



El imperfecto (–AR verbs)

Semillas: Elementary Spanish II

What is *el imperfecto*?

The imperfect tense in Spanish is used to talk about **past actions** that were **habitual, repeated or ongoing**. It is also used to **describe** people and places or set a scene in the past.

For example, “I **used to play** in the park every day,” would use the imperfect tense to show that this was a repeated activity in the past.





How do we form *el imperfecto* of –AR verbs?

Paso 1. Take off the –AR ending of an infinitive verb

Hablar-> habl-

Paso 2. Add the appropriate ending based on the subject

Yo habl aba	Nosotros habl ábamos
Tú habl abas	Vosotras habl abais
Ella habl aba	Ellos habl aban



When do we use *el imperfecto*?



To describe **habits or repeated actions** in the past.

Mi hermano siempre nadaba en la piscina durante los veranos.

My brother always swam in the pool during the summers.

To **set the scene** in a story by describing the background, such as the weather, a person's mood, or the setting.

El sol brillaba, y los pájaros cantaban.

The sun was shining, and the birds were singing.



To talk about **ongoing or continuous situations** in the past.

Yo hablaba por teléfono y los niños jugaban.

I was talking on the phone and the children were playing.

Some more examples

De niña, me **gustaba** explorar el bosque con mis amigos.

As a child, I liked to explore the forest with my friends.

Cada verano, **acampábamos** cerca del Lago Okoboji.

Every summer, we used to camp near Lake Okoboji.

Todos los invitados **celebraban** y **bailaban**.

All the guests were celebrating and dancing.

