

English Irregular Verbs

verbs with no changes			verbs with one change			verbs with two changes		
bet	bet	bet	Changing the vowel to /ɔː/			Vowel changes from /ɪ/ to /æ/ to /ʌ/		
bid	bid	bid	bring	brought	brought	begin	began	begun
burst	burst	burst	buy	bought	bought	drink	drank	drunk
cast	cast	cast	catch	caught	caught	ring	rang	rung
cost	cost	cost	fight	fought	fought	sing	sang	sung
cut	cut	cut	seek	sought	sought	sink	sank	sunk
hit	hit	hit	teach	taught	taught	shrink	shrank	shrunk
hurt	hurt	hurt	think	thought	thought	spring	sprang	sprung
let	let	let	Changing /ɪ/ to /ʌ/ x2			stink	stank	stunk
put	put	put	cling	clung	clung	swim	swam	swum
quit	quit	quit	dig	dug	dug	Vowel changes from /aɪ/ to /əʊ/ to /ɪ/		
set	set	set	fling	flung	flung	arise	arose	arisen
shed	shed	shed	hang	hung	hung	drive	drove	driven
shut	shut	shut	sling	slung	slung	ride	rode	ridden
slit	slit	slit	spin	spun	spun	rise	rose	risen
split	split	split	stick	stuck	stuck	write	wrote	written
spread	spread	spread	sting	stung	stung	Vowel changes to /uː/ then /əʊ/		
thrust	thrust	thrust	strike	struck	struck	blow	blew	blown
upset	upset	upset	swing	swung	swung	fly	flew	flown
verbs with one change			Changing final sound to /d/			grow	grew	grown
Ending in /d/, changing to /t/			have	had	had	know	knew	known
bend	bent	bent	hear	heard	heard	throw	threw	thrown
build	built	built	lay	laid	laid	Vowel changes from /aɪ/ to /ɪ/ + /n/		
lend	lent	lent	make	made	made	bite	bit	bitten
send	sent	sent	pay	paid	paid	hide	hid	hidden
spend	spent	spent	say	said	said	Vowel only changes in past form + /n/		
Adding /t/			sell	sold	sold	bid	bade	bidden
*burn	burnt	burnt	tell	told	told	draw	drew	drawn
*learn	learnt	learnt	Changing /ɪ/ to /æ/			eat	ate	eaten
*smell	smelt	smelt	sit	sat	sat	fall	fell	fallen
*spell	spelt	spelt	spit	spat	spat	forbid	forbade	forbidden
*spill	spilt	spilt	Changing from /uː/ to /ʌ/			give	gave	given
*spoil	spoilt	spoilt	lose	lost	lost	see	saw	seen
Changing /iː/ to /e/			shoot	shot	shot	Only past participle is irregular		
bleed	bled	bled	Changing past only			*mow	mowed	mown
breed	bred	bred	become	became	become	*prove	proved	proven
feed	fed	fed	come	came	come	*saw	sawed	sawn
flee	fled	fled	run	ran	run	*sew	sewed	sewn
lead	led	led	Other single changes			*show	showed	shown
meet	met	met	beat	beat	beaten	*swell	swelled	swollen
read /ɪː/	read /e/	read /e/	get	got	‡got(ten)	Other changes		
speed	sped	sped	hold	held	held	*(a)wake	(a)woke	(a)woken
sweep	swept	swept	*light	lit	lit	be	was	been
Changing /iː/ to /e/ and adding /t/			*shine	shone	shone	bear	bore	borne
*creep	crept	crept	stand	stood	stood	dive	†dove	dived
*deal	dealt	dealt	win	won	won	do	did	done
*dream	dreamt	dreamt	verbs with two changes			forget	forgot	forgotten
feel	felt	felt	Vowel changes to /əʊ/ x2 + /n/			go	went	gone
keep	kept	kept	break	broke	broken	lie	lay	lain
*kneel	knelt	knelt	choose	chose	chosen	tread	trod	trodden
*lean	leant	leant	freeze	froze	frozen	weave	wove	woven
*leap	leapt	leapt	speak	spoke	spoken			
leave	left	left	steal	stole	stolen			
mean	meant	meant	wake	woke	woken			
sleep	slept	slept	Vowel changes from /ɪə/ to /ɔː/ + /n/					
weep	wept	wept	tear	tore	torn			
Changing /aɪ/ to /aʊ/			swear	swore	sworn			
bind	bound	bound	wear	wore	worn			
find	found	found	Vowel changes from /eɪ/ to /ʊ/ to /eɪ/					
grind	ground	ground	shake	shook	shaken			
wind	wound	wound	take	took	taken			

* = verbs which are often regular
 † dove is AmE
 ‡ gotten is not confined to AmE
 lie is regular in the sense of telling an untruth
 All verbs simply adding /t/ or in which only the past participle is irregular may be used regularly.

Some notes

- *be*
has tense forms derived from different Old English verbs which accounts for *was* and *were* etc. as well as *am, are, is*. This is known as suppletion; the derivations are different so the words look unconnected. The verb *is*, in fact, a conglomeration of a number of verbs used in various dialects of Old English.
- *bear*
the past participle is spelled *born* when it is used in the passive or to refer to birth:
I was born in 1989
The request will be born in mind
- *cost*
is often regular when it means *calculate a price* as in, e.g.:
She costed the work at over £100
- *dive*
is regular in British English but irregular in American English (the past is *dove*)
- *fit*
is irregular and unchanging in AmE so slots into the first section of the chart after *hurt*. However, there is some evidence that when the verb is used transitively to mean *make to measure*, as in, e.g.:
The tailor fitted her for a new dress
it is often used as a regular verb as it is in BrE.
- *go*
has a past tense form derived from different Old English verbs which accounts for *went* (previously the past of *wend*). This is another case of suppletion.
- *hang*
is regular when it means execute but irregular in other senses:
I hung the picture on the wall
He was hanged in 1834
- *lie*
is regular when the sense is tell an untruth as in, e.g.:
She lied about the money
- *pay*
- *as in*
They payed out a rope
is regular
- *plead*
is regular in BrE but usually irregular in AmE (*pled, pled*). It may also be used irregularly in most varieties when the legal sense is being applied.
- *shine*
is irregular when it refers to light but regular when it means polish:
The sun shone
I shined my shoes
When the use is metaphorical, either form is used:
His eyes shined / shone with pleasure

- *sneak*
is regular but the past form *snuck* is attested from the late 19th century and making a comeback
- *strike*
actually mutates from /aɪ/ to /ʌ/ but is included in the group that mutates from /ɪ/ to /ʌ/
- *wrought*
was originally the past tense of *work* (which is now regular in English). It still exists as a participle adjective in, e.g., *wrought iron*. The past forms of *wreak* are in principle regular (*wreaked, wreaked*) but it has become common to see *wrought* used as the past of that verb, perhaps by analogy to *teach* and *seek*.
- *wake, awake, waken and awaken*
all mean the same and can be used with and without a direct object. The last three are more literary and rarer and the first two are often regular in American English.
- some past participle adjectives
come from earlier forms: *beholden, bereft, clad, cloven, drunken, forlorn, forsaken, graven, laden, misbegotten, misshapen, shod, shrunken, smitten, strewn, stricken, sunken, swollen, wrought*
- *run, become and come*
are slightly odd in having only one change but to the past form not the participle
- the verbs *read, mean, leap, deal, dream* and *lean*
mutate the vowel in the past forms, from /i:/ to /e/, with no spelling change but the similarly spelled *hear* mutates from /ɪə/ to /ɜ:/
- verbs that have regular -ed ending and irregular -t endings
(such as *learn, dream, smell* etc.) are more often used in the regular form in American than British English
- *gotten*
is the Old English form of the past participle of *get* which American English has retained in certain senses