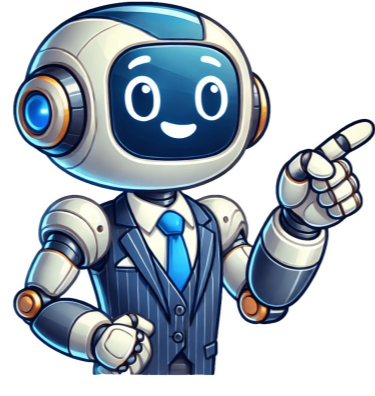


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para esta película. - He composed the music for this movie. No contuve mi entusiasmo cuando lo vi. - I didn't contain my enthusiasm when I saw him. El televisor se descompuso ayer. - The television set broke yesterday. Por suerte, se detuvieron antes de chocar. - Luckily, they stopped before crashing. Me dispuse a terminar esto temprano. - I decided to finish this early. Pude salir de la casa pero había mucho tráfico. - I was able to leave home but there was a lot of traffic. Puso mucha confianza en ti. - He placed a lot of trust in you. Propuse algunas ideas pero no sé si las tomen en cuenta. - I proposed a few ideas but I don't know if they'll be taken into consideration. Quise traer varios juegos pero solo encontré este. - I wanted to bring a few games but I only found this one. Tuve un sueño muy raro. - I had a really weird dream. Él supo cómo organizar todo. - He knew how to organize everything. Ellos previnieron el accidente. - They prevented the accident. Viniste desde muy lejos. - You came from far away. Highly-irregular preterite conjugations So far, we've seen the three sets of preterite tense endings that apply to most verbs, whether regular or irregular. Even most other irregular preterite verbs just exhibit slight variations of what we've just seen. Fortunately for Spanish learners, there aren't many highly-irregular verbs that need to be learned individually. We'll introduce the following ones here: ser (to be), ir (to go), dar (to give), ver (to see), and hacer (to do). Ser and ir are identical, dar and ver are similar, and hacer has a stem change. Let's see each of these three groupings here. Ser and Ir preterite conjugations First, take a look at this preterite conjugation chart for ser (to be) and ir (to go): Subject ser ir yo fui fui tú fuiste fuiste él, ella, usted fue fue nosotros fuimos fuimos vosotros fuisteis fuisteis ellos, ellas, ustedes fueron fueron Did you notice that the ir and ser preterite conjugations are exactly the same? That's right! So how do we differentiate them? It's all about context. Ir is used to talk about going or leaving. Ser is used to give descriptions that are rarely subject to change. So how does this work when you have to rely on understanding context alone? Native speakers intuitively know which verb is being used. Even when the context is known, however, Spanish students still often find it confusing to know which verb is being used, since the conjugations for ir and ser look exactly the same. A reasonably easy and effective trick to tell these verbs apart is to remember that the verb ir is used when something moves to somewhere else, so it is usually followed by a preposition such as a, or alternatively para. By comparison, the verb ser is typically followed by a description. Fueron a todos los conciertos en el tour. Necesitaron bastante dinero para eso. - They went to every concert on the tour. They needed a lot of money for that Mis amigos y yo fuimos bomberos por muchos años. - My friends and I were firefighters for many years. Fui a ver a mi vecino. - I went to see my neighbor. Fui su vecino por muchos años. - I was his neighbor for many years. Ver and Dar preterite conjugations These two short verbs both follow the same preterite form. Notice that although these conjugations resemble endings for regular -er and -ir verbs, the first- and third-person singular preterite conjugations do not have accents. Subject ver dar yo vi vi tú viste viste él, ella, usted vio vio nosotros vimos vimos vosotros visteis visteis ellos, ellas, ustedes vieron vieron Hacer preterite conjugation Hacer is one of the most common Spanish verbs. It has an irregular form in the first-person singular conjugation of the simple present tense (yo hago), and an irregular preterite form in the third-person singular (hizo). The rest of the hacer preterite endings use the stem hic-, followed by the endings we saw for other irregular verbs in the last section. We cover this verb in full detail in our post on hacer conjugation. Subject hacer yo hice tú hiciste él, ella, usted hizo nosotros hicimos nosotros hicisteis ellos, ellas, ustedes hicieron Conclusion: Preterite tense Spanish Today's post covered everything you need to know about the Spanish simple past tense known as the preterite. We started off by asking what is the preterite tense in Spanish: el pretérito indefinido or el pasado simple. The next section looked at when do you use preterite in Spanish. For the most part, we saw that the Spanish preterite tense is used when describing past actions that have been completed, including when listing a series of past actions. Then we got into the preterite conjugations Spanish uses for regular and irregular verbs. We saw that regular verbs have just two sets of preterite Spanish endings, while most irregular verbs have a third set of preterite endings. We saw the preterite stems for some of the most important irregular preterite verbs, and then we took a closer look at five highly-irregular preterite tense conjugations: ir, ser, ver, dar, and hacer. We also included a quick review of the two simple Spanish past tenses: preterite vs imperfect, noting that the imperfect is generally used for unfinished or ongoing actions. In that section, as well as throughout the post, we provided links to some of our other detailed posts covering specific lessons that we referenced here. Through all this, you should now have a good grasp of the Spanish preterite tense: how to recognize it, when to use it, and how to apply each preterite conjugation. We encourage you to practice this Spanish past tense whenever you're speaking, and to notice it whenever you read Spanish text. For now, we'll leave you with a set of exercises to put your new preterite conjugation knowledge into practice! Spanish preterite practice exercises A lot of today's post on preterite tense Spanish focused on conjugation. Now it's time to practice using the Spanish preterite tense by applying the correct conjugations in each of these sentences. We provide the verb for each of the preterite examples in Spanish, and we're helping you out by including the stem for all of the irregular preterite verbs. If we don't mention the stem, then the verb has a regular preterite form. The answers and translations are below. 1. Yo le _____ ese libro a Claudia. (prestar) 2. Nosotros _____ al restaurante. (ir: highly irregular) 3. Tú le _____ un regalo a mi madre en su cumpleaños. (dar: highly irregular) 4. Ayer _____ en la piscina con unos amigos. (estar: estuv-) 5. No _____ muy amigas en la universidad. (ser: highly irregular) 6. No _____ nada de lo que pasaba. (entender) 7. Ella _____ toda la tarde sobre eso. (hablar) 8. No _____ lo que debía. (pagar) 9. De pequeño no _____ perro, pero sí _____ otras mascotas. (tener: tuv-; tener: tuv-) 10. Ellos _____ por mucho tiempo. (viajar) 11. Yo _____ que tenía que irme de inmediato. (sentir) 12. Eso, nosotros lo _____ entre los dos. (hacer: highly irregular) 13. Yo _____ temprano, disculpa. (salir) 14. Ustedes _____ por la ventana justo a tiempo. (mirar) 15. Open-ended question for more preterite practice: ¿Qué hiciste la semana pasada? Preterite conjugation practice: Answers 1. Yo le presté ese libro a Claudia. - I lent that book to Claudia. 2. Nosotros fuimos al restaurante. - We went to the restaurant. 3. Tú le diste un regalo a mi madre en su cumpleaños. - You gave my mom a gift on her birthday. 4. Ayer estuve en la piscina con unos amigos. - Yesterday you were at the pool with some friends. 5. No fuimos muy amigas en la universidad. - We were not good friends in college. 6. No entendí nada de lo que pasaba. - I did not understand what was happening. 7. Ella habló toda la tarde sobre eso. - She talked the entire afternoon about that. 8. No pagué lo que debía. - I didn't pay what I had to. 9. De pequeño no tuve perro, pero sí tuve otras mascotas. - As a kid I didn't have a dog, but I did have other pets. 10. Ellos viajaron por mucho tiempo. - They traveled for a long time. 11. Yo sentí que tenía que irme de inmediato. - I felt that I had to leave immediately. 12. Eso, nosotros lo hicimos entre los dos. - We did that, the two of us. 13. Yo salí temprano, disculpa. - I left early, sorry. 14. Ustedes miraron por la ventana justo a tiempo. - You looked out the window right on time. 15. What did you do last week? For completed actions, including those listed in sequence, be sure to use the Spanish preterite tense!