

3 Irregular Verbs

Basics about Irregular Verbs

Most English verbs are **regular**. That is, they form their past tense and past participle by adding *-ed* or *-d* to the basic form, as shown here:

Basic Form	Past Tense	Past Participle
ask	asked	asked
raise	raised	raised

Some English verbs are **irregular**. They do not form their past tense and past participle by adding *-ed* or *-d* to the basic form of the verb. Instead, their past tenses and past participles are formed in other ways. Here are some of the most common irregular verbs.

Basic Form	Past Tense	Past Participle	Basic Form	Past Tense	Past Participle
become	became	become	go	went	gone
begin	began	begun	grow	grew	grown
break	broke	broken	have	had	had
bring	brought	brought	hide	hid	hidden
catch	caught	caught	is	was	been
choose	chose	chosen	keep	kept	kept
come	came	come	know	knew	known
do	did	done	leave	left	left
drink	drank	drunk	read	read	read
drive	drove	driven	see	saw	seen
eat	ate	eaten	shake	shook	shaken
feel	felt	felt	spend	spent	spent
find	found	found	take	took	taken
forget	forgot	forgotten	tell	told	told
get	got	got, gotten	write	wrote	written
give	gave	given			

A word about helping verbs Sometimes the verb of a sentence consists of more than one word. In these cases, the main verb will be joined by one or more **helping verbs**. Look at the following sentence:

I **should have gone** to bed earlier last night.

In this sentence, the main verb is *gone*. The helping verbs are *should* and *have*. Other common helping verbs include *be*, *can*, *could*, *do*, *has*, *may*, *must*, *will*, and *would*.

When you use the above chart, keep these two points in mind:

- 1 If your sentence does **not** have a helping verb, choose the past tense form.
I **ate** a bacon, lettuce, and tomato sandwich.
- 2 If the sentence **does have** a helping verb, choose the past participle.
I **had eaten** a bacon, lettuce, and tomato sandwich.

NOTE If you think a verb is irregular, and it is not in the above list, look it up in your dictionary. If it is irregular, the principal parts will be listed. See “Dictionary Use,” page •••.

Understanding Irregular Verbs

In the following passage about college student Zamil Ortiz, **five** mistakes in irregular verbs are underlined. The correct forms of the verbs are then shown in the spaces below.

¹During her first semester at college, Zamil becomed discouraged. ²The workload nearly drived her crazy! ³She had always did well in high school. ⁴But at college, everything feeled so new and strange. ⁵She worried that she had taked on too big a job.



1. became
2. drove
3. done
4. felt
5. taken

Check Your Understanding

Underline the **five** mistakes in irregular verbs. Then write the correct form of the verbs in the spaces provided.



¹Zamil knowed she needed to do something. ²She decided to talk to her instructors. ³She telled them where she was having problems, and they gived her advice. ⁴She worked hard and growed more confident. ⁵By the end of her freshman year, she felt she had begunned to win at the college game.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

A Note on Three Problem Verbs

Three common irregular verbs that confuse many writers are *be*, *do*, and *have*. Here are the correct present tense and past tense forms of these three verbs.

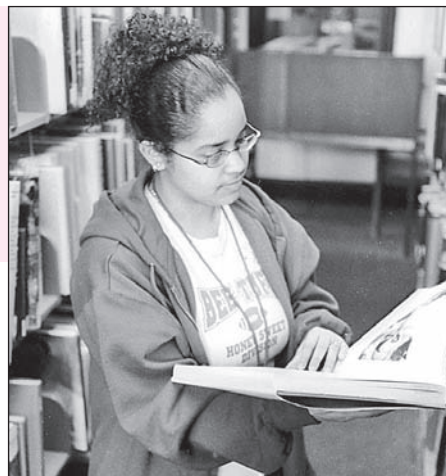
	Present Tense		Past Tense	
Be	I am	we are	I was	we were
	you are	you are	you were	you were
	he, she, it is	they are	he, she, it was	they were
Do	I do	we do	I did	we did
	you do	you do	you did	you did
	he, she, it does	they do	he, she, it did	they did
Have	I have	we have	I had	we had
	you have	you have	you had	you had
	he, she, it has	they have	he, she, it had	they had

Irregular Verbs: PRACTICE 1

Underline the mistakes in irregular verbs. Then write the correct form of the verbs in the spaces provided.

¹Zamil taked an art class that she liked very much. ²While she was taking the class, she spended hours in the library, looking through art books. ³Here she has choosed a book about African art.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



¹When you can find the book you want in the library, it's great. ²But sometimes that doesn't happen. ³Sometimes the last person who borrowed it never brought it back. ⁴Maybe he or she just forgot to return it. ⁵Maybe the person moved away and kept it. ⁶In any case, books sometimes do disappear from the library forever.

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____



¹Zamil doesn't always eat in the cafeteria. ²Today she ate there because there were grilled cheese sandwiches. ³She likes them so much that she took two. ⁴When her friends saw her sit down, they came over to join her for lunch.

7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Irregular Verbs: PRACTICE 2

For each sentence below, fill in the correct form of the verb in the space provided.

eaten, ate

1. The alligators were very hungry. They _____ everything the keeper gave them within two minutes.

done, did

2. Sue was told she must not leave the house until she had _____ all of her chores.

spent, spent

3. Jose _____ all his money on fast food and video games.

went, gone

4. My boss was very unhappy when I suddenly quit my job because he had _____ to a lot of trouble to train me.

drove, drove

5. I _____ over three hundred miles through Arizona before I reached Flagstaff.

caught, caught

6. The left fielder _____ the fly ball that resulted in his team winning the World Series.

brought, brought

7. They _____ their daughter to see Santa Claus on the first day he was at the mall.

broke, broken

8. Much to my embarrassment, my son _____ the hand off the most expensive doll in the shop.

wrote, wrote

9. He _____ an angry letter to his ex-girlfriend and regretted it as soon as it was in the mailbox.

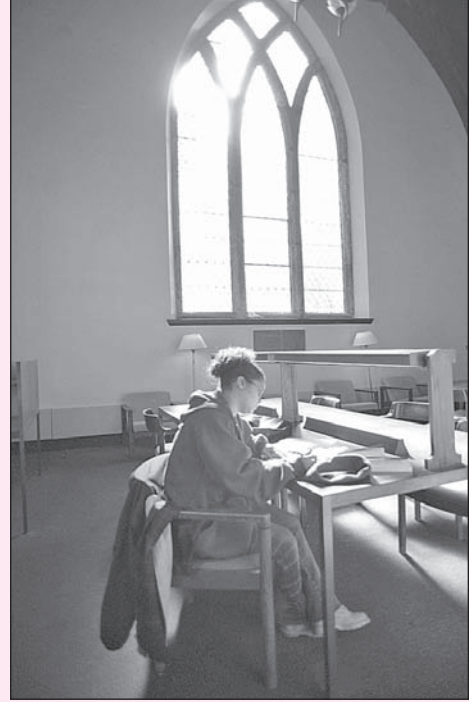
chose, chose

10. The overweight man _____ to walk to work, rather than drive, to get an hour's exercise done.

Irregular Verbs: PRACTICE 3

The following passage contains **ten** errors in irregular verbs. Cross out each error. Then, in the space provided, write the correct form of each verb.

¹Zamil readed and writed a lot in high school. ²Once she becomed a student at Haverford College, she finded that reading and writing were even more important in college. ³She also learned that reading in her dorm room could be difficult. ⁴Friends often camed by to visit her when she needed to be working. ⁵At other times, she growed tired working in her room. ⁶She even catched herself falling asleep. ⁷She knowed that she needed to find other places to do her school work. ⁸She taked her books to the library and tried studying there. ⁹The library quickly became one of her favorite places. ¹⁰It was beautiful and quiet. ¹¹She getted her work done more easily there. ¹²Now, you can often find Zamil hard at work in the library.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

Score: (Number right) _____ x 10 = _____ %

Irregular Verbs: TEST 1

Each of the items below contains **two** errors in irregular verbs. Find the errors and cross them out. Then, in the spaces provided, write the correct forms of the verbs.

NOTE To help you master irregular verbs, explanations are given for five of the sentences.

1. Once I seen a hawk dive from the top of a tall tree to capture a field mouse. The bird caught the tiny creature in its claws and flew back to its perch.

a. _____

b. _____

Use the past tense of the irregular verb *see* for the first correction needed.

2. I always have gave my little children household chores. This month, my son sets the table, and my daughter does some dusting. Last month, they both done some weeding in the backyard.

a. _____

b. _____

Use the past participle of the irregular verb *give* for the first correction needed.

3. My aunt be a big fan of Elvis Presley. Every time she hears “Love Me Tender,” she becomes misty-eyed. Last year, she and my uncle gone on a trip to Graceland, Elvis’s home. While there, she bought “Elvis Lives” bumper stickers for herself and all her friends.

a. _____

b. _____

Use the past tense of the irregular verb *go* for the second correction needed.

4. It is dangerous to shake a baby. Many babies who have been shook have suffered brain injuries. The adults who done this seldom meant to cause such harm.

a. _____

b. _____

Use the past tense of the irregular verb *do* for the second correction needed.

5. I was determined not to forget anything I needed at the store. I sat down and writed a long shopping list. Feeling proud of myself, I went to the store. Then I realized I had forgotted the list.

a. _____

b. _____

Use the past participle of the irregular verb *forget* for the second correction needed.

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

Score: (Number right) _____ x 10 = _____ %

Irregular Verbs: TEST 2

Each of the items below contains **two** errors in irregular verbs. Find the errors and cross them out. Then, in the spaces provided, write the correct forms of the verbs.

1. “Whatever becomed of the boy I sat next to in high school history class?” I asked my best friend. She told me that he had growed a beard and joined a cult.

a. _____

b. _____

2. My uncle was a generous man. He gived me a rifle for my eighteenth birthday. I felt ashamed because I had not even gave him a card for his birthday.

a. _____

b. _____

3. Every one of my friends had saw the musical *A Lion King*, but no one be sure who played each part because of the stage makeup and costumes.

a. _____

b. _____

4. The man told his doctor that he only drinks fruit juice now. However, he admitted that he drank a lot of wine over the previous twenty years. When all the wine in the house was drank, he would sometimes switch to whisky.

a. _____

b. _____

5. It taked a long time for me to finish my degree. However, I always knowed that I would finish eventually.

a. _____

b. _____

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

Score: (Number right) _____ x 10 = _____ %

Irregular Verbs: TEST 3

Each of the following passages contains **five** errors in irregular verbs. Cross out each error. Then, in the space provided, write the correct form of each verb.

¹Think of a time when you began something new in your life. ²Maybe it was a new school, a new job, or even a new personal relationship. ³Try to remember how you feeled at first. ⁴Were you nervous? ⁵Or were you confident you knowed what you were doing? ⁶Zamil had did very well in high school. ⁷But she finded out that college was very different. ⁸Fortunately, Zamil was willing to do the hard work of “learning the ropes” at college. ⁹Now she feels much more at home.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

¹“Who taked my food?” ²The students living on the second floor of Smith Hall getted used to hearing that. ³There was just one refrigerator on the floor, and many of them keepped snacks in it. ⁴But lately, some of that food had been disappearing. ⁵Nobody ever seed who took it. ⁶Some students lefted notes for the thief, asking her to stop. ⁷But nothing helped. ⁸Finally some students placed dead mice in brown paper bags and put them in the refrigerator. ⁹Two were stolen that night. ¹⁰After that, the thief never struck again.

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

Score: (Number right) _____ x 10 = _____ %

Irregular Verbs: TEST 4

Read each sentence below. Then choose the correct verb, fill in the blank, and write the letter of your choice in the space provided in the margin.

- _____ 1. The boss _____ his daughter to the office on Bring Your Child to Work Day.
a. bring **c.** brought
b. brang **d.** bringed
- _____ 2. Loretta _____ the flu from the kindergartners she taught who were all sick that week.
a. catched **c.** caught
b. catch **d.** caughted
- _____ 3. We _____ the employees they would all be laid off, but none of them believed us.
a. tell **c.** told
b. telled **d.** tolded
- _____ 4. Mikhael has _____ on vacation to Baja every summer for the last twenty years.
a. went **c.** go
b. wented **d.** gone
- _____ 5. The newlyweds loved being with each other so much that they even _____ to work together.
a. drived **c.** driven
b. drove **d.** droved
- _____ 6. Just before arriving at the airport, Kendra exclaimed, "I can't go to London; I _____ my passport!"
a. forget **c.** forgotted
b. forgotten **d.** forgot

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

Score: (Number right) _____ x 10 = _____ %

- _____ 7. The seventy-five-year-old actress has just _____ her memoirs.
a. writed c. written
b. wrote d. write
- _____ 8. She was so absent minded that she _____ the book from the library without checking it out.
a. take c. taked
b. took d. tooked
- _____ 9. I wish we had _____ my aunt last Christmas because she died soon after New Years.
a. seen c. seed
b. saw d. sawed
- _____ 10. If I had _____ you were in town last week, you could have stayed with us.
a. knew c. knowed
b. known d. knewed

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

Score: (Number right) _____ x 10 = _____ %

Irregular Verbs: TEST 5

Read each sentence below. Then choose the correct verb, fill in the blank, and write the letter of your choice in the space provided in the margin.

- _____ 1. Last July, Ivan _____ an American citizen.
 a. become c. became
 b. becomed d. becamed
- _____ 2. The tiny, cute puppy has _____ into a ninety-pound monster.
 a. grow c. grewed
 b. grew d. grown
- _____ 3. Last night, Natalie _____ nearly four hours on homework.
 a. spent c. spended
 b. spends d. spend
- _____ 4. Most people who traveled to Alaska during the Gold Rush never _____ anything.
 a. finded c. find
 b. founded d. found
- _____ 5. My father has _____ everything he can to keep our car in good shape.
 a. did c. do
 b. done d. doned
- _____ 6. I had _____ to do the assignment.
 a. forget c. forgot
 b. forgotten d. forgetted
- _____ 7. My family had _____ the whole pie before I got home.
 a. eat c. eaten
 b. ate d. eated
- _____ 8. The millionaire businessman _____ all his money to charity.
 a. left c. lefted
 b. leave d. leaved
- _____ 9. Juanita has _____ the color gray for her bridesmaids' dresses.
 a. chose c. choose
 b. choosed d. chosen
- _____ 10. The story was about a man who foolishly _____ some money in an old trash barrel.
 a. hide c. hided
 b. hid d. hides