

Lesson 21: Irregular Verbs

LEARN

■ **Irregular verbs** do not add *-ed* to show the past tense. Instead, the spelling of an irregular verb changes to form the past tense. The spelling of many irregular verbs changes again when they are used with the helping verbs *has*, *have*, or *had*.

■ There are many irregular verbs. Here are ten of them.

PRESENT

I **begin** to read Aesop's fables.

PAST

I **began** to read Aesop's fables.

PAST WITH HAVE

I **have begun** to read Aesop's fables.



Present	Past	Past with <i>has, have, or had</i>
begin	began	has, have, or had begun
bring	brought	has, have, or had brought
come	came	has, have, or had come
do	did	has, have, or had done
eat	ate	has, have, or had eaten
give	gave	has, have, or had given
grow	grew	has, have, or had grown
make	made	has, have, or had made
say	said	has, have, or had said
swim	swam	has, have, or had swum

PRACTICE

A

Write the verb in parentheses that correctly completes each sentence.

1. A kind butcher had given a hungry dog some meat. (gave, give)
2. The dog brought the meat to a bridge over a river. (bring, brought)
3. Before he began to eat, the dog looked down. (began, begun)

PRACTICE A *continued*

4. In the water below the bridge, another dog swam into view. (swam, swum)
5. This dog had come to the river with meat, too. (came, come)
6. He stopped and slowly ate his meat. (ate, eaten)
7. The dog on the bridge grew greedy. (grew, grown)
8. He made a sudden move toward the meat reflected in the water. (make, made)
9. As soon as he had done that, the real meat dropped into the river. (did, done)
10. The hungry dog ate nothing that night. (ate, eaten)

B *Write the past form of the verb in parentheses to correctly complete each sentence.*

1. A tired, hungry wolf had just swum across a river. (swim)
2. A farmer's dog began barking at the wolf. (begin)
3. "I have come a long way," growled the wolf. (come)
4. "I have eaten nothing for days," he said. (eat)
5. The kind dog brought the wolf some food. (bring)
6. "You must like it here," the wolf said. (say)
7. "The farmer has done a lot for me," replied the dog. (do)
8. "What has made that mark on your neck?" the wolf asked next. (make)
9. "I have grown so fat that my chain is too tight," explained the dog. (grow)
10. "I would never have given up my freedom for a chain," the wolf said. (give)

C Evan wrote this version of an old fable called "The Fox and the Goat." He made seven mistakes with the past forms of irregular verbs. Use the proofreading marks in the box to correct the errors.

The spelling of irregular verb past tense changes in the past tense used with *has*, *have*, or *had*.

Fox had fallen into a well. He ^{swam}~~swum~~ around for a while, but he couldn't get out.

After a while Goat came along. He had ^{brought}~~brung~~ a bucket to get some water. "What are you doing down there, Fox?" Goat asked.

Fox looked serious. "Haven't you heard about the drought?" he asked.

Goat ^{gave}~~gived~~ a shrug. "What drought?" he asked.

"The water shortage has ^{grown}~~growed~~ really bad all over the country," Fox said. "In fact this may be the last water left anywhere. If I were you, Goat, I'd jump in!"

Well, the foolish goat ^{did}~~done~~ just that. As soon as Goat was in the well, Fox jumped on his back. Then he climbed up onto Goat's horns and out of the well.

"I'm so glad you ^{came}~~come~~ along," Fox called down to Goat. "You have ^{made}~~make~~ my day! But next time look before you leap!"

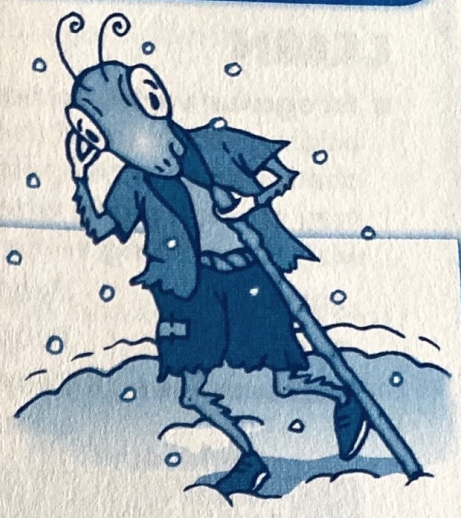
Proofreading Marks

- ^ Add
- Period
- ~ Take out
- ≡ Capital letter
- / Small letter

Look Back

Did you correct seven mistakes with irregular verbs?

D Complete the sentences in the fable below with past forms of irregular verbs. Use forms of the verbs in the chart on page 96. Then write a few sentences of your own to finish the fable. Use past forms of irregular verbs in some of your sentences.



The ants were hard workers. All summer long they had grown grain and vegetables in their large garden. Once fall came they brought the food inside and stored it. They had done everything possible to prepare for the cold months of winter.

Grasshopper, on the other hand, did very little all summer and fall. When the weather was hot he swam in the pond. When he was hungry, he ate fresh berries off the bushes.

Winter came early that year, and Grasshopper began to worry. No berries grew on the bushes now, and he had no food in his house. With his stomach growling, Grasshopper paid a visit to the ants.

“What has brought you here today, Grasshopper?”

asked one of the ants.

Story endings will vary. A sample is given.

Grasshopper said he had come to ask for help. He was sorry

that he had done so little to get ready for winter. The ants gave

Grasshopper food to eat, and they invited him to stay with them.

Proofreading Checklist

Did you use the correct past forms of the irregular verbs?