

Past Tense of Pay: Paid

Pay is an irregular verb. Its past form and past participle are the same word: paid. Say I paid the bill and I have paid the bill, never payed.

Base	pay
Past	paid
Past participle	paid
3rd person / -ing	pays / paying

Examples

I pay the bill at the end of the meal. — Pay is the base form with I, you, we and they.

We pay by card in this shop. — Pay by card, pay by cash and pay online are common phrases.

She paid ten dollars for the ticket. — Paid is the past form; it does not need have.

He paid for lunch yesterday. — Yesterday points to a finished action, so use paid.

I have paid my bill already. — After have, the participle is also paid.

They have paid for the tickets online. — Have paid for means the money is already gone.

Notes

Pay for something Use pay for before the thing you buy: pay for the tickets, pay for the coffee. Pay goes directly with an amount, a bill or a person: pay ten dollars, pay the bill, pay the driver.

Spelling and set phrases The past is paid with an i, never payed. In pay attention, the verb pay means give: Please pay attention means please listen and watch carefully.

Common mistakes

I payed the bill yesterday. → I paid the bill yesterday. — Pay is irregular; the past form is paid, with an i, never payed.

He paid the coffee with his card. → He paid for the coffee with his card. — Use pay for before the thing you buy. Pay without for goes with an amount, a bill or a person.

Exercises

Choose the right form

1. Yesterday I ___ for my lunch with my own money. (pay / paid / payed)
2. She has ___ the phone bill. (payed / pay / paid)
3. We usually ___ by card here. (pay / paid / payed)
4. Please ___ attention to the teacher. (paid / pay / pays)

Write the missing form

1. They have ___ for the hotel.
2. My father ___ for dinner last night.
3. I ___ my phone bill on the first of every month.

Correct the mistake

1. She payed for the bus ticket.

Answer key

Choose the right form

1. paid — Yesterday is a finished past time, so use paid.
2. paid — Has takes the past participle paid.
3. pay — Usually shows a present habit: we pay.
4. pay — After please, use the base form pay.

Write the missing form

1. paid — Have plus the past participle is have paid.
2. paid — Last night is finished, so use the past simple paid.
3. pay — Every month shows a routine, so use pay.

Correct the mistake

1. paid — The past of pay is paid, not payed.

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