

Past Simple: Negative Sentences

Grammar Lesson, Examples & 30 Practice Questions

Past Simple: Negative Sentences

We use the **past simple** to talk about things that happened in the past — things that are finished and done. In this lesson, we learn how to make **past simple negative sentences**. A negative sentence tells us something that did *not* happen.

Look at these simple examples:

- ✓ I played football yesterday.
- ✓ She watched TV last night.
- ✓ They ate pizza for dinner.

Now look at the negative versions:

- ✗ (Not true) → **I did not play football yesterday.**
- ✗ (Not true) → **She did not watch TV last night.**
- ✗ (Not true) → **They did not eat pizza for dinner.**

We use **did not** (or the short form **didn't**) to make a past simple negative sentence. Let's learn exactly how to do this.

A Simple Story First

Meet **Tom**. Tom had a free day yesterday. Let's find out what he did — and what he did *not* do.

Tom watched a film. He cooked dinner. He walked to the park. He listened to music.

But Tom's friend asked: "Did you go to the gym?" Tom says: "**No, I did not go to the gym.**"

Tom's friend asked: "Did you eat a burger?" Tom says: "**No, I did not eat a burger.**"

Tom is using **past simple negative sentences** to say what he did *not* do yesterday. Now let's look at the grammar rule.

Rule Breakdown

The Rule: Subject + did not + Base Verb

To make a **past simple negative sentence**, we follow this pattern:

Subject + did not + base verb

Let's explain each part:

- **Subject** — This is the person or thing doing (or not doing) the action. For example: I, you, he, she, it, we, they, Tom, Maria.
- **did not** — This is our negative helper word. It tells us the action did *not* happen in the past.
- **base verb** — This is the simple, basic form of the verb. For example: *play, eat, go, watch, sleep*. We do **not** add *-ed* to the verb here.

Look at this pattern clearly:

- I did not play.
- You did not eat.
- He did not go.
- She did not sleep.
- It did not work.
- We did not watch.
- They did not come.

Important word to know: A *base verb* is the basic verb with no extra endings. For example, the base verb of "played" is **play**. The base verb of "watched" is **watch**. The base verb of "went" is **go**.

Past Simple Negative: Full Sentences Table

Subject	did not	Base Verb	Full Sentence
I	did not	play	I did not play football.
You	did not	eat	You did not eat breakfast.
He	did not	go	He did not go to school.
She	did not	watch	She did not watch TV.
It	did not	work	It did not work.
We	did not	study	We did not study last night.
They	did not	come	They did not come to the party.
Tom	did not	sleep	Tom did not sleep well.
Maria and Ben	did not	talk	Maria and Ben did not talk.

Good news! We use **did not** for *all* subjects — I, you, he, she, it, we, they, and names. The rule is the same for everyone. There are no exceptions here!

Short Form: Didn't

In everyday English, people often use the short form of **did not**. The short form is **didn't**.

A **contraction** is when we join two words and use an apostrophe (') to show where letters are missing.

did not → didn't

The letter **o** from *not* is removed, and we use an apostrophe (') in its place.

Look at these examples with **didn't**:

I didn't play football.

You didn't eat breakfast.

He didn't go to school.

She didn't watch TV.

It didn't work.

We didn't study last night.

They didn't come to the party.

The meaning is exactly the same as *did not*. Both forms are correct. We use **didn't** more often in speaking and informal writing.

Did Not / Didn't: Comparison Table

Full Form	Short Form (Contraction)
I did not go.	I didn't go.
He did not eat.	He didn't eat.
She did not sleep.	She didn't sleep.
We did not study.	We didn't study.
They did not come.	They didn't come.

Important: Do Not Change the Verb!

This is a very important rule. When we use **did not / didn't**, the main verb stays in its **base form**. We do **not** add *-ed* to the verb.

Why? Because **did** already tells us we are in the past. We do not need to change the verb again.

Look at this:

- ✅ Positive: She **watched** TV. (*watched* = past form)
- ✅ Negative: She **didn't watch** TV. (*watch* = base form — no *-ed*!)
- ✅ Positive: He **played** football. (*played* = past form)
- ✅ Negative: He **didn't play** football. (*play* = base form — no *-ed*!)

This rule is the same for all verbs — including **irregular verbs** (verbs with a special past form).

- ✔ Positive: They **went** to the park. (*went* = irregular past form of *go*)
- ✔ Negative: They **didn't go** to the park. (*go* = base form)
- ✔ Positive: I **ate** a sandwich. (*ate* = irregular past form of *eat*)
- ✔ Negative: I **didn't eat** a sandwich. (*eat* = base form)

More Everyday Examples

Here are some more past simple negative sentences using everyday topics like home, school, food, and free time:

- I **didn't wake up** early this morning.
- She **didn't drink** coffee yesterday.
- He **didn't read** his book last night.
- We **didn't go** to the supermarket.
- They **didn't play** in the garden.
- My mum **didn't cook** dinner last Sunday.
- The dog **didn't eat** its food.
- I **didn't see** my friend at school.
- Tom and Anna **didn't travel** last summer.
- My teacher **didn't give** us homework.

Common Mistakes

Here are the most common mistakes students make with **past simple negative sentences**. Learn these so you don't make the same errors!

- ✗ She didn't *watched* TV.
- ✔ **She didn't watch TV.** (Use the base verb — no *-ed* after *didn't*.)
- ✗ He didn't *went* to school.
- ✔ **He didn't go to school.** (Use the base verb — no irregular past form after *didn't*.)
- ✗ I *not played* football.
- ✔ **I didn't play football.** (We need *did not* / *didn't* to make a negative.)
- ✗ She *don't* play yesterday.
- ✔ **She didn't play yesterday.** (For the past, we use *didn't*, not *don't*.)
- ✗ They *didn't* come.
- ✔ **They didn't come.** (The correct spelling is *didn't*, not *didin't*.)
- ✗ We didn't *ate* lunch.
- ✔ **We didn't eat lunch.** (After *didn't*, always use the base verb.)

Past Simple Negative Sentences: Quick Summary

Let's review the key rules for **past simple negative sentences**:

- We use **past simple negative sentences** to say something did *not* happen in the past.
- The structure is: **Subject + did not + base verb**
- The short form of *did not* is **didn't**. Both mean the same thing.
- We use **did not / didn't** for *all* subjects: I, you, he, she, it, we, they.
- After *did not / didn't*, always use the **base verb** (no *-ed*, no irregular past forms).
- We use *didn't* more in speaking and informal writing. We use *did not* in more formal writing.

Positive (Past Simple)	Negative (Past Simple)
I played.	I didn't play.
She watched.	She didn't watch.
He went.	He didn't go.
We ate.	We didn't eat.
They came.	They didn't come.

Now practise **past simple negative sentences** in the exercises below.

Past Simple: Negative Sentences – Practice Test

A1 | 30 Questions: Multiple Choice, Fill-in-the-Gap & Fill-in-the-Blank

Part 1: Multiple Choice (Questions 1–10)

1 I ____ to school yesterday. It was a holiday.

- A didn't went
- B didn't go
- C don't go
- D not went

2 She ____ the movie last night.

- A not watched
- B doesn't watched
- C didn't watched
- D didn't watch

3 They ____ dinner at home last Sunday.

- A didn't had
- B didn't have
- C not have
- D doesn't have

4 He ____ his homework last night.

- A not did
- B didn't did
- C didn't do
- D doesn't do

5 We ____ to the park last Saturday because it rained.

- A not went
- B didn't went
- C didn't go
- D don't go

6 My brother ____ his lunch at school yesterday.

- A** not eat
- B** didn't ate
- C** didn't eat
- D** doesn't eat

7 I ____ any coffee this morning.

- A** drank not
- B** didn't drank
- C** not drank
- D** didn't drink

8 She ____ the door. It was already open.

- A** didn't opened
- B** not opened
- C** didn't open
- D** doesn't open

9 The children ____ outside yesterday because it was cold.

- A** not played
- B** didn't played
- C** don't play
- D** didn't play

10 My parents ____ me a present for my birthday last year.

- A** not buy
- B** didn't bought
- C** didn't buy
- D** doesn't buy

Part 2: Fill in the Gap (Questions 11–20)

11 I ____ go to school yesterday.

- A** didn't
- B** don't
- C** wasn't

12 She ____ watch TV last night.

- A** didn't
- B** doesn't
- C** wasn't

13 They ____ play football on Sunday.

- A** didn't
- B** don't
- C** weren't

14 He ____ eat breakfast this morning.

- A** didn't
- B** doesn't
- C** hadn't

15 We ____ see the movie last week.

- A** didn't
- B** don't
- C** aren't

16 My dog ____ eat its food yesterday.

- A** didn't
- B** doesn't
- C** wasn't

17 I ____ have a pencil at school yesterday.

- A** didn't
- B** don't
- C** hadn't

18 She ____ walk to school last Monday.

- A** didn't
- B** wasn't
- C** doesn't

19 My parents ____ work on Saturday.

- A** didn't
- B** don't
- C** weren't

20 The children ____ sleep early last night.

- A** didn't
- B** don't
- C** aren't

Part 3: Fill in the Blank (Questions 21–30)

21 She _____ go to school yesterday.

22 I _____ eat breakfast this morning.

23 They did not _____ football last Saturday.

24 He didn't _____ TV last night.

25 We _____ visit our grandparents last weekend.

26 My parents did not _____ dinner yesterday.

27 Tom didn't _____ to school this morning.

28 I did _____ sleep well last night.

29 She _____ drink milk this morning.

30 They didn't _____ English last week.

Answer Key & Explanations

Past Simple: Negative Sentences | A1

Part 1: Multiple Choice

1. **B** Correct Answer: didn't go  Explanation: In Past Simple negatives, we use didn't + the base form of the verb. We say didn't go, not didn't went.
2. **D** Correct Answer: didn't watch  Explanation: We use didn't + base verb. The base form of watch is watch, not watched. So we say didn't watch.
3. **B** Correct Answer: didn't have  Explanation: We use didn't + base form. The base form of had is have. So the correct form is didn't have.
4. **C** Correct Answer: didn't do  Explanation: We use didn't + base form. The base form of did is do. So we say didn't do.
5. **C** Correct Answer: didn't go  Explanation: Past Simple negative uses didn't + base verb. The base form of went is go. So we say didn't go.
6. **C** Correct Answer: didn't eat  Explanation: We use didn't + base form. The base form of ate is eat. So the correct answer is didn't eat.
7. **D** Correct Answer: didn't drink  Explanation: We use didn't + base form. The base form of drank is drink. So we say didn't drink.
8. **C** Correct Answer: didn't open  Explanation: Past Simple negative is didn't + base verb. We use open (not opened) after didn't.
9. **D** Correct Answer: didn't play  Explanation: We use didn't + base form for Past Simple negatives. We say didn't play, not didn't played.
10. **C** Correct Answer: didn't buy  Explanation: We use didn't + base form. The base form of bought is buy. So the correct answer is didn't buy.

Part 2: Fill in the Gap

11. **A** Correct Answer: didn't  Explanation: In Past Simple negative sentences, we use didn't (did not) + base verb. I didn't go to school yesterday.
12. **A** Correct Answer: didn't  Explanation: We use didn't (did not) for all subjects in Past Simple negative sentences. She didn't watch TV last night.
13. **A** Correct Answer: didn't  Explanation: For Past Simple negatives, use didn't + base verb for all subjects, including they. They didn't play football on Sunday.

14. **A** Correct Answer: didn't ✓ Explanation: didn't (did not) is used with all subjects in Past Simple negatives. We keep the verb in its base form. He didn't eat breakfast this morning.
15. **A** Correct Answer: didn't ✓ Explanation: In Past Simple negative sentences, didn't comes before the base form of the verb. We didn't see the movie last week.
16. **A** Correct Answer: didn't ✓ Explanation: We use didn't + base verb for Past Simple negatives, even with singular subjects like my dog. My dog didn't eat its food yesterday.
17. **A** Correct Answer: didn't ✓ Explanation: didn't (did not) is the correct helper word for Past Simple negative sentences. The main verb stays in its base form: have. I didn't have a pencil at school yesterday.
18. **A** Correct Answer: didn't ✓ Explanation: To make a Past Simple negative, use didn't + the base form of the verb. She didn't walk to school last Monday.
19. **A** Correct Answer: didn't ✓ Explanation: For Past Simple negatives, we always use didn't (did not) + the base form of the verb. My parents didn't work on Saturday.
20. **A** Correct Answer: didn't ✓ Explanation: didn't is the correct Past Simple negative helper verb for all subjects. The main verb stays as the base form: sleep. The children didn't sleep early last night.

Part 3: Fill in the Blank

21. **did not|didn't** Correct Answer: did not / didn't ✓ Explanation: In the Past Simple negative, we use did not (or didn't) + the base verb. She did not go. We do NOT say She didn't went.
22. **did not|didn't** Correct Answer: did not / didn't ✓ Explanation: For Past Simple negatives, use did not or didn't before the base form of the verb. I did not eat. NOT I didn't ate.
23. **play** Correct Answer: play ✓ Explanation: After did not, we always use the base form of the verb. did not play is correct. NOT did not played.
24. **watch** Correct Answer: watch ✓ Explanation: After didn't, we use the base form of the verb. didn't watch is correct. NOT didn't watched.
25. **did not|didn't** Correct Answer: did not / didn't ✓ Explanation: To make a Past Simple negative, use did not or didn't + the base verb. We did not visit.
26. **cook** Correct Answer: cook ✓ Explanation: After did not, the verb stays in its base form. did not cook is correct. NOT did not cooked.
27. **walk** Correct Answer: walk ✓ Explanation: After didn't, always use the base form of the verb. didn't walk is correct. NOT didn't walked.

28. **not** Correct Answer: not ✓ Explanation: The Past Simple negative is formed with did + not + base verb. did not sleep is the correct negative structure.
29. **did not|didn't** Correct Answer: did not / didn't ✓ Explanation: We use did not or didn't to make a Past Simple negative. She did not drink milk.
30. **study** Correct Answer: study ✓ Explanation: After didn't, use the base form of the verb. didn't study is correct. NOT didn't studied.

Score Guide

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|----------------------|--|
| 27–30 Correct | Excellent! You have mastered this topic. |
| 23–26 Correct | Very good! Review the rules you missed. |
| 18–22 Correct | Good start. Re-read the lesson and examples. |
| 0–17 Correct | Study the lesson again before retaking the test. |