

Past Tense of Know: Knew and Known

Know is an irregular verb. Use knew for the past and known after have or has. The k is silent in all forms.

Base	know
Past	knew
Past participle	known
3rd person / -ing	knows / knowing

Examples

I know the answer. — Know describes something that is in your mind now.

Do you know her phone number? — After do, the verb stays as know.

She knew the way to the station. — Knew is the past form; it sounds like new.

We knew nobody at the party. — Knew nobody means we did not know anyone there.

I have known him since school. — Have known links the past to now.

Have you known Tom for a long time? — In questions, have comes before the subject.

Notes

Knew sounds like new The k is silent in know, knew and known. Knew is pronounced exactly like new, and the context shows which word is meant.

No continuous form for knowing Know describes a state, so we say I know her, not I am knowing her. Do not use know in the present continuous.

Common mistakes

I knowed the answer. → I knew the answer. — Know is irregular: the past is knew, never knowed.

She has knew him for years. → She has known him for years. — After has or have, use the past participle known.

I am knowing her. → I know her. — Know is a state verb, so it does not use the continuous form.

Exercises

Choose the right form

1. I didn't ___ your brother was here. (knew / know / known)
2. We have ___ our neighbors for ten years. (know / knew / known)
3. I ___ that man. He is my teacher. (know / knew / known)
4. When she was young, she ___ everyone in the village. (know / known / knew)

Write the missing form

1. Have you ___ Anna for a long time?
2. He ___ the way, so we did not ask.
3. I ___ the answer now!

Correct the mistake

1. She has knew him for ages.

Answer key

Choose the right form

1. know — After didn't, the verb stays in the base form know.
2. known — After have, use the participle known.
3. know — The sentence is in the present, so use know.
4. knew — When she was young is past, so use knew.

Write the missing form

1. known — Have you plus the past participle is have you known.
2. knew — The past form is knew.
3. know — A present state uses know.

Correct the mistake

1. known — After has, use known, not knew.

<https://www.fluencyroad.com/irregular-verbs/know>