


Presentación de GRAMÁTICA

¡AVANZA!

Goal: Learn the differences between the preterite and imperfect tenses. Then use both to narrate past events. *Actividades 12–15*

 *¿Recuerdas?* Daily activities pp. 10, R9

English Grammar Connection: English has only one simple tense to describe events that happened in the past. Spanish uses two past tenses: the **preterite** and the **imperfect**.

Preterite and Imperfect

Animated Grammar
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You have learned two verb forms used for the past tense: the **preterite** and the **imperfect**. How do you know when to use each one?

Here's how: Decide whether an action had a specific beginning and ending. Use the **preterite** if the action started and ended at a definite time.

La guerra **empezó** en 1846.
*The war **began** in 1846.*

Santa Ana **fue** presidente de México.
*Santa Ana **was** the president of Mexico.*

Use the **imperfect** to talk about past actions without saying when they began or ended.

Los guerreros no **tenían** miedo del enemigo.
*The warriors **were not afraid** of the enemy.*

El ejército **peleaba** valientemente.
*The army **fought** bravely.*

You can apply both tenses to talk about two overlapping events.

- the **preterite** for the action that occurred
- the **imperfect** for what was going on at the time

Cuando la guerra **terminó**, Santa Ana **era** presidente de México.
*When the war **ended**, Santa Ana **was** president of Mexico.*

Note that you use the preterite of **ser (fue)** to say that Santa Ana was *once* president of Mexico, but you use the imperfect of **ser (era)** to say that Santa Ana was president during an unspecified time.

Más práctica

Cuaderno pp.154–156

Cuaderno para hispanohablantes pp.155–158

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