

Past Tense of Understand: Understood

Understand is an irregular verb. Its past form and past participle are the same word: understood. Say I understood the lesson and I have understood the lesson.

Base	understand
Past	understood
Past participle	understood
3rd person / -ing	understands / understanding

Examples

I understand the question. — Understand is the base form with I, you, we and they.

Do you understand this word? — After do, use the base form understand.

She understood the teacher very well. — Understood is the past form; it does not need have.

We understood the story only at the end. — The action is finished, so use understood.

I have understood the rule now. — After have, the participle is also understood.

They have understood the instructions. — Have understood means they know what to do now.

Notes

Understand ends like stand Understand is stand with under in front. It follows the same pattern as stand, stood, stood, so the past is understood. Never write understooded.

Not usually with -ing Understand is a state verb, so we normally say I understand you, not I am understanding you. Use the simple form even when you mean right now.

Common mistakes

I understooded the lesson. → I understood the lesson. — Understand is irregular; the past form is understood, never understooded.

I am understanding you now. → I understand you now. — Understand describes a state, so it is normally not used with -ing.

Exercises

Choose the right form

1. Yesterday I ___ the lesson very well. (understand / understood / understooded)
2. She has ___ the rule at last. (understood / understand / understooded)
3. Do you ___ this question? (understood / understooded / understand)
4. We ___ the teacher when she spoke slowly. (understand / understood / understooded)

Write the missing form

1. They have ___ the instructions.
2. My brother ___ the film last night.
3. I don't ___ this word.

Correct the mistake

1. She understood the question.

Answer key

Choose the right form

1. understood — Yesterday is a finished past time, so use understood.
2. understood — Has takes the past participle understood.
3. understand — After do, use the base form understand.
4. understood — The speaking is finished, so use the past simple understood.

Write the missing form

1. understood — Have plus the past participle is have understood.
2. understood — Last night is finished, so use the past simple understood.
3. understand — After don't, use the base form understand.

Correct the mistake

1. understood — The past of understand is understood, not understood.

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