

THE PAST TENSE

There is only one past tense in Czech language. We use it for everything what happened in past, even if it is only one second ago.

Forms of the past tense are created from the infinitive:

STUDOVAL – T changes to L

STUDOVAL – this is the basic form of the past tense.

The first and the second person (JÁ, TY) are created by adding present forms of the verb TO BE.

STUDOVAL JSEM – I studied or I was studying.

STUDOVAL JSI- You studied or You were studying.

The third person doesn't use TO BE:

STUDOVAL – He studied or He was studying.

If you want to make the female forms, you have to add A to the end, for the neutral gender O:

STUDOVALA JSEM

STUDOVAL O JSEM

STUDOVALA JSI

STUDOVAL O JSI

STUDOVALA

STUDOVAL O

In the plural we use the same system:

STUDOVALI JSME We studied / We were studying

STUDOVALI JSTE You studied / You were studying

STUDOVALI They studied /They were studying

Forms STUDOVALY/A are for the masculins inanimate, feminins and neutrals, if there is no masculine animate. If you have a group of one hundred of women and only one man, this man is more important than one hundred of women and the grammar ending must be according to him.

In the second person of singular we very often use the shortened forms

STUDOVALS (= STUDOVAL JSI)

STUDOVALAS (= STUDOVALA JSI)

These shortened forms are used ONLY for the second person of singular, they are not possible to be used for any other person.

NEGATION:

For negative forms we have to put NE before the main verb:

NESTUDOVAL JSEM NESTUDOVALA JSEM

NEVER form negations STUDOVAL NEJSEM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

IRREGULAR PAST FORMS:

The most common verbs having irregular forms of the past tense are:

BÝT (be) - BYL (present já jsem) The length drops out.

BÝT is conjugated in the past tense:

BYL/A JSEM BYLI JSME

BYL/A JSI BYLI JSTE

BYL/A BYLI

MOCI/ MOCT (can) – MOHL (present já můžu)

MÍT (have) - MĚL (present já mám)

CHTÍT (want) - CHTĚL (present já chci)

ČÍST (read) - ČETL (present já čtu)

SPÁT (sleep) - SPAL (present spím)

PÍT (drink) - PIL (present já piju)

PSÁT (write) - PSAL (present já píšu) Be careful and don't confuse these two verbs.

JÍST (eat) - JEDL (present jím)

JÍT (go on foot) - ŠEL male form ŠLA female form ŠLO neutral form ŠLI plural form (present jdu)

The verb JÍT is irregular, the verb JET is regular with the past tense JEL JSEM.

Also some perfective verbs have irregular forms of the past tense, the most important of them are:

UMŘÍT (die) - UMŘEL (umřu) this form means I will die because umřít is the perfective verb)

VZÍT (take) - VZAL (vezmu)

ŘÍCT (say) - ŘEKL (řeknu)

POMOCT (help) - POMOHL (pomůžu)

ZAPOMENOUT (forget) - ZAPOMNĚL (zapomenu)

THE WORD ORDER:

The auxiliaries JSEM, JSI, JSME, JSTE must be at the second position in the sentence. Reflexive pronouns SE, SI move to the third position.

DÍVAL JSEM SE NA TELEVIZI. **Díval – the first position**

Jsem – the second position

SE – the third position

Than the rest of the sentence

If you start in the different way:

VČERA JSEM SE DÍVAL NA TELEVIZI. – **Včera – the first position, jsem the second position, se the third position and than the rest of the sentence.**

The first position doesn't mean the first word only. It can be longer.

VČERA VEČER A DNES RÁNO JSEM SE DÍVAL NA TELEVIZI. **Včera večer a dnes ráno is only one information about the time when I watched TV. So the whole this expression is the first position.**

If we start a sentence with a pronoun the system is the same.

JÁ JSEM SE DÍVAL NA TELEVIZI VČERA VEČER A DNES RÁNO.

1 2 3 and the of the sentence.

Vařila(1) jsem(2) oběd. – Já(1) jsem(2) vařila oběd.

Kde(1) jste(2) byli? – Byli(1) jsme(2) na fakultě. / My(1) jsme(2) byli na fakultě.

In the third person pronouns SE, SI are normally at the second position:

Petr si nemyl ruce. Dnes si Petr nemyl ruce.