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We usually make the past tense by adding "d" or "ed" to the verb root word. Example: Hannah talked to her friend. Some verbs have irregular past tenses. Example: Hannah told him about her holiday. We do not add "d" or "ed" to the irregular past tense verb, but change the spelling. Tell becomes told not telled. We also make the past tense by using the verb "to be" and add "ing" word. Root word Present tense Past tense Future tense To be is/ am/ are was/ were will/shall Past Tense: She was talking to her friends. Was is the verb "to be". Talking is the verb root word. Present Tense: I walk to school. We make the present tense by using the verb root word or the verb "to be", am and an "ing" word, walking. Present Tense: I am walking to school. Future Tense: I will go tomorrow. We make the future tense by using the verb "to be" and the verb root word. Will is the verb "to be". Go is the verb root word. Root word Past tense Present tense Future tense Walk I walked. I walk. I will walk. Walk plus to be I was walking. I am walking. I will walk. Help I helped. I help. I will help. Learn I learned. I learn. I will learn. Learn plus to be I was learning. I am learning I will learn. Irregular verbs do not follow the spelling pattern of regular Verbs and some irregular verbs do not change their spelling at all. Root word Past tense Present tense Future tense Write I wrote. I write. I shall write. Write plus to be They were writing. They are writing. They will write. Grow It grew. It grows . It will grow. Teach She taught. She teaches . She will teach. Teach plus to be We were teaching. We are teaching. We shall teach. Think He thought. He thinks. He will think. Root word Past tense Present tense Future tense cost I cost I cost. I shall cost hit They were hitting. They are hitting. They will hit. read It read. It reads . It will read. let She let. She lets . She will let. put We were putting. We are putting. We shall put. shut He shut. He shuts. He will shut. Click here for next lesson (Past Tense Verbs) The future in English can be rather confusing. There are two future forms used in most conversations: the future with "will" and the future with "going to." The main difference between the two forms is that "going to" is used for plans and intentions made before the moment of speaking, and the "will" to speak about the future at the moment of speaking. Study these basic forms and then use the referenced resources to practice these forms. Teachers can print out these materials for use in-class, or find help with how to teach future forms, as well as the lesson plans suggested below. There are two basic future tenses used to describe things that happen in the future. Besides these two there are some other future tenses which can be started on the advanced future tenses page. The first future tense is the future with "will." Use the future with will to talk about an event in the future that you have just decided to do, for predictions and for promises. Examples: I think I'll go to that party next week.The economy will get better soon.Yes, I will marry you. Positive: Subject + will + verb (I, You, He, She, We, They) will come to the party. Negative: Subject + will + not (won't) + verb (I, You, He, She, We, They) won't have time tomorrow. Questions: Question word + will + subject + verb What will (he, she, you, we) they do? The future with "going to" is used to express events you have already planned in the future and your intentions for the future. We sometimes also use the present continuous for planned events in the near future. Examples: She's going to attend university and study to become a doctor.We're going to make the presentation next week. Positive: Subject + to be + going to + verb I am going to attend the meeting.(He, She) is going to attend the meeting.(You, We, They) are going to attend the meeting. Negative: Subject + to be + not + going to + verb I'm not going to visit Rome next year.(He, She) isn't going to visit Rome next year.(You, We, They) aren't going to visit Rome next year. Questions: (Question word) + to be + subject + going to + verb Where am I going to stay?Where is (she, he) going to stay?Where are (you, we, they) going to stay? Some activities that will help you practice: Verbs come in three tenses: past, present, and future. The past is used to describe things that have already happened (e.g., earlier in the day, yesterday, last week, three years ago). The present tense is used to describe things that are happening right now, or things that are continuous. The future tense describes things that have yet to happen (e.g., later, tomorrow, next week, next year, three years from now). The following table illustrates the proper use of verb tenses: Simple Present Simple Past Simple Future I read nearly every day. Last night, I read an entire novel. I will read as much as I can this year. Present Continuous Past Continuous Future Continuous I am reading Shakespeare at the moment. I was reading Edgar Allan Poe last night. I will be reading Nathaniel Hawthorne soon. Present Perfect Past Perfect Future Perfect I have read so many books I can't keep count. I had read at least 100 books by the time I was twelve. I will have read at least 500 books by the end of the year. Present Perfect Continuous Past Perfect Continuous Future Perfect Continuous I have been reading since I was four years old. I had been reading for at least a year before my sister learned to read. I will have been reading for at least two hours before dinner tonight. Use Grammarly for mistake-free writing. The Present Tenses Simple Present Present Perfect Present Continuous Present Perfect Continuous The Past Tenses Simple Past Past Perfect Past Continuous Past Perfect Continuous The Future Tenses Simple Future Future Perfect Future Continuous Future Perfect Continuous Are you using verb tenses correctly? Check your grammar and find out! You don't have to guess whether you're using certain words correctly or breaking grammar rules in your writing. Just copy and paste your writing and get instant feedback on whether your sentences have misspellings, punctuation errors, or any structural mistakes. If you want to learn a foreign language, you must understand how to use the various tenses, as they are an important part of grammar. There are past, future, and present tense forms in almost every language that requires users to conjugate verbs in sentences. Aside from the present tense, the German language has several verb tenses for expressing actions in the future and the past. Fortunately, most of them are very similar to the English grammar system. With this post, we want to give you a quick overview of the different German tenses and a sense of how the past, present, and future tenses look in German, how to construct them, and which helping verbs to use. Take a look: Learn languages with stories by Langster German Tenses: and Overview As stated before, there are three main tenses in German: present, past, and future. The present tense is the most simple and most commonly used tense. In terms of future tenses, there are two of them - the German language allows you to express several types of future actions. You can also express the past through three different past tenses. For some tenses, the verb itself changes, and for others, you must add an auxiliary verb. We will have a closer look at that in this article, but first, here's a quick rundown - take a look at the German tenses and see how some of them correspond to English grammar: Präsens (present tense) Perfekt (present perfect) Präteritum (simple past tense) Plusquamperfekt (past perfect) Futur I (future tense) Futur II (future perfect) The German Present Tense The present is the most common tense in the German language and probably the easiest to learn. It is formed the same way for most regular verbs, even though you will find some exceptions. Here's an example with the regular verb "schwimmen" (to swim): ich schwimme (I swim) wir schwimmen (we swim) du schwimmst (you swim, 2. person singular) ihr schwimmt (you swim, 2. person plural) er/ sie / es schwimmt (he/she/it swims) sie schwimmen (they swim) As you can see, the root of the verb "schwimm-" does not change when the verb is conjugated. You will find the endings -e, -st, -t, -en, -t, and -en for most German verbs in the present tense. Look at another example with the regular verb "laufen" (to run): ich laufe (I run) wir laufen (we run) du läufst (you run, 2. person singular) ihr lauft (you run, 2. person plural) er/sie/es läuft (he/she/it runs) sie laufen (they run) As you can see, the endings are identical to those in the first example. If you memorize them, you will be able to conjugate most of the verbs in the present tense. Nevertheless, you might have noticed that the verb's root has changed in the second example. This happens when you conjugate several German verbs known as "strong verbs" or "irregular verbs." Some German irregular verbs are for example "schlafen" (to sleep), "essen" (to eat), and "sehen" (to see). Past Tense in German German past tenses can be a little complicated - so we will talk about them in more detail in a future article. For now, let's go over the different past tenses in German and find out which one you should use when. In German, like in English, there are several forms of the past tense. There is the simple past tense called "Präteritum" (sometimes called the "Imperfect tense"), the present perfect, which is "Perfekt," and the past perfect, which they call "Plusquamperfekt" in German. Just like in English, German speakers frequently use the "Perfekt" form to describe past actions. On the other hand, you will see the "Präteritum," equivalent to the simple past, mostly in written language. What to Know about the German Präteritum? As previously stated, the "Präteritum" may be the same past form as the simple past - it describes actions that occurred in the past. Nevertheless, in spoken German, you will only use this past form with auxiliary and modal verbs, like for example "wollen" (to want) or "können" (to can). Native speakers primarily use the "Präteritum" (simple past) in written German and prefer the "Perfekt" (present perfect tense) to discuss past events. This has not always been the case, but it has been changing for several decades. When listening to Germans talk about past actions, you'll notice a few German verbs in "Präteritum" will be others in "Perfekt." Regular and irregular verbs change differently in the German simple past tense, and there are many exceptions. Don't worry - there's plenty of time to perfect our understanding of the German simple past. Let's keep going for now. What Does the German Present Perfect Tense Look like? As we explained above, Germans mostly use the "Perfekt" when they talk about actions in the past. In this context, you will repeatedly hear the verb "haben" (to have). And you probably have no idea how often you can use this word in one sentence. This is so because just like in English, "haben" is an auxiliary verb (or a helping verb) required to construct the German Perfekt tense. To do so, you conjugate the verb "haben" (to have) and then add the verb in its participle form. Consider the following example: I have made > Ich habe gemacht You can see that the present perfect structure is the same in German and in English, even though you might not know how to build the past participle of a German verb yet. As you can see in the example, the German past participle is always at the end of the phrase. What is the "Plusquamperfekt?" This super large and complicated German word is the equivalent to the past perfect tense in the English language. In German, you use this tense when you have already spoken about past actions in the present perfect or simple past and want to mention something that happened even before. Imagine that with the past perfect or Plusquamperfekt, you can enter a deeper level of the past. Look at the following example: The sentence shows that two actions happened in the past, but the first action, which is buying a present, happened before the other one. You can see that the English and the German grammar work similarly here. Like in the "Perfekt," you need the helping verb "haben" (to have) and the participle of the verb you want to use to create this tense. The only difference is that you should put the auxiliary verb in its simple past form. As we mentioned before, the participle stands at the end of the German sentence. German Future Tenses The last tenses we will address today are the future tenses. Like in the English language, there are two ways to talk about future actions in German. The first and most common one is the regular "future tense," which they call "Futur I" in German. In English, you use "will" as a helping verb combined with an infinitive to express that something will happen in the future. In German, you have the same grammar structure with a helping verb and infinitive, and in place of the English "will," you use the verb "werden." An example: You can see how similar the future tense in English and German works. The only difference is the position of the infinitive, which in the German phrase stands at the end. "Future Perfect" As the Second Future Tense The second future tense is the "future perfect," called "Futur II" in German. You can use it to talk about an action that will be accomplished in the future. Here's an example: The phrase is more complicated but still similar in German and English. Besides "werden" (will), you need the infinitive "haben" (have) and the participle of the verb that you want to talk about. A Short Summary We hope that now you have a basic understanding of the way German tenses work - and will have a chance to practice them soon. Don't hesitate to speak German more - even if you're not fluent now, if you practice enough, you will master the tricky German grammar pretty quickly. Remember to concentrate on one tense at a time and be patient with all of the exceptions. The German simple past tense can be challenging in particular, but you'll get there. It can help to practice with an application such as the Langster app, where you can learn German grammar and vocabulary through short stories. We wish you the best of luck and invite you to check more articles about German on our blog.





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