

Pronunciation of the simple past -ed

There are three ways to pronounce the final **-ed** of regular verbs in the simple past. This pronunciation is determined by the final sound of the verb in the base form: Is it a voiced consonant, an unvoiced consonant, or a vowel sound? Learn more about vowel sounds and voiced and unvoiced sounds in the lesson on English phonetics. Before you continue, review the lesson on the simple past.

Note that in all the examples below the first column represents the **IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet)** symbol for the final sound of the verb in its base form.

/ t /

After unvoiced sounds such as **p, f, s, k, ʃ**, and **tʃ** the final **-ed** is pronounced like **t** as in the word *cat*. Note that the **-e** remains silent. Click on the words to hear the sound files.

IPA	base form	simple past
p	<u>help</u>	<u>helped</u>
f	<u>stuff</u>	<u>stuffed</u>
	<u>laugh</u>	<u>laughed</u>
s	<u>miss</u>	<u>missed</u>
	<u>dice</u>	<u>diced</u>
	<u>fix</u>	<u>fixed</u>
ʒ	<u>massage</u>	<u>massaged</u>
dʒ	<u>rage</u>	<u>raged</u>
ʃ	<u>fish</u>	<u>fished</u>
tʃ	<u>march</u>	<u>marched</u>

/ d /

After voiced sounds such as **b, g, v, z, ʒ, dʒ, m, n, ŋ, l, ð,** and **r** the final **-ed** sound is pronounced like **d** as in *good*. Note that the **-e** remains silent.

IPA	base form	simple past
b	<u>grab</u>	<u>grabbed</u>
g	<u>hug</u>	<u>hugged</u>
v	<u>save</u>	<u>saved</u>
z	<u>ooze</u>	<u>oozed</u>
m	<u>resume</u>	<u>resumed</u>
n	<u>sign</u>	<u>signed</u>
ŋ	<u>bang</u>	<u>banged</u>
l	<u>peel</u>	<u>peeled</u>
ð	<u>breathe</u>	<u>breathed</u>
r	<u>honor</u>	<u>honored</u>

The final **-ed** is also pronounced like the **d** in *good* after all vowel sounds. Note that the **-e** again remains silent.

base form	simple past		
<u>stay</u>	<u>stayed</u>	<u>sue</u>	<u>sued</u>
<u>free</u>	<u>freed</u>	<u>ski</u>	<u>skied</u>
<u>lie</u>	<u>lied</u>	<u>snow</u>	<u>snowed</u>
<u>hoe</u>	<u>hoed</u>	<u>try</u>	<u>tried</u>

/ Id /

For verbs ending in **d** and **t** the final **-ed** is pronounced **Id** as in the final two letters of the word *did*.

base form **simple past**

add added

grade graded

decide decided

exit exited

taste tasted

object objected

Note here that the **-e** is **not** silent and this final **-ed** sound adds another syllable to the end of the verb.

one syllable **two syllables**

add add·ed

exit exit·ed

two syllables **three syllables**

de·cide de·cid·ed

ob·ject ob·ject·ed

Remember, if the base form of the verb does not end with a **d** or a **t**, no extra syllable is added.