

Irregular Past Tense

It is very important that your child is using Regular past tense correctly before starting this work.

Irregular past tense verbs tell us what has happened. They do not have 'ed' endings but change completely. This makes learning these words even trickier.

When your child is first learning the past tense rule, they will keep using 'ed', e.g. "Mummy, I caught the ball". Some children may need some extra help with learning these irregular past tense words.

Here is a list of common words that change completely when they happen in the past.

catch / caught	sing / sang	drink / drank
teach / taught	take / took	eat / ate
fight / fought	rise / rose	bend / bent
bring / brought	wake / woke	think / thought
throw / threw	drive / drove	give / gave
blow / blew	ring / rang	run / ran
draw / drew	get / got	choose / chose
win / won	write / wrote	sell / sold
fly / flew	dig / dug	know / knew

How can I help my child with understanding and using irregular past tense?

Your child will first need to understand that irregular past tense words are all different.

Explain to your child that when something has happened, we usually put an 'ed' sound on the end. e.g. "yesterday, the man climbed the ladder." However some words change completely.

- Talk to your child about what they did yesterday or earlier today. Tell them what you did; "I drove to the shop and bought some food for dinner."
- Give your child lots of praise when they remember to use the present tense e.g. "That's right; yesterday you won the running race."
- Make up a story e.g. going to the park, "They ran to the swings and sang a song."
- Play 'Simon Says' games to carry out a range of actions. These could include catch, blow, sing, run, throw, bend down
- When your child has completed the action, ask them "What did you do?" The child should say "I caught the ball". Don't worry if they don't, just repeat the word back to them "Yes, you caught the ball". Let them have a go at being 'Simon'.
- When looking at books talk about things that happened. e.g. "the man drove the car to the café where he ate a sandwich and drank some juice."
- When your child has completed an activity, e.g. drawing, encourage the child to go and tell another adult what they did.
- Print off and cut out action pictures from magazines, newspapers or catalogues. You can use them to play pairs, snap or lotto games. Make sure you say the word every time you or your child put down or pick up a card, e.g. "the girl caught the ball"
- Skittles: Place a picture under each skittle. Take turns to roll the ball and knock the skittles down. You and your child say what has happened in the pictures under each skittle that is knocked down.
- Bean bag game: Lay the pictures face down, on the floor. Take turns to throw a beanbag on-to the pictures. Talk about the picture you land on. e.g. "this man dug a hole".
- Put the pictures in a pile and play any board game. Take turns to turn over a card and make a sentence, e.g. "the wind blew the trees". When you use the correct verb you roll the dice and take a turn on the board game.

Self Correction

When your child becomes more familiar with using present tense verbs:

- Give your child choices "Do you mean she bought it or she buyed it?"
- Encourage your child to monitor and self correct "He blowed, does that sound right?"

