

The Past Indefinite (Simple)

FORMATION AND USE

the formation of the Past Indefinite

- ▶ **V+ed /V ll** auxiliary verb **Did** the verb to be **was/were**
was (for sing.), **were** (for pl.)

Affirmative

I worked**ed** (wrote)
He worked**ed** (wrote)
She worked**ed** (wrote)
We worked**ed** (wrote)
You worked**ed** (wrote)
They worked**ed** (wrote)

Interrogative

Did I work (write)?
Did he work (write)?
Did she work (write)?
Did we work (write)?
Did you work (write)?
Did they work (write)?

Negative

I **did not** work (write).
He **did not** work (write).
She **did not** work (write).
We **did not** work (write).
You **did not** work (write).
They **did not** work (write).

Contracted forms: didn't (I didn't work) ; Did you not work? (Didn't you work?);

the use of the Past Indefinite

The Past Indefinite denotes an action performed within a period of time which is already over. The action is cut off from the present. The time of the action may be indicated by adverbials of past time, such as *yesterday, a week ago, last year, etc.*

The sun **came out** a moment ago.

The Past Indefinite can correspond to the Russian past perfective and past imperfective (совершенный и несовершенный вид)

He **smoked** a cigarette and left the room. (выкурил)

He **smoked** in the silence for a few minutes. (курил)

The Past Indefinite is used to denote

a) an action performed in the past.

We **entered** Farmer Ridley's meadow in silence.

the use of the Past Indefinite

b) a succession of past actions.

He **threw down** his spade and **entered** the house.

c) repeated actions in the past.

He **made** an entry in his diary every night.

Repeated actions are often expressed by *used to+Infinitive* and *would+Infinitive*. *Used to* is more colloquial and *would* is more literary.

Every afternoon, when the children came from school, they **used to go** and play in the Giant's garden.

When fits of melancholy came upon him, he **would spend** all days locked in his room.
