

Irregular verbs: the past participle

CEFR B1 • 20 questions • A4 / US Letter

The third form of an irregular verb, the jobs it does after have, has, had and be, and the mistakes it causes.

The rule

What the third form is

- Base form: write. Past simple: wrote. Past participle: written.
- After have, has and had, use the participle: have written, has taken, had gone.
- After be in the passive, use the participle: was written, is broken, were sent.
- The participle is not a tense. It cannot stand alone as the only verb: "I written" is wrong.
- After get meaning "become", the participle often appears: get lost, get married, get stuck.

Group A: the past form and the participle are the same

- buy, bought, bought; bring, brought, brought; think, thought, thought.
- teach, taught, taught; catch, caught, caught; send, sent, sent.
- keep, kept, kept; feel, felt, felt; sleep, slept, slept; meet, met, met.
- Once you know the past simple, you already know the participle.

Group B: three different forms

- go, went, gone; do, did, done; see, saw, seen.
- write, wrote, written; take, took, taken; give, gave, given.
- speak, spoke, spoken; break, broke, broken; choose, chose, chosen.
- These verbs cause the classic error "I have went". Learn them inside a phrase: "have gone", "have seen", "have taken".

Group C: participles ending in -en or -n

- eat, ate, eaten; fall, fell, fallen; drive, drove, driven; ride, rode, ridden; rise, rose, risen.
- The -en or -n ending is a useful signal. If you hear it, you know the form is the participle, not the past simple.
- Some participles end in -wn: know, knew, known; grow, grew, grown; throw, threw, thrown.
- A few end in -ne: do, did, done; go, went, gone; see, saw, seen.

The participle in the passive and as an adjective

- Passive: "The window was broken", "The letters were sent", "The song was sung twice".
- Adjective: a written test, a broken cup, frozen food, a well-known writer.

- The participle can describe a state or a feeling: I am interested, she was tired, they were surprised.
- Do not confuse the participle with the -ing form. A broken window is the window that someone broke; a boring film makes you bored.

Questions

Write your answer on the line under each question. Check your work with the answer key on the last page.

1. She has ___ three novels this year.

2. I ___ the film last night.

3. The bridge was ___ in 1904.

4. They have ___ their homework already.

5. Someone has ___ my bike.

6. I have never ___ sushi.

7. He had ___ before we arrived.

8. Have you ___ your key?

9. The window was ___ by the storm.

10. I have ___ this song before.

11. The leaves have ___ from the tree.

12. I have ___ to Paris twice.

13. We had ___ dinner before the guests arrived.

14. The letter was ___ by hand.

15. He has ___ his car keys again.

16. I have ___ a new coat.

17. The song was ___ by a famous singer.

18. I have ___ my phone at home.

19. I have ___ the book on the table.

20. They had ___ each other for years.

Answer key

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1. **written** — After has, use the past participle written. Write, wrote, written.
2. **saw** — Last night is finished time, so the past simple saw is correct; seen is the participle after have.
3. **built** — The passive uses the past participle built after be.
4. **done** — After have, use the participle done. Do, did, done.
5. **taken** — After has, use the past participle taken. Take, took, taken.
6. **eaten** — After have, the participle is eaten. Eat, ate, eaten.
7. **left** — After had, use the participle left; here it has the same form as the past simple.
8. **found** — Find has the same past simple and participle: found.
9. **broken** — The passive uses the past participle broken after be.
10. **heard** — The participle of hear is heard. After have, use heard.
11. **fallen** — After have, use the participle fallen. Fall, fell, fallen.
12. **been** — After have, the participle of be is been in the pattern have been to a place.
13. **eaten** — After had, use the past participle eaten.
14. **written** — The passive needs the participle written after was.
15. **lost** — Lose has the same past simple and participle: lost.
16. **bought** — Buy keeps the same past simple and past participle: bought. After have, use bought.
17. **sung** — Sing, sang, sung. The passive uses the participle sung.
18. **left** — After have, use the participle left.
19. **put** — Put never changes: base form, past simple and past participle are all put.
20. **known** — After had, use the past participle known. Know, knew, known.