

Irregular Verbs in English*

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Type 1: The same form for the simple past and the past participle

Group 1 - 1 (5 verbs)

The simple past and the past participle are exactly the same and end with “d”. The infinitive is always pronounced [i:] like the letter E, while the simple past and past participle are pronounced [E] like in the word “edge”.

élever	to breed	bred	bred
lire	to read	read	read
mener, conduire	to lead	led	led
nourrir, alimenter	to feed	fed	fed
traiter (affaires)	to deal	dealt	dealt

Group 1 - 2 (10 verbs)

The simple past and the past participle are exactly the same and end with “t”. The infinitive is always pronounced [i:] like the letter “E”, while the simple past and past participle are pronounced [E] like in the word “edge”.

(se) sentir	to feel	felt	felt
balayer	to sweep	swept	swept
bondir	to leap	leapt	leapt
dormir	to sleep	slept	slept
garder	to keep	kept	kept
pleurer	to weep	wept	wept
quitter, laisser	to leave	left	left
ramper	to creep	crept	crept
rencontrer	to meet	met	met
signifier, vouloir dire	to mean	meant	meant

Group 2 – 1 (7 verbs)

The simple past and past participles are exactly the same and are formed by changing the last consonant to a “d” or to “de”.

avoir	to have	had	had
faire	to make	made	made
dire	to say	said	said
mettre, étendre	to lay	laid	laid
payer	to pay	paid	paid
entendre	to hear	heard	heard
glisser	to slide	slid	slid

**There are additional irregular verbs, but many of these now have common regular forms.*

Group 2 – 2 (11 verbs)

The simple past and past participles are exactly the same and are formed by changing the last consonant to “t”.

dépenser, passer	to spend	spent	spent
(se) courber	to bend	bent	bent
prêter	to lend	lent	lent
envoyer	to send	sent	sent
sentir (odorat)	to smell	smelt	smelt
brûler	to burn	burnt	burnt
construire	to build	built	built

- *The verbs below (also in group 2) have both regular and irregular forms ending in “t”. They appear in “Was It Love?” as irregular verbs.*
- *In these tables the verbs marked with an asterisk have both regular and irregular forms. In the story “Was It Love?” they have irregular forms.*

apprendre	to learn *	learnt	learnt
rêver	to dream *	dreamt	dreamt
déverser	to spill *	spilt	spilt
gâcher	to spoil *	spoilt	spoilt

Group 3 – 1 (7 verbs)

The simple past and past participles are the same and are formed by changing the last consonant to “ght” pronounced /t/.

apporter, amener	to bring	brought	brought
attraper	to catch	caught	caught
penser, réfléchir	to think	thought	thought
acheter	to buy	bought	bought
combattre, se battre	to fight	fought	fought
chercher	to seek	sought	sought
enseigner	to teach	taught	taught

Group 4 A (11 verbs)

The simple past and past participles are the same and are formed by changing the last consonant to “d”.

dire, raconter	to tell	told	told
vendre	to sell	sold	sold
attacher, tenir, lier (contrat)	to bind	bound	bound
trouver	to find	found	found
moudre, hacher	to grind	ground	ground
enrouler	to wind	wound	wound
se tenir debout	to stand	stood	stood
comprendre	to understand	understood	understood
tenir contre, endurer	to withstand	withstood	withstood
tenir	to hold	held	held
retenir	to withhold	withheld	withheld

Group 4 B - 1 (10 verbs)

The simple past and past participles are the same and end in “t”, “ck”, “n” or “ne”.

acquérir, obtenir	to get	got	got / gotten (US)
perdre	to lose	lost	lost
briller	to shine	shone	shone
tirer (fusil), chasser	to shoot	shot	shot
être assis	to sit	sat	sat
cracher	to spit	spit / spat	spit / spat
coller	to stick	stuck	stuck
frapper	to strike	struck	struck
(se) balancer	to swing	swung	swung
tordre	wring	wrung	wrung
gagner	to win	won	won

Group 4 B - 2 (9 verbs)

The simple past and past participle are once more the same and end in “g” or “ng”.

creuser	to dig	dug	clung
s'accrocher à	to cling	clung	dug
lancer, (se) jeter	to fling	flung	flung
être suspendu, pendre	to hang	hung / hanged	hung / hanged
lancer, jeter	to sling	slung	slung
tourner, filer (tissage)	to spin	spun	spun
piquer (insecte, sensation)	to sting	stung	stung
accrocher (guirlande)	to string	strung	strung

Type II: Three different forms**Group 5 (11 verbs)**

The simple past and past participles are different. These verbs all have infinitives ending in “ow” except “fly”, “draw”, “withdraw” and “sew”. All but the last 4 verbs form the simple past by changing the main syllable to “ew”. Four verbs have regular simple past tenses but irregular past participles: “show”, “sew”, “mow” and “sow”. For all the verbs in group 5 the past participle is formed by adding “n” to the infinitive.

souffler	to blow	blew	blown
pousser, croître	to grow	grew	grown
savoir, connaître	to know	knew	known
jeter, lancer	to throw	threw	thrown
voler, piloter (avion)	to fly	flew	flown
tirer, dessiner	to draw	drew	drawn
se retirer	to withdraw	withdrew	withdrawn
tondre (la pelouse)	to mow	mowed	mown / mowed
montrer	to show	showed	shown / showed
coudre	to sew*	sewed	sewn / sewed
semer	to sow*	sowed	sown / sowed

Be careful, the verbs “sow” and “sew” are pronounced exactly the same way /s@U/.

Group 6 (7 verbs)

The simple past and past participle are again different. The simple past changes the middle vowel of the infinitive to an “o” and adds an “e” at the end if it doesn’t already exist (break, broke; speak, spoke; steal, stole). The past participle is formed by adding an “n” to the simple past.

briser, casser	to break	broke	broken
choisir	to choose	chose	chosen
geler, congeler	to freeze	froze	frozen
parler	to speak	spoke	spoken
voler, dérober	to steal	stole	stolen
(se) réveiller	to wake	woke	woken
tisser	to weave	wove	woven

Group 7 – 1 (10 verbs)

The simple past and past participles are different. The simple past is formed by changing the original central vowel sound to another sound:

“eat” → “ate”, “take” → “took”, “hide” → “hid”.

Thus the past “sounds” different from the infinitive (exception: beat = beat).

The past participle is formed by adding “n” to the infinitive if it ends with an “e”: “give” → “given” or by adding “en” if it ends with a consonant: “eat” → “eaten”.

Prendre, enlever, sortir	to take off /out	took	taken
manger	to eat	ate	eaten
battre	to beat	beat	beaten
conduire	to drive	drove	driven
donner	to give	gave	given
pardonner	to forgive	forgave	forgiven
s’efforcer de	to strive *	strove / strived	striven / strived
secouer, serrer (main)	to shake	shook	shaken
abandonner	to forsake	forsook	forsaken
se lever, s’élever	to rise	rose	risen
surgir, survenir, émerger	to arise	arose	arisen

* Both regular and irregular forms

Group 7 – 2 (7 verbs)

The simple past and past participle differ. The central vowel sound changes in the past, and the past participle doubles the “d”, “t” or “l” at the end.

mordre	to bite	bit	bitten
écrire	to write	wrote	written
oublier	to forget	forgot	forgotten
défendre, interdire	to forbid	forbade	forbidden
(se) cacher	to hide	hid	hidden
aller à cheval, moto, vélo	to ride	rode	ridden
tomber	to fall	fell	fallen

Group 8 - 1 (5 verbs)

The simple past and past participles are different. These are very common verbs.

être	to be	was	been
voir	to see	saw	seen
aller, partir	to go	went	gone
faire	to do	did	done
commencer	to begin	began	begun

Group 8 - 2 (4 verbs)

The simple past and past participle differ, but the past participle is like the infinitive.

venir	to come	came	come
devenir	to become	became	become
surmonter	to overcome	overcame	overcome
courir	to run	ran	run

Group 8 - 3 (4 verbs).

The simple past and past participle are different. The simple past is formed by changing the central vowel sound “ear” to “o” pronounced /O:/ and adding “e” after the final consonant. The past participle is formed by changing the final “e” to “n”.

jurer, prêter serment	to swear	swore	sworn
porter, supporter	to bear	bore	born
porter (vêtements, parfum, montres, etc.)	to wear	wore	worn
déchirer	to tear	tore	torn

Group 8 - 4 (8 verbs).

The simple past and past participle are different. The simple past is formed by changing the central vowel sound “i” to “a” pronounced /{/. The past participle is formed by changing the central vowel sound to “u” pronounced /V/.

sauter, bondir	to spring	sprang	sprung
sonner, téléphoner	to ring	rang	rung
chanter	to sing	sang	sung
boire	to drink	drank	drunk
rétrécir	to shrink	shrank	shrunk
couler, sombrer	to sink	sank	sunk
sentir mauvais	to stink	stank	stunk
nager	to swim	swam	swum

Group 8 - 5 (2 verbs).

The simple past and past participle are different. The past participle ends in “ain, which is pronounced /eIn/.

être étendu	to lie*	lay	lain
tuer, massacrer	to slay	slew	slain

**Here the verb “to lie” means “to be in a horizontal position”. The verb “to lie”, which means “not to tell the truth” is a regular verb.*

Type III: The same form for the infinitive, the simple past and the past participle
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Group 9 - 1 (5 verbs)

The central vowel sound is /E/.

laisser, permettre	to let	let	let
parier	to bet	bet	bet
installer, poser	to set	set	set
perdre (feuilles, cheveux)	to shed	shed	shed
étaler, étendre	to spread	spread	spread

Group 9 - 2 (4 verbs)

The central vowel sound is /I/.

frapper	to hit	hit	hit
faire une offre	to bid	bid	bid
fendre, couper droit	to slit	slit	slit
séparer, scinder, fendre	to split	split	split
laisser, s'arrêter de...	to quit	quit	quit

Group 9 - 3 (3 verbs)

The central vowel sound is /V/.

couper	to cut	cut	cut
fermer	to shut	shut	shut
enfoncer, porter un coup	to thrust	thrust	thrust

Group 9 - 4 (2 verbs)

The central vowel sound is /@:/.

blessé, faire mal	to hurt	hurt	hurt
éclater	to burst	burst	burst

Group 9 - 5 (3 verbs)

The central vowel sound in the final syllable is /A:/.

lancer	to cast	cast	cast
prévoir	to forecast	forecast	forecast
diffuser (radio, TV, etc.)	to broadcast	broadcast	broadcast

Group 9 - 6 (2 verbs)

The central vowel sound is /U/ or /Q/.

poser, mettre	to put	put	put
coûter	to cost	cost	cost

If you now know the entire list you have learnt one hundred and forty-nine irregular verbs and their tenses. Congratulations on your efforts to speak correct English!

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