

How to Pronounce
The Simple Past Tense
Of
Regular English Verbs

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About The Simple Past Tense for Regular English Verbs

The Simple Past Tense (SPT) is used often in English and is used when we talk about something that has already happened. It can happen last week, yesterday, last year, or 5 minutes ago.

For regular English verbs, the SPT is formed by adding “ed” to the end of the infinitive form of the verb. For example, the infinitive form of “talk” is “to talk”. To form the SPT, add “ed” to the end of the verb to get “**talked**.”

If a regular verb infinitive ends in “e”, then only a “d” is added to form the SPT. For example, the infinitive “to hate” ends in an “e”, so we just add a “d” to form the Simple Past Tense, “**hated**”.

If a regular verb infinitive ends in “y”, the “y” is changed to an “i”, and then the “ed” is added. For example, the SPT of “study” is “**studied**”.

The “ed” for the SPT is not pronounced the same way for all regular verbs. The “ed” can be pronounced as “ěd”, “t”, or “d”. The next pages discuss each of these pronunciations.

When the “ed” is pronounced “ĕd” for
the Simple Past Tense

When the infinitive of a regular English verb ends in the “d” sound or the “t” sound, then the Simple Past Tense “ed” is pronounced (→) “ĕd”.

Examples:

<u>Infinitive</u>	<u>Present Tense</u>	<u>Simple Past Tense</u>
• to wait	wait → wāt	waited → wāt' ĕd
• to count	count → count	count ed → count' · ĕd
• to need	need → nĕd	need ed → nĕd' · ĕd
• to paint	paint → pānt	paint ed → pānt' · ĕd
• to graduate	graduate → grād' ū āt	graduated ed → grād' · ū · āt · ĕd
• to visit	visit → vĭz' · ĭt	visit ed → vĭz' · ĭt · ĕd

When the “ed” is pronounced “t” for
the Simple Past Tense

When the infinitive of a regular English verb ends in these sounds { “x”, “ch”, “sh”, “s”, or “k”}, then the Simple Past Tense “ed” is pronounced (→) “t”.

Examples:

<u>Infinitive</u>	<u>Present Tense</u>	<u>Simple Past Tense</u>
• to check	check → chĕk	checked → chĕkt
• to cash	cash → cāsh	cached → cāsht
• to fix	fix → fĭx	fixed → fĭxt
• to dress	dress → drĕs	dressed → drĕst
• to dance	dance → dāns	danced → dānst

When the “ed” is pronounced “d” for
the Simple Past Tense

For the infinitive form of **any other regular** English verbs (that is, verbs that **do not end in these sounds**: “d”, “t”, “x”, “ch”, “sh”, “s”, or “k”), the Simple Past Tense “ed” → “d”.

Examples:

<u>Infinitive</u>	<u>Present Tense</u>	<u>Simple Past Tense</u>
· to study	study → stüd' · ē	studied → stüd' · ēd
· to answer	answer → äñ' · sēr [The ě sound is like the “er” in “her”.]	answered → äñ' · sērd
· to describe	described → dē · scrīb' → dĕ · scrīb'	described → dē · scrībd' → dĕ · scrībd'
· to perform	perform → pĕr · fōrm' [The ọ sound is like the “or” in “orange.”]	performed → pĕr · fōrmd'
· to love	love → lŭv	loved → lŭvd