

A stylized botanical illustration in muted earth tones. It features a large, dark, circular shape on the left, possibly a seed pod or a flower bud, with radiating lines. To the right, there are vertical, leaf-like shapes and a small, dark, circular shape. The overall style is modern and artistic.

# El pretérito: Irregular 3rds

Semillas: Elementary Spanish II



# What are irregular 3rds?

Some verbs have **stem or spelling changes** in the preterite tense, but only in the

**singular and plural third-person forms**

*(él / ella / elle / usted & ellos / ellas / elles / ustedes).*

You will have to memorize which verbs are irregular, but these changes mostly happen with certain verbs that end in -IR or in cases where there is a vowel before an -ER or -IR ending.



# How to form irregular 3rds (e-i)

**Paso 1.** Follow the steps for forming a regular preterite verb for all forms **EXCEPT** the third person.

**Paso 2.** Only in the **third person forms**, the **stem changes from e-i**.

Some verbs that follow this pattern:

- pedir (*to ask for*)
- servir (*to serve*)
- preferir (*to prefer*)
- mentir (*to lie*)
- competir (*to compete*)

Pedir (e-i)	
pedí	pedimos
pediste	pedisteis
pidió	pidieron



# How to form irregular 3rds (o-u)



**Paso 1.** Follow the steps for forming a regular preterite verb for all forms EXCEPT the third person.

**Paso 2.** Only in the **third person forms**, the **stem changes from o-u**.

Some verbs that follow this pattern:

- dormir (*to sleep*)
- morir (*to die*)

Dormir (o-u)	
dormí	dormimos
dormiste	dormisteis
<b>durmió</b>	<b>durmieron</b>



# How to form irregular 3rds (i-y)

**Paso 1.** Follow the steps for forming a regular preterite verb for all forms EXCEPT the third person.

**Paso 2.** Only in the **third person forms**, the **vowel changes from i-y**. Note that verbs that have a vowel before an –ER or –IR ending take accents in some of their preterite forms.

Some verbs that follow this pattern:

- leer (*to read*)
- creer (*to believe*)
- oír (*to hear*)

Leer (i-y)	
leí	leímos
leíste	leísteis
leyó	leyeron

# Some examples

Ayer **competí** en un torneo de tenis y mis amigos **compiteiron** en un torneo de beisbol.

*Yesterday I competed in a tennis tournament, and my friends competed in a baseball tournament.*

Carlos se **durmió** a las nueve anoche.

*Carlos fell asleep at 9:00 last night.*



Ellos estaban en el mercado cuando **oyeron** las noticias.

*They were at the market when they heard the news.*