

181 Useful irregular verbs

Verbal Base	Preterit	Past Participle	Meaning	Example
abide *by	abode	abode	se conformer, se plier à	You must abide by the rules...
arise	arose	arisen	se produire	A new question arose...
awake	awoke	awoken	s'éveiller, ranimer, raviver	The debate awoke my interest for this issue.
bear	bore	borne	porter, supporter, rester	to bear something in mind. Bear with me for a minute, will you?
beat	beat	beaten	battre	to beat a record. To beat around the bush.
become	became	become	devenir	What became of him was a mystery
befall	befell	befallen	advenir, arriver	The disaster that befell Japan was a hit to the economy.
begin	began	begun	commencer	She began writing in her early childhood
bend	bent	bent	(se) tordre, (se) courber	She bent down to kiss the child. NB: to bend over backwards (se mettre en quatre) ; to bend the rule (détourner les règles)
beseech	besought	besought	supplier, implorer	to beg = to beseech
bet	bet	bet	parier	He bet me 10€ that I would kiss her.
bid	bade	bidden	dire, ordonner	They bade me farewell (= faire ses adieux)
bid	bid	bid	faire une offre (d'argent)	They bid a very high price for this painting at the auction.
bind	bound	bound	lier, attacher / voie passive: exprime un caractère inévitable	She bound the flowers in a lovely bunch. / The accident was bound to happen.
bite	bit	bitten	mordre	She bit her lips and said nothing.
bleed	bled	bled	saigner	He bled to death on the carpet.
blow	blew	blown	souffler, se moucher	I blew on his food to cool it down.
break	broke	broken	casser, enfreindre la loi	She broke the law several times. He broke his nose in a fight.
breed	bred	bred	élever	She was born and bred in London.
bring	brought	brought	apporter	He brought her a cup of tea.
broadcast	broadcast	broadcast	diffuser	The BBC broadcast the show last night.
build	built	built	construire	The house was built in 1778
burn	burnt	burnt	brûler	His tent and gear were burnt in the fire.
burst	burst	burst	éclater	She burst out in tears.
buy	bought	bought	acheter	She bought groceries from the grocery shop.
cast	cast	cast	jeter, lancer	The witch cast a spell on the princess.
catch	caught	caught	attraper	They caught a cold on their ski trip.
choose	chose	chosen	choisir	They chose to ignore him.
cling	clung	clung	se cramponner	They clung to the hope of succeeding.
come	came	come	venir	The time has come to say fair's fair.
cost	cost	cost	coûter, valoir	It cost an arm and a leg.
creep	crept	crept	se glisser discrètement	He crept up behind her.
cut	cut	cut	couper, diminuer	The costs were cut by half.
deal	dealt	dealt	to deal with/ s'occuper de	I will deal with you later.
dig	dug	dug	creuser, fouiller	The dog dug a hole and found a bone.
dive	dove / dived	dived	plonger	He dove in at the deep end.
do	did	done	faire	He had already done his homework.
draw	drew	drawn	tirer, prélever, dessiner	The child drew a picture.
dream	dreamt	dreamt	rêver	He dreamt of a better future.
drink	drank	drunk	boire	He drank himself silly.
drive	drove	driven	conduire, se déplacer (en voiture) / rendre + adjectif	She drove him crazy.
dwelt	dwelt	dwelt	habiter, dwell on = insister	She dwelt on the idea for a while.
eat	ate	eaten	manger	She ate up all her plate.
fall	fell	fallen	tomber	Night fell upon the hills.
feed	fed	fed	(se) nourrir, (s') alimenter	He fed on berries and insects.
feel	felt	felt	tâter, sentir, ressentir	He felt sorry for her.
fight	fought	fought	(se) battre	They fought bravely to denounce injustice.
find	found	found	trouver	He found himself in a deadend.
fling	flung	flung	lancer (violemment)	He flung his cap to the ground.
fly	flew	flown	voler (avion, oiseau), piloter (avion)	He flew hi plane very high (stt transitive). The plane flew to India (stt intransitive).
forbid	forbade	forbidden	interdire	Her mother forbade her to go out.
forecast	forecast	forecast	prédire	It is difficult to forecast more than 3 days ahead .
foresee	foresaw	foreseen	prévoir, prédire	The present crisis had not been foreseen.
forget	forgot	forgotten	oublier	He had forgotten all about it.
forgive	forgave	forgiven	pardonner	He forgave her for her sins.
for(e)go	for(e)went	for(e)gone	renoncer à qqch	I am unwilling to forgo dessert under any circumstances.
forsake	forsook	forsaken	renoncer à , abandonner	She won't forsake her privileges. A God-forsaken place.
freeze	froze	frozen	s'immobiliser, geler	The gangster froze when the police arrived.
get	got	got / gotten	obtenir, devenir, chercher	I got a scholarship for my first year at Stanford.
give	gave	given	donner	she gave a favorite doll to her cousin.
go	went	gone	aller	the went on a shopping spree.
grind	ground	ground	moudre	I love the smell of freshly ground coffee.
grow	grew	grown	(faire) pousser, devenir+adj., se développer, croître	They grew corn and wheat. I grew up in Australia.
hang	hung	hung	pendre, flotter	A nice smell hung in the air.
hear	heard	heard	entendre, entendre dire	Se heard a strange noise.
hide	hid	hidden	(se) cacher	He hid behind the door.
hit	hit	hit	frapper, toucher	She hit her assailant with a frying pan.
hold	held	held	tenir	He was held responsible for his mistakes.
hurt	hurt	hurt	blessar, faire mal	This hurt her feelings very badly.
keep	kept	kept	garder, +V-ing = continuer à	He kept bragging about his strength.
kneel	knelt	knelt	s'agenouiller	He knelt in front of the king.

knit	knit	knit	tricoter, souder (figuré)	A closely knit family.
know	knew	known	savoir, connaître	They have known each other for years.
lay	laid	laid	mettre, poser	He laid the table to help his mother.
lead	led	led	mener, conduire	They led them to the door.
lean	leant / leaned	leant / leaned	(s')appuyer, (se) pencher	She leant out of the window
leap	leapt	leapt	sauter, bondir, enjamber	My heart leapt at the thought of seeing her.
learn	learnt	learnt	apprendre	He had learnt his lesson the hard way.
leave	left	left	partir, quitter, laisser	The train left on time.
lend	lent	lent	prêter	I lent him a few pounds.
let	let	let	laisser (faire), louer	My parents let me go out on Sundays.
lie	lay	lain	être posé, être allongé	He lay there, motionless.
light	lit	lit	allumer, éclairer	The lights were lit in the hallway.
lose	lost	lost	perdre	Have you lost your mind?
make	made	made	faire, fabriquer	She made herself heard.
mean	meant	meant	signifier, vouloir dire, avoir l'intention	This meant nothing to her.
meet	met	met	rencontrer	They met on a cold winter afternoon.
mislead	misled	misled	tromper	The detective was misled by the facts.
mistake	mistook	mistaken	confondre qqch avec qqch	Sorry, I mistook you for my friend.
mow	mowed	mown	tondre (pelouse)	The lawn had been mown neatly.
misunderstand	misunderstood	misunderstood	mal comprendre qqch	I misunderstood the outline of the assignment completely.
outdo	outdid	outdone	(se) surpasser	He outdid all his opponents.
overcome	overcame	overcome	surmonter, vaincre	He overcame all his difficulties.
overdo	overdid	overdone	exagérer	The acting was overdone.
put	put	put	mettre, poser	I put the essay on your desk.
quit	quit	quit	abandonner, démissionner	He quit his job without any notice.
read	read	read	lire, contenir un message	He read his lecture to the class
rid	rid	rid	(se) débarrasser	Students should get rid of their homework ASAP.
ride	rode	ridden	aller à cheval ou à vélo, être transporté (véhicule)	She rode down the mountain.
ring	rang	rung	sonner	The phone rang as soon as he got home.
run	ran	run	courir, gérer (entreprise)	He ran this business with an iron fist.
rise	rose	risen	monter, augmenter	He rose to his feet. The dollar has risen by 2% recently.
saw	sawed	sawn / sawed	scier	He had to saw his hand off to set himself free.
say	said	said	dire	It is said to be very difficult.
see	saw	seen	voir, fréquenter, raccompagner	They hadn't seen each other in quite a while.
seek	sought	sought	chercher, rechercher	The have sought to rehabilitate their reputation.
sell	sold	sold	(se) vendre	This item sold very well last year.
send	sent	sent	envoyer	She was sent to hospital immediately.
set	set	set	placer, fixer	The date has been set to April, 21st.
sew	sewed	sewn / sewed	coudre	A seamstress sewed my dress.
shake	shook	shaken	trembler, secouer	She shook with fear.
shave	shaved	shaved/shaven	raser (humain, viande morte)	His beard was closely shaven so I did not recognise him
shear	sheared	sheared/shorn	raser (fourrure)	the sheep shearers sheared the sheep.
shed	shed	shed	diffuser / se débarrasser de	It shed a new light on the issue. I am trying to shed 3 kilos.
shine	shone	shone	briller	the water shone bright, like a diamond.
shoot	shot	shot	tirer (arme), filmer	He was shot in the chest.
show	showed	shown	montrer	he has shown real abilities to forge paintings.
shrink	shrank	shrunk	(se) rétrécir	Honey, I shrank the kids!
sink	sank	sunk	couler, (s')enfoncer	The Titanic sunk after hitting an iceberg.
shut	shut	shut	fermer	Can you shut the door, please?
sing	sang	sung	chanter	People have sung the praises for Martin Luther King for many years.
sit	sat	sat	s'asseoir, être assis	He sat on a bench and cried.
slay	slew	slain	tuer	Animals are slain at the slaughter house.
sleep	slept	slept	dormir	He slept like a log until the next morning.
slide	slid	slid	glisser	He slid quietly out of bed.
slit	slit	slit	fendre, inciser, entrouvrir	He slit his victim's throat with the precision of a surgeon. He slit his eyes open.
smell	smelt	smelt	sentir	She smelt of alcohol.
sow	sowed	sown	semer	To sow seeds, to sow scandals.
speak	spoke	spoken	parler	They spoke the same language.
speed	sped	sped	aller à toute vitesse	The car sped along the road.
spell	spelt	spelt	épeler, orthographier, entraîner	It is spelt with an H.
spend	spent	spent	passer (temps), dépenser	He spends his time at the pub.
spill	spilt	spilt	renverser, répandre	The waiter spilt water on the floor.
spin	spun / span	spun	tourner	Her head started spinning and she fainted.
spit	spat	spat	cracher	He spat on the ground and walked away
split	split	split	(se) fendre, diviser, rompre	The world is split in two hemispheres. They split up yesterday.
spoil	spoil	spoilt	gâcher, gâter	Grandparents always spoil their grandchildren.
spread	spread	spread	(s') étaler, (se) répandre	He spread butter and jam on his bread.
spring	sprang	sprung	bondir, apparaître	She sprang to her feet and ran away.
stand	stood	stood	se tenir debout	The pupils stood up straight when the headmaster entered.
steal	stole	stolen	voler, se déplacer furtivement	Harry stole away from Gryffindor house, hidden under his invisibility cloak.
stick	stuck	stuck	coller, s'en tenir à qqchse	Stick to the facts! The glue stuck to her fingers.
sting	stang	stung	piquer	the bee stung him badly.
stink	stank	stunk	puer, empesté	The street stank of exhaust fumes.
strew	strewed	strewed/strewn	répandre/éparpiller/joncher	Bodies were strewn across the dead end street.
stride	strode	stridden	marcher à grandes enjambées	He strode across the park.
strike	struck	struck	frapper	Doc and Marty were struck by lightning.
strive	strove	striven	s'efforcer de, faire son possible	she strove to finish her homework.
swear	swore	sworn	jurer (serment/jurons)	He swore he was telling the truth.

sweat	sweat	sweat	transpirer	He was sweating so much that drops were trickling down his forehead.
sweep	swept	swept	balayer (propre et figuré)	The opposition party swept the election.
swell	swole	swollen	enfler	his knee had swollen by the time he got to the hospital.
swim	swam	swum	nager	He swam across the river.
swing	swung	swung	(se) balancer	She was swinging on her chair.
take	took	taken	prendre	He took the tram to go to work.
teach	taught	taught	enseigner	She taught me everything.
tear	tore	torn	déchirer, se précipiter	He tore his shirt on the barbed wire fence. He tore out of the place yelling 'Fire'.
tell	told	told	dire, raconter	She told her a bedtime story every night.
think	thought	thought	penser	I was thinking about you the other day.
thrive	throve/thrived	thriven/thrived	prosperer	The company was thriving despite the recession.
throw	threw	thrown	jeter, lancer	They threw themselves at one another in a wild fight.
thrust	thrust	thrust	pousser, jeter violemment	The rocket was thrust into orbit by the blast.
tread	trode	trodden	marcher	He trod on his cigarette end to extinguish it.
undergo	underwent	undergone	subir, endurer	They underwent surgery to fix their injuries.
understand	understood	understood	comprendre	I didn't understand a word you said.
undertake	undertook	undertaken	entreprendre	He undertook the trip to discover new landscapes.
upset	upset	upset	boulverser, renverser	I was upset by the news. Oil always upsets regional stability.
wake	woke	woken	(se) réveiller	He woke up in fright after a terrible nightmare.
undo	undid	undone	défaire, démêler, détruire	She undid her belt and rearranged her shirt.
wear	wore	worn	porter (vêtements), (s')user	His clothes were worn-out.
weave	wove	woven	tisser, tresser	A hand-woven basket.
wed	wed	wed	épouser qqn	They were wed on the following morning and lived happily ever after.
weep	wept	wept	pleurer	People wept in front of their TV sets on September, 11th 2001.
win	won	won	gagner	They won the World Cup last year.
wind	wound	wound	envelopper, enrouler, remonter	They wound the windows down at the back of the car to let the air in.
withdraw	withdrew	withdrawn	retirer	They withdrew money at the ATM.
withhold	withheld	withheld	retenir, différer	He was withheld after work. She withheld the truth until her last breath.
withstand	withstood	withstood	résister à, supporter	The Constitution has withstood the test of time well.
wreak	wrought	wrought	provoquer de gros dégâts	Hurricane Katrina wrought havoc on New Orleans.
wring	wrung	wrung	tordre	She wrung her hands in despair.
write	wrote	written	écrire	She wrote her name in the sand.