

Wh- Questions in the Past Simple Tense

You can ask Wh- questions in the past tense.

Wh- question words include:

- What
- Where
- When
- Why
- Who
- How

These types of questions require more information than a simple Yes or No answer.

When asking Wh- questions, you need to add the word “did”.

Wh- Past Simple Questions

Wh- + did + Subject + Verb?

What		I	
Where		You	
When		He	
Why	did	She	say?
Who		It	
How		We	
		They	

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What

You can use “what” to ask for information.

For example:

- **What** did you do?
- **What** did she say?

You can also use “what” to ask for someone to repeat what they said.

For example:

- Sorry, I can’t hear you. **What** did you say?

Where

You can use “where” to ask for the position of something or someone.

For example:

- **Where** did they go?
- **Where** did Sam live?

When

You can use “when” to ask about time.

For example:

- **When** did the meeting start?
- **When** did the plane arrive?

Why

You can use “why” to ask for the reason.

For example:

- **Why** did they not call back?
- **Why** did he not study for the test?

Who

You can use “who” to ask for which person or persons did an action.

For example:

- **Who** did that?
- **Who** did you call?

How

You can use “how” to ask about manner.

For example:

- **How** did this work?
- **How** did they do that?

You can also use “how” to ask about quality or condition.

For example:

- **How** did you do on the test?
- **How** did it go?

Wh- Questions with “to be”

You can also ask Wh- questions in the past simple tense with the verb “to be”.

Wh- Past Simple Questions with "to be"

Wh- + to be + Subject + ?

What	was	I	
Where	were	You	
When	was	He	
Why	was	She	?
Who	were	It	
How	were	We	
		They	

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For example:

- **What** was in the box?
- **Where** were they?
- **When** did they get back?
- **Who** was at the door?
- **How** was class?

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Practice Exercises

1. A: _____ did they do yesterday?
B: They went shopping.
2. A: _____ did she get here?
B: She took the bus.
3. A: _____ was that?
B: It was nothing.
4. A: _____ did you eat dinner?
B: I ate it a few hours ago.
5. A: _____ was your 4th grade teacher?
B: She was Mrs. Smith.
6. A: _____ did they not call?
B: They were busy.
7. A: _____ ate my pizza?
B: Susie ate it.
8. A: _____ did he say?
B: He said that he would be late.
9. A: _____ did the plane land?
B: It landed at 4:30 pm.
10. A: _____ was the meal?
B: It was very tasty.

Answers:

1. What
2. How
3. What
4. When
5. Who
6. Why
7. Who
8. What
9. When
10. How