



RECOUNTING THE PAST

Recounting a story, incident or event is to write or talk about something, which has happened in the past.

It may be an event from your life (personal recount), a narrative, biography, diary entry or another form of description.

When describing events which have already occurred in the past, it is necessary to use past tense verbs and time expressions/words which order past events or refer to points of time in the past.

STUDY TIPS

When recounting in the past whether it writing a biography or describing a sequence of events for example, it is important to establish clearly the relationship between different past actions.

The past perfect focuses on a specific past time first and then refers back to an action, event or situation that occurred before that time.

Simple Past and Past Perfect Tenses

These notes compare simple past and past perfect use, and focus on time expressions in relation to the order or sequence of past actions, events, or situations.



Simple Past	
Forms	Examples
<p>Regular Simple Past</p> <p>Questions or Negative</p> <p>Irregular</p>	<p>Add -d or -ed to the infinitive: decided, watched, studied</p> <p>auxiliary did [not] + infinitive: Did you watch the documentary? No, I didn't watch it.</p> <p>be - was/were, dream - dreamed/dreamt, find - found, have - had, know - knew, leave - left, make - made, read - read, seek - sought, speak - spoke, strike - struck, swim - swam, teach - taught, understand - understood, write - wrote</p>
Use	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> actions that occurred at a specific time in the past; the action is completed from start to finish habitual past action; it happened for a period of time in the past 	<p>It was evident from the report that company profits increased substantially.</p> <p>I lived and worked in Sydney for two years.</p>
Expressions	Examples
<p>Referring to points of time in the past</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepositions: at, in, on yesterday, yesterday morning, yesterday evening, last month, before last, ago, earlier, in the past 	<p>Profits decreased in the first quarter.</p> <p>They cancelled classes yesterday morning. Interest rates rose last week. I saw him in class the day before last. John completed his studies two years ago. In the past, life was much simpler.</p>
Time Clauses	Pattern
<p>Order or Sequence of Past Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> as soon as before after when until once 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> time clause can occur before or after the main clause or time clause [past tense], + main clause (if the clause contains new information) [past tense] main clause [past tense] + time clause [past tense] <p>It started to rain as soon as he arrived at his destination.</p> <p>Before he arrived at the school, John rang his colleagues.</p> <p>After he got his results, he enrolled on the course.</p> <p>When John got to his seat, the film began.</p> <p>John waited until everyone left the cinema.</p> <p>Once John finished his exam, he relaxed for the rest of the day.</p>

