

Preterite vs. Imperfect

- Use both tenses to talk about the past
- Every event theoretically has three aspects:
 1. A beginning aspect (Preterite)
 2. A middle aspect - imperfect aspect (was/were verb+ing) (imperfect)
 3. An end aspect (Preterite)
- Use it to talk about something that happened (preterite) while something else was going on (imperfect)
-ejemplo: Mientras yo caminaba, vi un pájaro bonito.

Preterite →

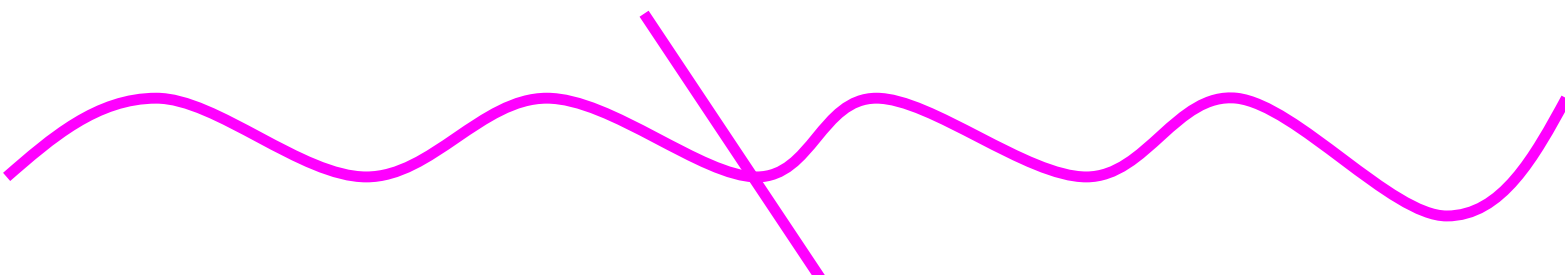
- Is used for specific actions in the past that are completed.
-ejemplo: Ana habló con su amiga.
- Is used for actions that are seen as single events.
- Is used for actions that are seen as part of a chain of events/sequence of actions.
- Is used to state the beginning or the end of an action.
- Is used when specific actions took place/ definite period of time.

Imperfect →

- Is used for actions in the past that are not seen as completed (no definite beginning or end).
- Is used to talk about a indefinite period of time (in general).
- Is used for actions that were repeated habitually.
- Is used for actions that “set the stage” for another past action.
- Is used for telling time.
- Is used for stating one's age.
- ** Was-ing and were-ing **actions/ Used to
- Description: WALT-MEP: weather, age, location, time, and to describe a person mentally, emotionally and physically.

*When both tenses occur in the same sentence or paragraph, the preterite tells what happened (main action) and the imperfect tells (circumstances).

Ejemplo: Hacía mucho calor cuando fui a Florida.
(Imperfect) (Preterite)



Preterite

Imperfect

****Think of the imperfect as an ongoing action and the preterite as an action that cuts/interrupts it.**

Some phrases that are used with the preterite are:

- ayer
- anteayer
- anoche
- entonces
- la semana pasada
- el mes pasado
- el año pasado
- una vez
- hace dos días, años
- ayer por la mañana

Some phrases that are used with the imperfect are:

- a menudo
 - a veces
 - cada día, mes, año
 - con frecuencia
 - frecuentemente
 - generalmente
 - mucho
 - muchas veces
 - nunca
 - siempre
 - todas las semanas
 - todos los días
 - todo el tiempo
 - varias veces
 - de vez en cuando
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