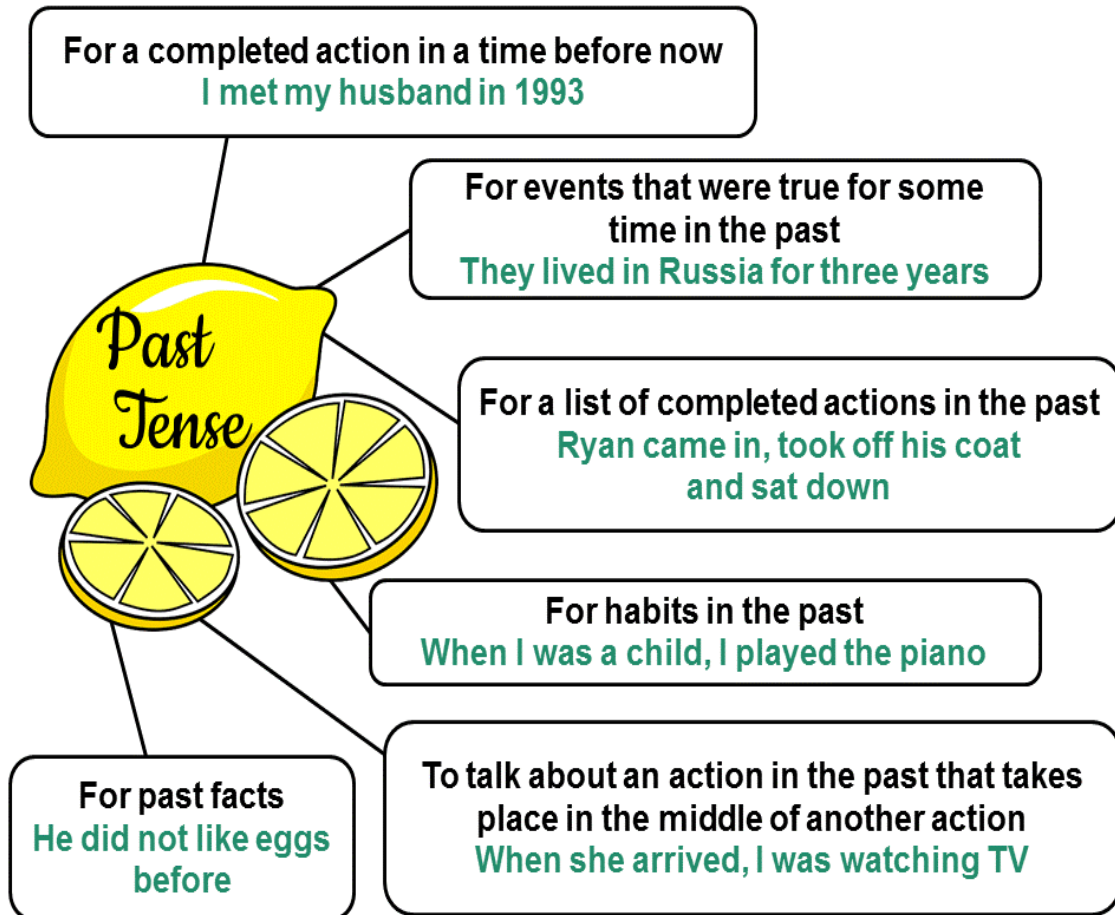
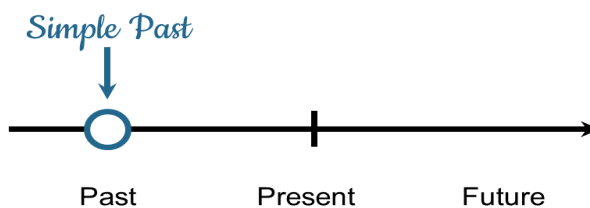


How to use the Simple Past Tense

THE USE OF SIMPLE PAST TENSE



1) For a completed action in a time before now

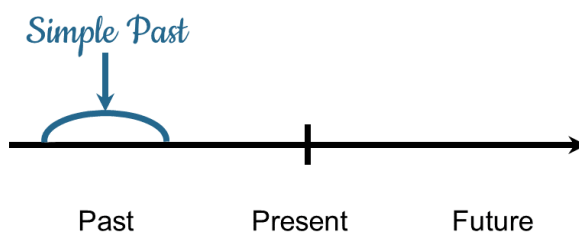


Use simple past to talk about a completed action that started and finished at a specific time in the past.

EXAMPLES

- Albert Einstein **developed** the general theory of relativity.
- I **met** my husband in 1993.
- The cat **broke** the lamp yesterday.
- Last year, I **traveled** to Canada.
- She **did not eat** anything for 2 days.
- They **played** baseball over twenty years ago.
- **Did** you **open** the door last night?
- What **did** you **do** last weekend?
- Why **didn't** you **do** your homework?

2) For events that were true for some time in the past

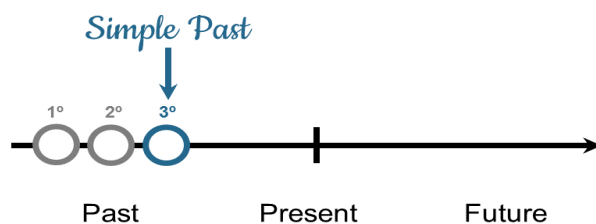


Use simple past to indicate the duration of past events.

EXAMPLES

- They **lived** in Russia for three years.
- The baby **did not cry** for five minutes.
- I **talked** on the phone for fifteen minutes.
- He **waited** for two hours.

3) For a list of completed actions in the past

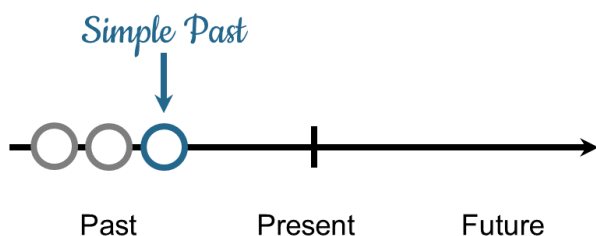


Use simple past to tell a story or a list of completed actions in the past in order to express actions which follow each other.

EXAMPLES

- Ryan **came in**, **took off** his coat and **sat down**.
- Yesterday, I **had** a very rough day. I **woke up** late so I **missed** my train to work.
- I **bought** a cup of tea and a newspaper. I **found** a chair to sit on. I **drank** my tea and **read** the newspaper.
- **Did** you **add** flour, **pour in** the milk, and then **add** the eggs?

4) For habits in the past

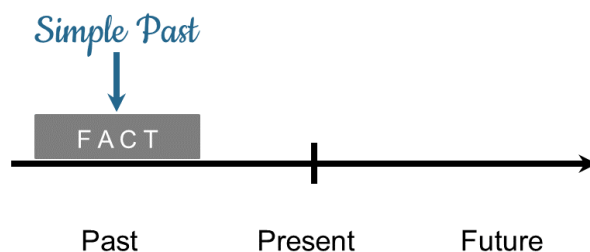


Use simple past to talk habitual or repeated actions that took place in the past.

EXAMPLES

- She **saw** him every day.
- When I was a child, I **played** the piano.
- Tom **visited** his parents every weekend.
- I **drove** to work every day.
- **Did** you **play** the violin when you were young?

5) For past facts

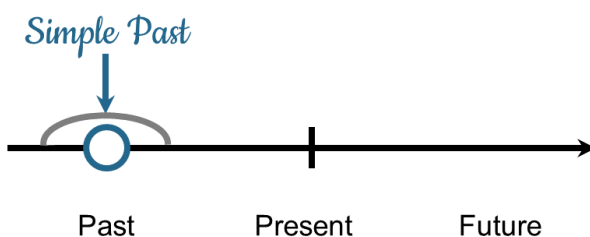


Use simple past to talk about past facts which are no longer true.

EXAMPLES

- He **did not like** eggs before.
- **Did you live** in Senegal when you were younger?

6) To talk about an action in the past that takes place in the middle of another action



Use simple past to talk about an action in the past taking place in the middle of another action.

EXAMPLES

- When she **arrived**, I was watching TV.
- They were playing volleyball on the beach when she **broke** her arm.
- I was having a bath when the phone **rang**.

Adverb placement

You can use adverbs such as: always, never, once, frequently, just, rarely, etc. with the simple past tense.

EXAMPLES

- You **always** invited me to your birthday parties.
- She **never** played volleyball in the colleague.
- I met him **once**.
- He **frequently** changed jobs.
- Did you **just** call her?
- I **just** wanted to say what I mean.
- Kevin **rarely** missed classes.