

Regular and irregular verbs

1.1 Regular verbs

If a verb is regular, the past simple and past participle end in -ed. For example:

<i>infinitive</i>	clean	finish	use	paint	stop	carry
<i>past simple</i>	cleaned	finished	used	painted	stopped	carried
<i>past participle</i>						

For spelling rules, see Appendix 6.

For the *past simple* (I cleaned / they finished / she carried etc.), see Unit 5.

We use the *past participle* to make the perfect tenses and for all the passive forms.

Perfect tenses (have/has/had cleaned):

- I **have cleaned** the windows. (*present perfect* – see Units 7–8)
- They were still working. They **hadn't finished**. (*past perfect* – see Unit 15)

Passive (is cleaned / was cleaned etc.):

- He **was carried** out of the room. (*past simple passive*)
 - This gate **has just been painted**. (*present perfect passive*)
- } see Units 41–43

1.2 Irregular verbs

When the past simple / past participle do *not* end in -ed (for example, I saw / I have seen), the verb is *irregular*.

With some irregular verbs, all three forms (*infinitive*, *past simple* and *past participle*) are the same. For example, **hit**:

- Don't **hit** me. (*infinitive*)
- Somebody **hit** me as I came into the room. (*past simple*)
- I've never **hit** anybody in my life. (*past participle* – *present perfect*)
- George was **hit** on the head by a stone. (*past participle* – *passive*)

With other irregular verbs, the past simple is the same as the past participle (but different from the infinitive). For example, **tell** → **told**:

- Can you **tell** me what to do? (*infinitive*)
- She **told** me to come back the next day. (*past simple*)
- Have you **told** anybody about your new job? (*past participle* – *present perfect*)
- I was **told** to come back the next day. (*past participle* – *passive*)

With other irregular verbs, all three forms are different. For example, **wake** → **woke/awakened**:

- I'll **wake** you up. (*infinitive*)
- I **woke** up in the middle of the night. (*past simple*)
- The baby has **woken** up. (*past participle* – *present perfect*)
- I was **woken** up by a loud noise. (*past participle* – *passive*)

1.3 The following verbs can be *regular* or *irregular*:

burn → burned or burnt	smell → smelled or smelt
dream → dreamed or dreamt [dremt]*	spell → spelled or spelt
lean → leaned or leant [lent]*	spill → spilled or spilt
learn → learned or learnt	spoil → spoiled or spoilt

* pronunciation

So you can say:

- I **leant** out of the window. or I **leaned** out of the window.
- The dinner has been **spoilt**. or The dinner has been **spoiled**.

In British English the irregular form (**burnt/learnt** etc.) is more usual.

For American English, see Appendix 7.

1.4 List of irregular verbs

<i>infinitive</i>	<i>past simple</i>	<i>past participle</i>
be	was/were	been
beat	beat	beaten
become	became	become
begin	began	begun
bend	bent	bent
bet	bet	bet
bite	bit	bitten
blow	blew	blown
break	broke	broken
bring	brought	brought
broadcast	broadcast	broadcast
build	built	built
burst	burst	burst
buy	bought	bought
catch	caught	caught
choose	chose	chosen
come	came	come
cost	cost	cost
creep	crept	crept
cut	cut	cut
deal	dealt	dealt
dig	dug	dug
do	did	done
draw	drew	drawn
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven
eat	ate	eaten
fall	fell	fallen
feed	fed	fed
feel	felt	felt
fight	fought	fought
find	found	found
flee	fled	fled
fly	flew	flown
forbid	forbade	forbidden
forget	forgot	forgotten
forgive	forgave	forgiven
freeze	froze	frozen
get	got	got
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
grow	grew	grown
hang	hung	hung
have	had	had
hear	heard	heard
hide	hid	hidden
hit	hit	hit
hold	held	held
hurt	hurt	hurt
keep	kept	kept
kneel	knelt	knelt
know	knew	known
lay	laid	laid
lead	led	led
leave	left	left
lend	lent	lent
let	let	let
lie	lay	lain

<i>infinitive</i>	<i>past simple</i>	<i>past participle</i>
light	lit	lit
lose	lost	lost
make	made	made
mean	meant	meant
meet	met	met
pay	paid	paid
put	put	put
read	read [red]*	read [red]*
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
run	ran	run
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
seek	sought	sought
sell	sold	sold
send	sent	sent
set	set	set
sew	sewed	sewn/sewed
shake	shook	shaken
shine	shone	shone
shoot	shot	shot
show	showed	shown/showed
shrink	shrank	shrunk
shut	shut	shut
sing	sang	sung
sink	sank	sunk
sit	sat	sat
sleep	slept	slept
slide	slid	slid
speak	spoke	spoken
spend	spent	spent
spit	spat	spat
split	split	split
spread	spread	spread
spring	sprang	sprung
stand	stood	stood
steal	stole	stolen
stick	stuck	stuck
sting	stung	stung
stink	stank	stunk
strike	struck	struck
swear	swore	sworn
sweep	swept	swept
swim	swam	swum
swing	swung	swung
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
tell	told	told
think	thought	thought
throw	threw	thrown
understand	understood	understood
wake	woke	woken
wear	wore	worn
weep	wept	wept
win	won	won
write	wrote	written

* pronunciation