

IMPERFECT CHEAT SHEET

The imperfect tense is used for ongoing or repeated actions in the past. It also describes the way things were, what used to happen or was going on, and the way people felt in general. Generally speaking, the imperfect is used for actions in the past that are not seen as completed. Use of the imperfect tense implies that the past action did not have a definite beginning or a definite end.

- The imperfect tense is used for actions that were repeated habitually.

Comíamos el almuerzo juntos todos los días.

We would eat lunch together every day.

Las señoras siempre hablaban por las mañanas.

The ladies would always talk in the mornings.

- The imperfect is used for actions that “set the stage” for another action.

Yo leía cuando entró mi papá.

I was reading when my father entered. (Note that “entered” is in the preterite)

- The imperfect is used for telling time and stating one’s age.

Eran las siete de la noche.

It was seven o'clock at night.

La niña tenía cinco años.

The little girl was five years old

The verb endings for regular verbs are in the following chart using the following verbs as examples: **hablar, comer, vivir**. What do you notice about the **-AR** endings? What do you notice about the yo, and él, ella, Ud. form? What do you notice about the **-ER and -IR endings?**

-AR		-ER		-IR	
hablaba	hablábamos	comía	comíamos	vivía	vivíamos
hablabas	hablabais	comías	comíais	vivías	vivíais
hablaba	hablaban	comía	comían	vivía	vivían

*****-AR verbs are regular in the imperfect tense.

GOOD NEWS!!!! THERE ARE ONLY THREE IRREGULAR VERBS IN THE IMPERFECT. YOU

MUST SIMPLY MEMORIZE THE FOLLOWING THREE. 😊

<u>Ir</u>	<u>Ver</u>	<u>Ser</u>
iba íbamos	veía veíamos	era éramos
ibas ibais	veías veíais	eras erais
iba iban	veía veían	era eran

One does not normally think of a general mental state or physical sensations as having a definite beginning or end, and so they are usually expressed in the imperfect.

Ramón tenía miedo de hablar en público.

Ramon was afraid to speak in public.

Yo creía que Juan podía hacerlo.

I thought that Juan could do it.

Me gustaba el coche.

I liked the car. (The car was pleasing to me.)

The imperfect is used to describe how things **were or what things were like**. Use the imperfect **when describing the characteristics of people, things or conditions**.

Era un chico muy inteligente.

He was a very intelligent boy.

Era una señorita muy guapa.

She was a beautiful young lady.

Las ventanas estaban abiertas.

The windows were open.

La casa era blanca.

The house was white.