

PAST TENSE

Guardate le seguenti due frasi:

1. I went to the movies.

2. I have been to Paris.

Qual e' la differenza?

Can you say:

“I went to the movies yesterday.” ?

Can you say:

*“I have been to Paris last year.”?

In English, you **CANNOT** use the 2-word past tense (present perfect) when you specify **WHEN** something happened.

In Italian, you **CAN**. Actually, the 2-word past tense is the most used.

The two words used for the past have a name:

1. Auxiliary/Ausiliare - *Avere o essere (to have or to be)*

2. Past Participle/Participio passato
English "ed" = Italian -ato, -uto, -ito.

Examples:

I have *bought* a new car = **Ho comprato** una macchina nuova.

She *has eaten* a pizza. = Lei **ha mangiato** una pizza.

We *have watched* TV yesterday. = **Abbiamo guardato** la tv ieri.

Have you *received* my letter? = **Hai ricevuto** la mia lettera?

They *have slept* here. = **Hanno dormito** qui.

Now the question is: When do we use “to be” and when do we use “to have” as an auxiliary?

You need to know the difference between a transitive and an intransitive verb 😊

TRANSITIVE VERBS may be followed by a direct object.

Ho mangiato + una mela.

Hanno ricevuto + una lettera.

Ha avuto + la febbre.

Abbiamo incontrato + tua sorella.

A pretty easy way to tell a transitive verb is to check whether it answers the questions WHO and/or WHAT?

Ex. “sognare” + chi? *Ho sognato il mio amico!*

“guidare” + cosa? *Hai guidato la mia macchina?*

Unless irregular, a verb is transitive if it answers these questions.

INTRANSITIVE VERBS are **NOT** followed by a direct object.

Sono andato + **a** mare.

Siamo ritornati + **con** il treno.

E' partito + **per** Roma.

Siete riusciti + **a** finire il lavoro?

Your auxiliary will be one of the forms of the verb “to be” if your main verb is *intransitive* or *reflexive*.

Also, intransitive verbs have to **match** with the subject, so you might need to change the ending.

Ho ballato molto; Lei **ha** cantato male; Noi **abbiamo** parlato inglese.

BUT

Io sono entrata in un negozio; Tu sei andata a Roma?

Noi siamo state a Roma; Loro *sono* restati a casa.