
cobrar <i>to collect</i>	desayunarse <i>to have breakfast</i>	inflar <i>to inflate</i>
cocinar <i>to cook</i>	elevantar <i>to raise, to lift</i>	jugar <i>to play (a sport, game)</i>

lavar to wash
 llorar to cry, to weep
 mirar to look at
 pasar to pass, to spend time
 pensar to think, to intend

planchar to iron
 preparar to prepare
 prestar to lend
 pronunciar to pronounce
 robar to rob

sacar to take out
 tocar to play (an instrument)
 trabajar to work
 visitar to visit

EXERCISE A. Lucy is describing what everyone did in preparation for the party. Use the cues to express what she says.

EXAMPLE: mi mamá / preparar la comida Mi mamá **preparó** la comida.

1. Gabriel / comprar los refrescos
2. Susie y Glenda / limpiar la sala
3. yo / colgar las decoraciones
4. Richy y yo / inflar los globos
5. tú / lavar los vasos
6. Miriam y Silvia / enviar las invitaciones

EXERCISE B. When school resumes in September, some friends are talking about what they and other students did during the summer. Express what they say.

EXAMPLE: yo / trabajar en la oficina de un abogado Yo **trabajé** en la oficina de un abogado.

1. Manuel / visitar a sus primos en Venezuela
2. Blanca y Virginia / tomar cursos en la universidad
3. tú / viajar con tu familia
4. Alex y yo / cantar en un coro
5. yo / comenzar a estudiar el violín
6. Efraín / jugar en un equipo de béisbol

EXERCISE C. You and a group of friends are in a restaurant. One of your friends is helping you figure out the check. Answer her questions.

1. ¿Quién ordenó hamburguesas y papas fritas? (*Milton y Jaime*)
2. ¿Quién tomó dos té helados? (*Laura*)
3. ¿Quién desayunó huevos fritos y tocino? (*tú*)
