

Past Tense of Speak: Spoke and Spoken

Speak is an irregular verb. Use spoke for a finished action in the past. Use spoken after have or has.

Base	speak
Past	spoke
Past participle	spoken
3rd person / -ing	speaks / speaking

Examples

I speak English with my teacher. — Speak with I, you, we and they in the present.

Do you speak Spanish at home? — After do, use the base form speak.

She spoke to the manager yesterday. — Yesterday points to a finished past action.

We spoke on the phone last night. — Spoke is the past form; it does not need have.

I have spoken to him twice this week. — After have, use the participle spoken.

They have spoken to their neighbor about the noise. — Have spoken is the present perfect.

Notes

Speak or talk? Speak is a little more formal and is used for languages: speak French. Talk is more informal: talk to a friend. Both take to: speak to the teacher, talk to the teacher.

Spoke is not the participle Spoke is only the simple past: I spoke to her. After have or has, use spoken: I have spoken to her.

Common mistakes

I speaked to her yesterday. → I spoke to her yesterday. — Speak is irregular. Its past form is spoke, not speaked.

She has spoke to the teacher. → She has spoken to the teacher. — After has, use the past participle spoken.

He has spoken to me last week. → He spoke to me last week. — Last week is a finished time, so use the simple past spoke, not have spoken.

Exercises

Choose the right form

1. She ___ to her boss this morning. (spoke / spoken / speaked)
2. Have you ___ to Anna today? (spoke / spoken / speaked)
3. I ___ English at work every day. (speak / spoke / spoken)
4. Can you ___ more slowly, please? (speak / spoke / spoken)

Write the missing form

1. They ___ on the phone for an hour last night.
2. I have ___ to my teacher about it.
3. She is ___ to her mother now.

Correct the mistake

1. I have spoke to the doctor.

Answer key

Choose the right form

1. spoke — A finished action in the past uses spoke.
2. spoken — After have, use the participle spoken.
3. speak — Every day describes a present routine: I speak.
4. speak — After can, use the base form speak.

Write the missing form

1. spoke — A finished past action uses spoke.
2. spoken — Have plus the participle is have spoken.
3. speaking — Now needs the -ing form: speaking.

Correct the mistake

1. spoken — After have, use spoken, not spoke.

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