

## 6.3

Preterite tense of regular verbs  Tutorial

## ANTE TODO

In order to talk about events in the past, Spanish uses two simple tenses: the preterite and the imperfect. In this lesson, you will learn how to form the preterite tense, which is used to express actions or states completed in the past.

## Preterite of regular -ar, -er, and -ir verbs

	-ar verbs comprar	-er verbs vender	-ir verbs escribir	
SINGULAR FORMS	yo	compré / <i>bought</i>	vendí / <i>sold</i>	escribí / <i>wrote</i>
	tú	compraste	vendiste	escribiste
	Ud./él/ella	compró	vendió	escribió
PLURAL FORMS	nosotros/as	compramos	vendimos	escribimos
	vosotros/as	comprasteis	vendisteis	escribisteis
	Uds./ellos/ellas	compraron	vendieron	escribieron

- ▶ **¡Atención!** The **yo** and **Ud./él/ella** forms of all three conjugations have written accents on the last syllable to show that it is stressed.
- ▶ As the chart shows, the endings for regular **-er** and **-ir** verbs are identical in the preterite.



- ▶ Note that the **nosotros/as** forms of regular **-ar** and **-ir** verbs in the preterite are identical to the present tense forms. Context will help you determine which tense is being used.

En invierno **compramos** ropa.  
*In the winter, we buy clothes.*

Anoche **compramos** unos zapatos.  
*Last night we bought some shoes.*

- ▶ **-Ar** and **-er** verbs that have a stem change in the present tense are regular in the preterite. They do *not* have a stem change.

## PRESENT

## PRETERITE

<b>cerrar</b> (e:ie)	La tienda <b>cierra</b> a las seis.	La tienda <b>cerró</b> a las seis.
<b>volver</b> (o:ue)	Carlitos <b>vuelve</b> tarde.	Carlitos <b>volvió</b> tarde.
<b>jugar</b> (u:ue)	Él <b>juega</b> al fútbol.	Él <b>jugó</b> al fútbol.

- ▶ **¡Atención!** **-Ir** verbs that have a stem change in the present tense also have a stem change in the preterite.

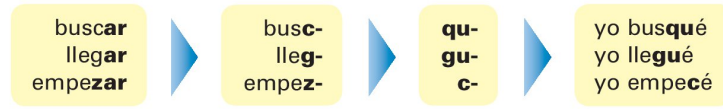
## CONSULTA

There are a few high-frequency irregular verbs in the preterite. You will learn more about them in **Estructura 9.1**, p. 310.

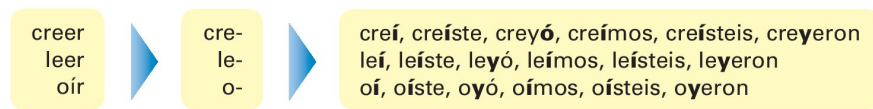
## CONSULTA

You will learn about the preterite of **-ir** stem-changing verbs in **Estructura 8.1**, p. 274.

- ▶ Verbs that end in **-car**, **-gar**, and **-zar** have a spelling change in the first person singular (**yo** form) in the preterite.



- ▶ Except for the **yo** form, all other forms of **-car**, **-gar**, and **-zar** verbs are regular in the preterite.
- ▶ Three other verbs—**creer**, **leer**, and **oír**—have spelling changes in the preterite. The **i** of the verb endings of **creer**, **leer**, and **oír** carries an accent in the **yo**, **tú**, **nosotros/as**, and **vosotros/as** forms, and changes to **y** in the **Ud./él/ella** and **Uds./ellos/ellas** forms.



- ▶ **Ver** is regular in the preterite, but none of its forms has an accent.  
**ver** → vi, viste, vio, vimos, visteis, vieron

**Words commonly used with the preterite**

<b>anoche</b>	<i>last night</i>	<b>pasado/a (adj.)</b>	<i>last; past</i>
<b>anteayer</b>	<i>the day before yesterday</i>	<b>el año pasado</b>	<i>last year</i>
<b>ayer</b>	<i>yesterday</i>	<b>la semana pasada</b>	<i>last week</i>
<b>de repente</b>	<i>suddenly</i>	<b>una vez</b>	<i>once</i>
<b>desde... hasta...</b>	<i>from... until...</i>	<b>dos veces</b>	<i>twice</i>
		<b>ya</b>	<i>already</i>

**Ayer** llegué a Santiago de Cuba.  
*Yesterday I arrived in Santiago de Cuba.*

**Anoche** oí un ruido extraño.  
*Last night I heard a strange noise.*

- ▶ **Acabar de** + [infinitive] is used to say that something has just occurred. Note that **acabar** is in the present tense in this construction.

**Acabo de comprar** una falda.  
*I just bought a skirt.*

**Acabas de ir** de compras.  
*You just went shopping.*

**recursos**

WB pp. 64–65

LM p. 35

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Lección 6

**¡INTÉNTALO!**

Provide the appropriate preterite forms of the verbs.

	<b>comer</b>	<b>salir</b>	<b>comenzar</b>	<b>leer</b>
1. ellas	<u>comieron</u>	<u>salieron</u>	<u>comenzaron</u>	<u>leyeron</u>
2. tú	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. usted	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. nosotros	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. yo	_____	_____	_____	_____