

STANDARD FORMS: IRREGULAR VERBS

Irregular English verbs do not simply add *-d* or *-ed* for the past. Instead, they use some other change in form: *see-saw, buy-bought, break-broke*. And many of them have an *additional* separate form for use after the auxiliaries *have (has, had)* and *be (am, is, are, was, were)*: *have seen, was broken*. We call the combined forms using *have* or *had* the **perfect** forms of a verb. Often the perfect tells us about something recently completed. (*Seen* and *broken* are **past participles**.)

Present:	Jean <i>grows</i> her own flowers.	They <i>go</i> to church regularly.
Past:	The Indians <i>grew</i> corn.	We all <i>went</i> together.
Perfect:	Manuel <i>has grown</i> a beard.	They <i>have gone</i> home for the day.

- (1) Study the standard forms for the following irregular verbs. Pay special attention to verbs like *grow, know, throw, run, eat*.

begin	began	have begun	fly	flew	have flown
bend	bent	have bent	freeze	froze	have frozen
blow	blew	have blown	go	went	have gone
break	broke	have broken	grow	grew	have grown
bring	brought	have brought	know	knew	have known
burst	burst	have burst	lead	led	have led
choose	chose	have chosen	run	ran	have run
come	came	have come	see	saw	have seen
deal	dealt	have dealt	send	sent	have sent
dig	dug	have dug	sing	sang	have sung
do	did	have done	speak	spoke	have spoken
draw	drew	have drawn	swim	swam	have swum
drink	drank	have drunk	take	took	have taken
drive	drove	have driven	throw	threw	have thrown
eat	ate	have eaten	wear	wore	have worn
fall	fell	have fallen	write	wrote	have written

- (2) The most irregular English verb is *be (me, is, are, was, were, been)*. Use *is* only for third person singular: he *is*, she *is*, it *is*. Use *was* only after *I* and for third person singular in the past.

Present: I *am* your friend.
He *is* ill. She *is* here. It *is* cold. Your friend *is* right.
You *are* right. We *are* wrong. They *are* out. Your friends *are* right.

Past: I *was* your friend. He *was* right. She *was* wrong. The prices *was* right.
You *were* wrong. We *were* right. They *were* angry. The prices *were* high.

(3) A few verbs have doubles that are just close enough to be confusing. *Lie-lay-lain* shows that somebody or something is situated somewhere, usually reclining or stretched out. The same forms are used in the combination *lie* down.

Present: On hot days, the animals *lie* in the shade. (S—V) It's too early to *lie* down.

Past: A letter *lay* on the floor. The dog *lay* down on the rug.

Perfect: Someone has *lain* on my bed. You should have *lain* down earlier.

Not to be confused with *lie—lay—lain* is *lay—laid—laid*. It shows that somebody is placing something somewhere. Use it when you can substitute *place* or *put*.

Present: I *lay* (or *place*) my cards on the table. (S—V—O)

Past: The plumber *laid* (or *put*) down his tools.

Perfect: I have *laid* (or *put*) aside some books for you.

Sit—sat—sat shows that someone is seated. *Sit* down follows the same scheme. *Set—set—set* belongs with *lay—laid—laid* as a possible substitute for *place* or *put*. You, yourself, *sit* or *sit* down. You *set*, or *set* down, something else. (Exception: The sun *sets*.)

Sit: He still *sits* where he *sat* down. He has *sat* there for hours. (S—V)

Set: When you have *set* the alarm, *set* it down by the cot I *set* up. (S—V—O)

For each of the following verbs, fill in *three* missing forms in the following order: the *-s* form for third person, present; the past form that goes after *have* or *be*.

1. Things really *grow* out here. My uncle _____ flowers. Last year, he _____ zinnias and other annuals. He had _____ mostly tulips the year before.
2. Mechanics *know* cars. Uncle Time _____ everything. Stone Age tribes _____ fire. I have _____ for years.
3. The lights *go* out. Jim _____ to school. Last spring, he _____ to Mexico. She had _____ upstairs.
4. Brides *wear* white. The groom _____ black. The Romans _____ togas. He has _____ a tuxedo only once.

5. Rocks *break* glass. Glass _____ easily. The story _____ my heart. They have _____ the contract.
6. Boys *throw* rocks. A bouncer _____ out drunks. Last winter, we _____ snowballs. She has _____ him out.
7. Authors *write* books. A columnist _____ a column. Shakespeare _____ plays. His plays were _____ in England.
8. Rabbits *run*. His uncle _____ a casino. The *Titanic* _____ into trouble. Nobody had yet _____ a four-minute mile.
9. Austrians *speak* German. Herman _____ Portuguese. The Romans _____ Latin. The oracle had _____.
10. (Fill in the appropriate forms of *be*.) The train will *be* on time. He _____ unemployed at the present, but they _____ working. Kennedy _____ killed, and several other people _____ wounded. The trip has _____ a pleasure.