

## **Advanced Intermediate**

### **Podcast number 1**



## **THE PRETERITE**

¡Hola! This time we're talking about the past tense called the Preterite. This Help-Sheet is designed as not only a working document, but also as a valuable reference document too. We expect that you'll return to it many times.

*Without doubt you'll need to look at it a few times. It is absolutely normal. There's a lot of material to remember, so we'd advise you to divide it in chunks. Trust that you'll end of loving this tense once you get to know it! Give it time and give yourself time too.*



### **When do you use it?**

- The Preterite is the tense used for specific actions in the past, for a specific number of times or during a specific amount of time.
- Actions in Preterite are completed.
- If an action is specific and you can pin-point in time when it happened or how many times it happened, it is very likely Preterite.
- They are not ongoing actions.



### Time references that are usually with Preterite

**Ayer** (yesterday),

**Ayer por la mañana/tarde/noche** (Yesterday morning/afternoon/evening/night)

**Esta mañana/tarde/noche** (This morning/afternoon/evening/ tonight)

**Anteayer/ Antes de ayer** (The day before yesterday)

**El año pasado** (last year),

**La semana pasada** (last week),

**El mes pasado** (last month)

**En ese momento** (at that moment)

**El otro día** (the other day)

**Durante días/ semanas/meses/años...** (For days/weeks/months/years...)

**Desde el primer momento** (from the first time)

**Hace dos días...** (Two days ago...)

The line is a story in the past and the dots are actions in the Preterite.

\_\_\_\_\_ ● \_\_\_\_\_ ● \_\_\_\_\_ ● \_\_\_\_\_

For example:

While I was having lunch the postman came ● , Julia phoned twice ● and Peter came ● .

‘While I was having lunch’ is the story line (this is a past that we call *Imperfect*). The three dots of actions that were specific were: Postman came, Julia phoned twice and Peter came. These are actions in the Preterite.

⋮  
**EJEMPLO**  
**DE LO**  
**GENIAL**  
!!!

More examples:

*I rang you at 7:30* → Specific point in time.  
*I rang you three times* → Specific number of times.  
*I rang you for an hour* → Specific time frame.

Sometimes the time won't be specified in the sentence, but it will still be implied:

We went to the park. → Not ongoing action. Action finished that we could pin-point in time by asking ‘**when specifically?**’



Look at this sentence. We have Preterite and *Imperfect* (ongoing past, which we'll look at soon), can you spot the action in Preterite?

- My ears **were hurting** before I **put** some eardrops in them.

Which verb was the ongoing story \_\_\_\_\_ and which was preterite ●?

.....OK. Let's see ☺ .....

My ears were hurting was ongoing \_\_\_\_\_ (Imperfect)

I put some eardrops in them ● (Preterite)

### Conjugating regular verbs in Preterite

	-AR <u>Hablar</u>	-ER <u>Comer</u>	-IR <u>Vivir</u>
Yo	hablé	Comí	Viví
Tú	hablaste	Comiste	Viviste
Él /Ella	habló	Comió	Vivió
Nosotros	hablamos	Comimos	Vivimos
Vosotros	hablasteis	Comisteis	Vivisteis
Ellos	hablaron	Comieron	Vivieron



Do you fancy practicing? ¡¡Buena suerte, chic@s!! 👍

1. She opened the window.
2. Last week I didn't watch TV.
3. Did you speak with Felipe?
4. I waited for you ('I waited you') for thirty minutes!
5. Did he finally sell the house?
6. This morning I saw Patricia with her ex-boyfriend.
7. I bought this house five years ago.
8. Last night we danced and sang for hours.
9. Where did you all celebrate your birthday party?
10. You washed your hair.

1. (Ella) abrió la ventana.
2. La semana pasada (yo) no vi la televisión.
3. ¿Hablaste (tú) con Felipe?
4. ¡(Yo) te esperé durante treinta minutos!
5. ¿Vendió (él) la casa al final?
6. Esta mañana (yo) vi a Patricia con su ex novio.
7. (Yo) compré esta casa hace cinco años.
8. Anoche (nosotros) bailamos y cantamos durante horas.
9. ¿Dónde celebrasteis (vosotros) vuestra fiesta de cumpleaños?
10. (Tú) te lavaste el pelo.



- **Changes because of sound:**

In Spanish we like to keep the same sound when conjugating a verb, therefore sometimes we need to change a 'c' for a 'z' or a 'que' to keep the same sound, or a 'g' for a 'gu', etc. We will show you ☺

♦ *The first person singular only (Yo).*

**G → GUÉ:** The verb 'Pagar' (To pay) has a soft 'g' (like in *gato*), if we break the verb down in Preterite it'd be 'Yo pagé'. This changes the sound from soft 'g' to strong 'g' (as in *gente*). For that reason, we need to put 'gu' → Yo pagué.

Llegar → (Yo ~~llegé~~) Yo llegué.

Regar → (Yo ~~regé~~) Yo regué.

**C → QUÉ:** The verb 'Buscar' (To look for) has a 'k' sound (like in *coco*). When we say I looked for we need to change the 'c' for a 'qué' to keep the 'k' sound.

Aparcar → (~~Yo aparqué~~) Yo aparqué

Practicar → (~~Yo practiqué~~) Yo practiqué.

## Z→CÉ:

Comenzar → (~~Yo comencé~~) Yo comencé.

Empezar → (~~Yo empecé~~) Yo empecé.



## • Irregular verbs in Preterite:

For all three conjugations of verbs (-Ar, -Er, -Ir):

Yo            -e  
Tú            -iste  
Él/Ella      -o

Nosotros    -imos  
Vosotros    -isteis  
Ellos        -ieron

**Andar** (To walk) → **Anduv...**

**Estar** (To be) → **Estuv...**

**Tener** (To have) → **Tuv...**

**Caber** (To fit) → **Cup...**

**Haber** (To have (*done, eaten...*)) → **Hub...**

**Poder** (To be able to) → **Pud...**

**Poner** (To put) → **Pus...**

**Saber** (To know) → **Sup...**

**Hacer** (To do/make) → **Hic...**

**Querer** (To want/Love) → **Quis...**

**Venir** (To come) → **Vin...**

Anduve, anduviste, anduvo...

Estuve, estuviste, estuvo...

Tuve, tuviste, tuvo...

Cupe, cupiste, cupo...

Hube, hubiste, hubo...

Pude, pudiste, pudo...

Puse, pusiste, puso...

Supe, supiste, supo...

Hice, hiciste, hizo \*\*\*

Quise, quisiste, quiso...

Vine, viniste, vino...



Do you fancy a quick practice? ¡¡Buena suerte!! 👍

1. He didn't come to my reception.
  2. What did you do yesterday morning?
  3. She didn't know what to say.
  4. Where did you two put my glasses?
  5. The machine didn't fit in my car.
  6. Lisa could see her sister for an hour.
  7. They walked to the beach.
  8. Sofía didn't come to the meeting because she had an accident.
  9. Once he had done it, he left.
  10. I made my bed this morning.
- .....

1. (Él) no vino a mi recepción.
  2. ¿Qué hiciste (tú) ayer por la mañana?
  3. (Ella) no supo qué decir.
  4. ¿Dónde pusisteis mis gafas vosotros dos?
  5. La máquina no cupo en mi coche.
  6. Lisa pudo ver a su hermana durante una hora.
  7. (Ellos) anduvieron a la playa.
  8. Sofía no vino a la reunión porque tuvo un accidente.
  9. Una vez lo había hecho, se fue/ salió.
  10. (Yo) hice mi cama esta mañana.
- .....

How did it go? 😊





- **Other irregular verbs:**

**SER** (To be) & **IR** (To go) Are the same!

Yo	fui	Nosotros	fuimos
Tú	fuiste	Vosotros	fuisteis
Él/Ella	fue	Ellos	fueron

**DECIR** (To say)

Yo	dije
Tú	dijiste
Él/Ella	dijo
Nosotros	dijimos
Vosotros	dijisteis
Ellos	dijeron

**TRAER** (To bring)

Yo	traje
Tú	trajiste
Él/Ella	trajo
Nosotros	trajimos
Vosotros	trajisteis
Ellos	trajeron

♦ *Other verbs like 'Traer':* Atraer (to attract), Distraer (To distract), Sustraer (To subtract, take away, remove), etc...

**DAR** (To give)

Yo	di
Tú	diste
Él/Ella	dio
Nosotros	dimos
Vosotros	disteis
Ellos	dieron

**VER** (To see)

Yo	vi
Tú	viste
Él/Ella	vio
Nosotros	vimos
Vosotros	visteis
Ellos	vieron



- **-IR stem-changing verbs in Present:**

*They only change in third person singular (Él/Ella) and plura (Ellos).*

O → U

When in Present the o→ue, in Preterite...

**DORMIR** (To sleep)

Yo	dormí
Tú	dormiste
Él/Ella	durmió *
Nosotros	dormimos
Vosotros	dormisteis
Ellos	durmieron *

E → I

When in Present the e→ie, in Preterite...

**SENTIR(SE)** (To feel)

Yo	sentí
Tú	sentiste
Él/Ella	sintió *
Nosotros	sentimos
Vosotros	sentisteis
Ellos	sintieron *

**Morir** (To die)

.  
. .  
. .

**Advertir** (To warn)

**Mentir** (To lie)

**Preferir** (To prefer)

**Conseguir** (To achieve)

## E → I

When in Present e→i, in Preterite:

### PEDIR (To request, ask for)

Yo	pedí	
Tú	pediste	Medir (To measure), Repetir (To repeat)
Él/Ella	pidió *	Seguir (To follow, continue)
Nosotros	pedimos	Servir (to serve)...
Vosotros	pedisteis	
Ellos	pidieron *	



Time for a bit of practice! ¡¡Buena suerte!! 👍

1. At that moment they preferred not to say anything.
2. The doctor warned me of the side effects.
3. We asked for another coffee.
4. Estela repeated the same question five times.
5. They didn't lie to you.
6. I slept all night.
7. Did she sleep all night?
8. They asked for the bill.
9. I felt a hand on my shoulder.
10. His hamster died yesterday.

1. En ese momento (ellos) prefirieron no decir nada. ✓
2. El médico me advirtió de los efectos secundarios. ✓
3. (Nosotros) pedimos otro café. ✗
4. Estela repitió la misma pregunta cinco veces. ✓
5. (Ellos) no nos mintieron. ✓
6. (Yo) dormí toda la noche. ✗
7. ¿Durmió (ella) toda la noche? ✓
8. (Ellos) pidieron la cuenta. ✓
9. (Yo) sentí una mano en mi hombro. ✗
10. Su hámster murió ayer. ✓

- Verbs that change I → Y in Preterite (because of sound).  
We substitute the i for a y (not to get too many vowels and because it is easier to pronounce with a 'y' sound). If you look at these verbs they already have double vowels, not to have three we change the i for a y.

♦Also for third person singular (Él/Ella) and plural (Ellos).

I → Y

in Preterite:

### CREER (To believe)

Yo	creí	
Tú	creíste	Caer (To fall), Caerse (To fall down)
Él/Ella	creyó *	Leer (To follow, continue), Oír (To hear)
Nosotros	creímos	Poseer (To possess), Proveer (To provide)
Vosotros	creísteis	
Ellos	creyeron *	

♦Not applicable for the verb 'traer' (to bring) which we saw before, nor any of its compound verbs (distraer & atraer).

♦ Not applicable for verbs ending in –guir (distinguir, perseguir..), as the 'u' is not pronounced.

♦ Verbs ending in –uir (construir, destruir...) do make this change to ‘y’, but the accents appears on the first person singular (Yo) and third person (Él/Ella).

- Therefore, - uir verbs where I → Y

### **CONSTRUIR** (To build)

Yo	construí	Destruir (To destroy), Fluir (To flow)
Tú	construiste	Contribuir (To contribute), Huir (To flee)
Él/Ella	creyó *	Incluir (To include), Influir (To influence)
Nosotros	construimos	
Vosotros	construisteis	
Ellos	construyeron *	

- Verbs ending in –ducir → -duj...

-DUCIR → - DUJ...

### **CONDUCIR** (To drive)

Yo	conduje	Producir (To produce), Deducir (To deduct)
Tú	condujiste	Inducir (To induce), Introducir (To introduce)
Él/Ella	condujo	Reducir (To reduce), Traducir (To translate)
Nosotros	condujimos	
Vosotros	condujisteis	
Ellos	condujeron	



**Phew!! ¡Bien hecho! Éste es el final ☺**



Ready for some more sentences to practise the last bits? ¡¡Buena suerte!! 👍

1. She believed him when he said: 'I'm single'.
  2. Did Pablo read that poem to his girlfriend?
  3. Toni and Iván heard the bomb explode from their houses.
  4. My father built a new house.
  5. Her children didn't contribute to the house chores.
  6. The thief fled the bank empty handed.
  7. His opinion didn't influence her decision.
  8. We drove for miles on Sunday.
  9. Did you translate this document?
  10. The supermarket reduced its costs by nearly half.
- .....

1. (Ella) le **creyó** cuando dijo: -Soy soltero-.
2. ¿Le **leyó** Pablo el poema a su novia?
3. Toni e Iván **oyeron** la bomba explosionar desde sus casas.
4. Mi padre **construyó** una casa nueva.
5. Sus hijos no **contribuyeron** con las tareas domésticas.
6. El ladrón **huyó** del banco con las manos vacías.
7. Su opinión no **influyó** en su decisión.
8. **Condujimos** durante/por millas el domingo.
9. ¿**Tradujiste** este documento?
10. El supermercado **redujo** sus costes a casi la mitad.



¡Buen trabajo! You deserve a nice cup of tea with a biscuit!



That's all for now. We hope that this has helped you in beginning to get to grips with the Preterite.

Of all the tenses in Spanish, this one is probably the most irregular. However, with use and plenty re-visits, you'll get there. Thanks for your focus. See you in the next Help-Sheet.



**Gordon y Cynthia**