

Prétérit simple ou BE + ING ?

L'essentiel :

Le prétérit sert à exprimer une action **passée, révolue, sans lien avec le présent et dont la date est précisée ou pas**. Il faut distinguer le prétérit simple du prétérit be + ING (on trouve parfois le nom prétérit continu)

✓ Le prétérit simple

C'est le temps du récit. En français, on le traduit souvent par le passé composé.

• Forme affirmative

— Verbes réguliers : base verbale + suffixe **-ed** à toutes les personnes.

*To play: I / you / he... **played** tennis yesterday.*

— Verbes irréguliers : le verbe se transforme.

*To go: I / you / he... **went** to the cinema last weekend.*

• Forme interrogative

Verbes réguliers et irréguliers : **did + sujet + base verbale** à toutes les personnes. **Did you sleep well last night?**

• Forme négative

Verbes réguliers et irréguliers : sujet + **didn't + base verbale** à toutes les personnes. **I didn't go to Italy last summer.**

Remarques :

— Parmi les nombreuses expressions qui situent l'action passée dans le temps (*yesterday, last week...*), il faut retenir **ago** qui traduit « il y a + une durée » et **for** « pendant ». *She phoned me ten minutes ago.* Elle m'a téléphoné il y a dix minutes.

— Dans les réponses courtes, on reprendra uniquement l'auxiliaire.

Did you see him yesterday? Yes, I did. / No I didn't.

✓ Le prétérit « be + ING »

Le prétérit continu indique qu'une action était en cours à un moment du passé. Il se construit avec l'auxiliaire *be* au prétérit (**was, were**) + base verbale + **-ing**.

What were you doing yesterday at six? Que faisais-tu hier à six heures ?

I was reading a good book. I wasn't watching TV. Je lisais un bon livre. Je ne regardais pas la télévision.

Les deux prétérits peuvent aussi se retrouver dans une même phrase :

I was having a bath when he phoned. Je prenais un bain quand il a téléphoné.

I met him while I was doing the shopping. Je l'ai rencontré pendant que je faisais les courses.

Exercices

Ex 1 : Complétez les phrases en employant les mots suivants : was - were - do - did - didn't - doing.

- What you at ten yesterday? Sleeping?
- Why you phone? I so worried.
- I always my homework after school. Yesterday it for two hours.
- Who told you that? My mother
- The children reading while their mother the washing-up.
- They watch TV last night. you know where they last week?

Ex2 Répondez aux questions suivantes comme dans l'exemple ci-dessous.

Exemple : *Did you buy a newspaper? (a magazine) → No, I didn't. I bought a magazine.*

- | | |
|---|---|
| -Did you eat all the sweets? (only two) | -Did she see the film in London? (in Paris) |
| -Did you learn English at school? (at home) | -Did he speak Spanish fluently? (Italian) |
| -Were you happy? (sad) | -Did you pay for the dinner? (for the play) |
| -Did she meet you in the street? (at a party) | -Was it raining when he arrived? (to snow) |

Ex3 Reformulez les phrases suivante sen utilisant ago :

- I left my country **in 1990**.
- It's already October. They got married **in June**
- We visited her last week**.
- Molière died in the 17th Century**.
- It's five o'clock. I think she called me **at half past three**.

Ex4 Traduisez.

- Je suppose que tes parents t'attendaient à la gare à dix heures hier.
- Stacey a vécu à San Francisco pendant plus d'un an.
- Nous prenions le café dans le jardin quand il s'est mis à pleuvoir.
- Shakespeare est né en 1564 et mort en 1616.
- J'espère que je ne vous ai pas réveillé.
- Il a été malade il y a deux mois.
- Il y a cent ans, les gens n'allaient pas au cinéma.

Compréhension écrite.

What a holiday!

Jenny's on the phone. She's telling her friend Vivian about her two-week holiday in Egypt.

VIVIAN - When did you come back?

JENNY - Three days ago.

VIVIAN - How was your trip then?

JENNY - Well, to tell you the truth, everything went wrong as soon as I got on the plane. The air hostess gave me a seat next to a horrible man who spent his time sleeping and snoring. Then, when I arrived at my hotel, the receptionist told me there was no room available for me. I didn't know what to do. I was thinking of going back home immediately when she finally found me one. On the following day, something terrible happened to me at the Pyramid of Cheops.

VIVIAN - Tell me!

JENNY - Well, I was quietly reading my guidebook at the foot of the Pyramid when a stone fell off and almost killed me. I was so scared!

VIVIAN - I can imagine! Did you visit the Pyramid?

JENNY - Yes, I did, I mean, I tried to. The place was so crowded and so hot that it took me half an hour to come down. I almost fainted! Oh! Vivian, I'm so glad to be back!



Répondez aux questions suivantes.

1. When did Jenny come back from Egypt?
2. How long did her trip last?
3. Did she enjoy it?
4. What went wrong on the plane?
5. Why was she thinking of going back home when she arrived at the hotel?
6. Did she stay in that hotel?
7. What happened when she was at the Pyramid of Cheops?
8. What was she doing at that very moment?
9. How did she react?
10. What made her visit inside the Pyramid difficult?

Vocabulaire:

To tell you the truth = à vrai dire

As soon as = dès que

To go wrong = aller de travers

To book a room = réserver une chambre

To snore = ronfler

Available = disponible

Scared = effrayé

To faint = s'évanouir