



## Korean Past Tense

To make the past tense in Korean you must take the basic 'dictionary form' of a verb (e.g. 먹다 [meok-da] = to eat) and conjugate it together with the correct ending.

### Step 1

Remove **다** from the verb so you are left with the verb stem. For example, if you drop **다** from 먹다 [meok-da] you're left with 먹 [meok].

### Step 2

Add one of the following endings: **았어요** / **었어요** / **였습니다**. The ending you add depends on the conjugation rules below.

### Past Tense Conjugation Rules

#### 았어요

Add **았어요** if the last vowel in the verb stem is **ㅏ** or **ㅑ**.

#### Example:

살다 [sal-da] = to live

살다  
+  
**았어요**  
=  
살았어요  
(lived)

#### 었어요

Add **었어요** if the last vowel in the verb stem is NOT **ㅏ** or **ㅑ**.

#### Example:

먹다 [meok-da] = to eat

먹다  
+  
**었어요**  
=  
먹었어요  
(ate)

#### 였습니다

Add **였습니다** if the verb ends in **하다**.

#### Example:

일하다 [il-ha-da] = to work

일하다  
+  
**였습니다**  
=  
일했습니다  
(worked)