

PAST TENSE - PRETERITE

To talk about things that have already happened we use the past tense by removing the verb ending and adding the appropriate past tense ending below.

-AR VERBS

yo	- é	nosotros	- amos
tú	- aste	vosotros	- asteis
él/ella		ellos/as	
usted	- ó	ustedes	- aron

-ER & IR VERBS

yo	- í	nosotros	- imos
tú	- iste	vosotros	- isteis
él/ella		ellos/as	
usted	- ió	ustedes	- ieron

SPELLING CHANGES

Some verbs in the preterite tense have a spelling change in the yo form.

Verbs that end in **-car** change to **qu** + the yo ending

For example; Tocar > **yo toqué**

Verbs that end in **-gar** change to **gu** + the yo ending

For example; Pegar > **yo pegué**

Verbs that end in **-zar** change to **c** + the yo ending

For example; Empezar > **yo empecé**

STEM CHANGERS (Shoe verbs)

In the preterite, the rules for stem changers are different.

1. Only -IR verbs have a stem change
2. The stem change in the preterite resembles a sandal instead of a shoe because it only happens in the 3rd person.
3. There are only 2 kinds of stem change. -IR verbs that changed from o>ue in the present are now o>u and -IR verbs that changed from e>i and e>ie are both e>i in the preterite. For example: **Dormir (o>ue)**

yo dormí	nosotros dormimos
tú dormiste	vosotros dormisteis
él/ella, ud. durmió	ellos/as, uds. durmieron

MEANING CHANGES

You should be aware that because Spanish has two past tenses, some verbs have a slight change in meaning in the preterite. The most common are these;

Verb	Meaning in the Preterite
Conocer - to know someone	met
Querer - to want	tried but didn't
No Querer	refused to
Saber - to know a fact	found out
Poder - to be able, can	succeeded
Tener - to have	received