

Nombre \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha \_\_\_\_\_ Hora \_\_\_\_\_

### apuntes el pretérito y el imperfecto

In Spanish, we use both the preterit and the imperfect tenses to describe actions that took place in the past. The question is, how do we choose which tense to use?

#### Uses of the preterite tense

The preterite tense is used to indicate the beginning or the end of an action or event occurring in the past.

In particular, we use the preterite for:

- 1.) past events with a specific beginning/end
- 2.) completed/finished past actions
- 3.) talking about specific actions and events
- 4.) actions which occurred at a specific moment in time (isolated actions)

#### Ejemplos:

Carlos jugó fútbol ayer.

Carlos played soccer yesterday.

Preterite because it is a specific action (playing soccer) taking place at a specific time (yesterday)

Rosa escribió un informe.

Rosa wrote a report.

This is preterite because Rosa has completed a specific action (writing a report).

Write your own example:

Dillon corrió muy despacio esta mañana.

#### Uses of the imperfect tense

The imperfect tense is used to indicate the continuance of a past action or event, or to describe a situation in past time. Neither the beginning nor the end of the event or situation is indicated.

In particular, we use the imperfect to:

- 1.) express what was happening (was/were + "ing"), what used to happen, or happened repeatedly in the past.
- 2.) describe people / things in the past
- 3.) express the time of day in the past.
- 4.) express a person's age when an event took place.

#### Ejemplos:

Los pájaros cantaban.

The birds were singing.

Imperfect because it describes what was happening, using was/were + an "ing" word

Vivíamos en Miami.

We used to live in Miami.

This is imperfect because it describes something that we "used to" do (live in Miami).

Tomás a menudo llegaba tarde.

Thomas often arrived late.

Imperfect because it describes something that happened repeatedly (arriving late)

Tú eras rubio y tenías los ojos azules.

You were blond and had blue eyes.

This is imperfect because it is describing what a person or thing was like (blond, blue-eyed).

Eran las cinco.

It was five o'clock.

This is imperfect because it expresses the time of day in the past.