

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 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.”

	to breed	bred	bred
	to read	read	read
	to lead	led	led
	to feed	fed	fed
	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.”

	to feel	felt	felt
	to sweep	swept	swept
	to leap	leapt	leapt
	to sleep	slept	slept
	to keep	kept	kept
	to weep	wept	wept
	to leave	left	left
	to creep	crept	crept
	to meet	met	met
	to mean	meant	meant

Group 2 – 1 (7 verbs)

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

	to have	had	had
	to make	made	made
	to say	said	said
	to lay	laid	laid
	to pay	paid	paid
	to hear	heard	heard
	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 the same and are formed by changing the last consonant to “t.”

	to spend	spent	spent
	to bend	bent	bent
	to lend	lent	lent
	to send	sent	sent
	to smell	smelt	smelt
	to burn	burnt	burnt
	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.*

	to learn *	learnt	learnt
	to dream *	dreamt	dreamt
	to spill *	spilt	spilt
	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/.

	to bring	brought	brought
	to catch	caught	caught
	to think	thought	thought
	to buy	bought	bought
	to fight	fought	fought
	to seek	sought	sought
	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.”

	to tell	told	told
	to sell	sold	sold
	to bind	bound	bound
	to find	found	found
	to grind	ground	ground
	to wind	wound	wound
	to stand	stood	stood
	to understand	understood	understood
	to withstand	withstood	withstood
	to hold	held	held
	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”.

	to get	got	got / gotten (US)
	to lose	lost	lost
	to shine	shone	shone
	to shoot	shot	shot
	to sit	sat	sat
	to spit	spit / spat	spit / spat
	to stick	stuck	stuck
	to strike	struck	struck
	to swing	swung	swung
	wring	wrung	wrung
	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.”

	to dig	dug	clung
	to cling	clung	dug
	to fling	flung	flung
	to hang	hung / hanged	hung / hanged
	to sling	slung	slung
	to spin	spun	spun
	to sting	stung	stung
	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.

	to blow	blew	blown
	to grow	grew	grown
	to know	knew	known
	to throw	threw	thrown
	to fly	flew	flown
	to draw	drew	drawn
	to withdraw	withdrew	withdrawn
	to mow	mowed	mown / mowed
	to show	showed	shown / showed
	to sew*	sewed	sewn / sewed
	to sow*	sowed	sown / sowed

Be careful, the verbs “sow” and “sew” are pronounced exactly the same.

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.

	to break	broke	broken
	to choose	chose	chosen
	to freeze	froze	frozen
	to speak	spoke	spoken
	to steal	stole	stolen
	to wake	woke	woken
	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”.

	to take off /out	took	taken
	to eat	ate	eaten
	to beat	beat	beaten
	to drive	drove	driven
	to give	gave	given
	to forgive	forgave	forgiven
	to strive *	strove / strived	striven / strived
	to shake	shook	shaken
	to forsake	forsook	forsaken
	to rise	rose	risen
	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.

	to bite	bit	bitten
	to write	wrote	written
	to forget	forgot	forgotten
	to forbid	forbade	forbidden
	to hide	hid	hidden
	to ride	rode	ridden
	to fall	fell	fallen

Group 8 - 1 (5 verbs)

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

	to be	was	been
	to see	saw	seen
	to go	went	gone
	to do	did	done
	to begin	began	begun

Group 8 - 2 (4 verbs)

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

	to come	came	come
	to become	became	become
	to overcome	overcame	overcome
	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".

	to swear	swore	sworn
	to bear	bore	born
	to wear	wore	worn
	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 /.

	to spring	sprang	sprung
	to ring	rang	rung
	to sing	sang	sung
	to drink	drank	drunk
	to shrink	shrank	shrunk
	to sink	sank	sunk
	to stink	stank	stunk
	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 /en/.

	to lie*	lay	lain
	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/.*

	to let	let	let
	to bet	bet	bet
	to set	set	set
	to shed	shed	shed
	to spread	spread	spread

Group 9 - 2 (4 verbs)*The central vowel sound is /V/.*

	to hit	hit	hit
	to bid	bid	bid
	to slit	slit	slit
	to split	split	split
	to quit	quit	quit

Group 9 - 3 (3 verbs)*The central vowel sound is /V/.*

	to cut	cut	cut
	to shut	shut	shut
	to thrust	thrust	thrust

Group 9 - 4 (2 verbs)*The central vowel sound is /a:/.*

	to hurt	hurt	hurt
	to burst	burst	burst

Group 9 - 5 (3 verbs)*The central vowel sound in the final syllable is /A:/.*

	to cast	cast	cast
	to forecast	forecast	forecast
	to broadcast	broadcast	broadcast

Group 9 - 6 (2 verbs)*The central vowel sound is /U/ or /Q/.*

	to put	put	put
	to cost	cost	cost

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

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