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SUBSIDIOS PARA PROFESSORES DE INGLES



**PRONUNCIATION: PAST TENSE
ENDINGS FOR REGULAR VERBS**

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PRONUNCIATION: PAST TENSE ENDINGS FOR REGULAR VERBS



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Abstract: Is it important to teach and learn Pronunciation? Should teachers teach Pronunciation in a regular course? Do you think students can improve their fluency by having contact with Pronunciation? If your answers were “yes”, you find this work most helpful and interesting.

Key Words: Pronunciation, regular verbs, past tense.

INTRODUCTION

First of all, consider and reflect upon the following questions: Is it important to teach and learn Pronunciation? Should teachers teach Pronunciation in a regular course? Do you think students can improve their fluency by having contact with Pronunciation? If your answers were “yes”, keep reading this text.

It is considered that teachers should teach Pronunciation to their students, in order for them to sound more natural when they speak. Further, students may improve their ability to communicate and they may be better understood in a conversation when their pronunciation is similar to native speakers’.

The following activities were especially designed for teachers who have little experience in teaching Pronunciation and for those who did not have the opportunity to learn the sounds of English. The body of the text focuses on the sounds of regular past tense ending verbs. What you acquire here may be easily taught to all-level-learners.

It is known that all regular past tense endings are spelled with –ed (–d, –ied), but do you think they have the –ed pronounced in the same way? Study the verbs (in bold) in the following sentences taken from an interview of Anthony Hopkins for the magazine *Speak Up*. Do these verbs have the same pronunciation? How many different pronunciations do you think regular past participle endings have?

“...I’d done all the homework I **needed** to do, I’d **learned** the script obsessively...”

“And then he was **asked**: What draws people to fear?”

If you think that the verbs “needed”, “learned” and “asked” have different pronunciations you are right! There are three different pronunciations for regular past tense verbs in English: /d/, /t/, and /ɪd/. Now, let’s see how to identify and use them.

'VOICED' AND 'VOICELESS' SOUNDS

During the production of sounds, our vocal tract produces two different kinds of sounds – voiced sounds and voiceless (or unvoiced) sounds. The distinction between them is found in the character of vibration of the vocal folds. When the vocal folds do not vibrate during the production, the sounds are called voiceless (e.g. /p/, /t/, /f/ sounds). For example, in “put” both the consonant sounds are voiceless; there is no vibration of the vocal folds when these sounds are produced. On the other hand, when vibration of the folds occurs, the sounds are called voiced (e.g. /d/, /b/, /m/ sounds).

For instance, in “dog”, the /d/ and the /g/ sounds are both voiced, since there is vibration of the folds during their production (however, voiced sounds in final positions tend to be less voiced or sometimes almost inaudible).

NOTE: In order to make the distinction process between voiced and voiceless sounds easier, put the palm of your hand in front of your mouth and produce the sound. If an air flow comes out of your mouth you are producing a voiceless sound. If there is no air flow, the sound is voiced.

Another way is to press two fingers gently against your throat to feel the vibration (or its absence) of the vocal folds when producing a sound.

NOTE 2: All vowels, semivowels, laterals and nasal sounds are voiced.

1. Write 'VL' for voiceless sound and 'V' for voiced sounds.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> breath | <input type="checkbox"/> couch | <input type="checkbox"/> sword | <input type="checkbox"/> rule |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bank | <input type="checkbox"/> stomach | <input type="checkbox"/> hand | <input type="checkbox"/> judge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> television | <input type="checkbox"/> shell | <input type="checkbox"/> nail | <input type="checkbox"/> running |
| <input type="checkbox"/> apple | <input type="checkbox"/> pencil | <input type="checkbox"/> picture | <input type="checkbox"/> numb |
| <input type="checkbox"/> guitar | <input type="checkbox"/> house | <input type="checkbox"/> elephant | <input type="checkbox"/> those |
| <input type="checkbox"/> please | <input type="checkbox"/> chart | <input type="checkbox"/> machine | <input type="checkbox"/> negative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cave | <input type="checkbox"/> color | <input type="checkbox"/> hamburger | <input type="checkbox"/> epic |

WHEN PRECEDED BY VOICED SOUNDS

As it is known, in the simple past tense, regular verbs end in -ed. When these verbs end with a voiced sound, the final -ed is produced as a /d/ sound. For instance, in “dubbed”, the last sound produced is the /d/ sound.

2. Put the verbs in the past tense and then write the final sounds.

- a) cover _____
- b) beg _____
- c) concern _____
- d) dream _____
- e) bounce _____
- f) exercise _____
- g) call _____
- h) behave _____

WHEN PRECEDED BY VOICELESS (OR UNVOICED) SOUNDS

When the regular verb is in the past and the sound before the -ed is voiceless, the pronunciation is different. When this happens, the final -ed is pronounced as a /t/ sound. For example, in “worked”, the sound after the /k/ is a /t/ sound.

3. Rewrite the following verbs in their past forms and then transcribe the final sound in each case

- a) kiss _____
- b) stop _____
- c) crush _____
- d) lock _____
- e) watch _____
- f) cook _____
- g) escape _____
- h) fix _____

WHEN PRECEDED BY /t/ AND /d/ SOUNDS

When the base form of regular verbs end with a /t/ or a /d/ sound, as in “applaud” and “count”, in the past tense the final –ed is pronounced as a /ɪd/ sound. The final –ed in “applauded” and in “counted” have a /ɪd/ sound.

NOTE: In “dedicate”, the final sound is a /t/ sound, not an /e/ sound, which means that we must take into account the final *sound*, not the final letter of the verb in question.

NOTE2: In those cases, another syllable is added to the verb. For instance, “dedicate” has three syllables. But when in the simple past, “dedicated” has four syllables. The same happens to “applaud” – the base form has two syllables, but in the past tense, “applauded”, it has three syllables.

4. Associate the verbs listed to the corresponding sounds: /t/, /d/, or /ɪd/

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> closed | <input type="checkbox"/> melted | <input type="checkbox"/> appreciated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> compared | <input type="checkbox"/> noted | <input type="checkbox"/> contained |
| <input type="checkbox"/> discovered | <input type="checkbox"/> liked | <input type="checkbox"/> refused |
| <input type="checkbox"/> loved | <input type="checkbox"/> enjoyed | <input type="checkbox"/> sealed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ended | <input type="checkbox"/> offended | <input type="checkbox"/> wrapped |
| <input type="checkbox"/> missed | <input type="checkbox"/> pushed | <input type="checkbox"/> jumped |

5. Put the verbs from the box in the correct column.

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------|------------|---------|---------|
| Looked | called | hoped | invited | arrived |
| needed | stopped | lived | ended | |
| /d/ | /ɪd/ | /t/ | | |

6. Pronounce these verbs and circle the odd word according to the final –ed sounds.

- landed – marked – aided
- lived – jogged – picked

- c. robbed – realized – messed
- d. protested – loved – elected
- e. beloved – wanted – invented
- f. danced – matched – confused

Teachers can explain how important it is to pronounce words similarly to native speakers in order to sound more natural when they speak. Students can practice and improve pronunciation by doing speaking activities, such as the one suggested below:

Teacher's Guide

- Teacher (T) explains the rules of regular verbs in the past to students (Ss);
- T gives a copy of the handout below to each student;
- Activity 1 - Ss can do the activity in pairs;
- Ss check their answers in pairs;
- T corrects the activity with the group;
- Activity 2 - T asks Ss to talk about the topics given using the verbs from Activity 1;

Handout for students

Activity 1: Put the verbs into the correct column according to their sound.

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Asked worked | called studied | enjoyed wanted | watched visited | invited learned | talked hated |
| /t/ | /d/ | /ɪd/ | | | |

Activity 2: Individually, think about the topics below, brainstorming verbs you might need to use to talk about them. Then, talk to a partner about the topics that are more meaningful to you.

- A place you visited last summer;

- The last movie you watched;
- Things you did last weekend;
- A person you met;
- A book you read recently;

Adapted from: <http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/003043.html>.

Adapted from: <http://www.cartoonstock.com/directory/p/pronunciation.asp>.

FURTHER READING AND EXERCISING

Here are listed some websites with further theories about this topic and other topics related. There are also some more exercises to further practices.

Regarding pronunciation of regular verbs in the past:

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zh_DM7qJGWo
- <http://www.vitaeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Regular-Past-Tense-Pronunciation-Handout.pdf>
- <http://www.autoenglish.org/gr.edpron.pdf>

Regarding phonetics/phonology:

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_phonology
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Phonetic_Alphabet
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJG0uErf8WY&list=EC4CD827F436742F68&index=7>

ANSWER KEY

1. Write 'VL' for voiceless sound and 'V' for voiced sounds.

[VL] breath [VL] couch [V] sword [V] rule
[V] bank [VL] stomach [V] hand [V] judge
[V] television [VL] shell [V] nail [V] running
[VL] apple [VL] pencil [VL] picture [V] numb
[V] guitar [VL] house [VL] elephant [V] those
[V] please [VL] chart [V] machine [V] negative
[V] cave [V] color [V] hamburger [V] epic

2. Put the verbs in the past tense and then write the final sounds.

- a) Covered – “d” sound
- b) Begged – “d” sound
- c) Concerned – “d” sound
- d) Dreamed – “d” sound
- e) Bounced – “d” sound
- f) Exercised – “d” sound
- g) Called – “d” sound
- h) Behaved – “d” sound

3. Rewrite the following verbs in their past forms and then transcribe the final sound in each case

- a) Kissed – “t” sound
- b) Stopped – “t” sound
- c) Crushed – “t” sound
- d) Locked – “t” sound
- e) Watched – “t” sound
- f) Cooked – “t” sound
- g) Escaped – “t” sound
- h) Fixed – “t” sound

4. Associate the verbs listed to the corresponding sounds: /t/, /d/, or /ɪd/

[B] closed [C] melted [C] appreciated
[B] compared [C] noted [B] contained

[B] discovered [A] liked [B] refused
[B] loved [D] enjoyed [B] sealed
[C] ended [C] offended [A] wrapped
[A] missed [A] pushed [A] jumped

5. Put the verbs from the box in the correct column.

| /t/ | /d/ | /ɪd/ |
|---------|---------|---------|
| looked | arrived | invited |
| hoped | lived | needed |
| stopped | called | ended |

6. Pronounce these verbs and circle the odd word according to the final –ed sounds.

a. landed – marked – aided

The final –ed in “landed” and “aided” is pronounced as /ɪd/; the final –ed in “marked” is pronounced as /t/

b. lived – jogged – picked

The final –ed in “lived” and “jogged” is pronounced as /d/; the final –ed in “picked” is pronounced as /t/

c. robbed – realized – messed

The final –ed in “robbed” and “realized” is pronounced as /d/; the final –ed in “messed” is pronounced as /t/

d. protested – loved – elected

The final –ed in “protested” and “elected” is pronounced as /ɪd/; the final –ed in “loved” is pronounced as /d/

e. beloved – wanted – invented

The final –ed in “wanted” and “invented” is pronounced as /ɪd/; the final –ed in “beloved” is pronounced as /d/

f. danced – matched – confused

The final –ed in “danced” and “matched” is pronounced as /t/; the final –ed in “confused” is pronounced as /d/

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