

Preterite vs Imperfect

Preterite, which you have already studied, is used for the following:

- Started and completed action
- List of events
- Absolute verbs (to be born, to die)

Imperfect tense is used for the following:

- Age in the past
- Habitual action
- Describing the weather
- “Setting the scene”

Preterite endings

Imperfect endings

-AR	-ER/-IR	IR/SER	-AR	-ER/-IR	SER
-é	-í	fui	-aba	-ía	era
-aste	-iste	fuiste	-abas	-ías	eras
-ó	-ió	fue	-aba	-ía	era
-amos	-imos	fuimos	-ábamos	-íamos	éramos
-asteis	-isteis	fuisteis	-abais	-íais	erais
-aron	-ieron	fueron	-aban	-ían	eran

- 1) Juan was walking when he ate the taco.
- 2) When María was young, she used to eat tacos.
- 3) I washed the car, straightened my room, ate the taco, and finished my homework.
- 4) He was born (nacer) in June and he died (morir – u ***) in September.
- 5) They played the game yesterday.
- 6) When I was young, my brothers and I spent time at the house of my grandparents. My grandmother used to make cookies, and we played basketball on the patio. My grandfather always read stories. My grandparents did not work.
- 7) She used to go to the park on Saturdays.