

## Past imperfect (or descriptive past) tense.

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Past imperfect (or descriptive past) tense. Замони гузаштаи ҳикоягӣ

Whereas the simple past tense communicates a single action in the past that is finished, the past imperfect tense is used to describe repetition or a continuous action in the past.

Compare

Simple past: I read a book.

Past imperfect: I used to read books.

Simple past: I went to your house yesterday.

Past imperfect: When I was little I would play at your house.

The past imperfect is formed by adding the prefix ме- to the simple past.

мекардам	I used to do	мекардем	we used to do
мекардӣ	you used to do	мекардед	you used to do
мекард	he/she used to do	мекарданд	they used to do

The above chart could be translated “used to do”, “would do” or “did” depending on the context. The negative is formed by adding the prefix на-.

Examples:

Ман дар Самарканд <b>зиндагӣ мекардам.</b>	I used to live in Samarkand. <i>or</i> I lived in Samarkand.
Мо ба мактаб <b>мерафтем.</b>	We used to go to school.
Шумо дар мактаби даҳ <b>дарс медодед?</b>	Did you used to teach at school number 10?
Мардум ба назди <b>ӯ меомаданду таъмид мегирифтанд.</b>	Men would come to him and would be baptized.
Яҳё онҳоро дар дарёи Урдун <b>таъмид медод.</b>	John would baptize them in the river Jordan.
Исо ба онҳо каломи Худоро <b>таълим медод.</b>	Jesus would teach them the Word of God.
Студентҳо аз муаллим <b>мепурсиданд.</b>	The students would ask the teacher.
Пеш аз Революцияи Октябр коргарон рӯзе дувоздаҳ-чордаҳ соат <b>кор мекарданд.</b>	Before the October Revolution workers would work twelve to fourteen hours a day.
Падарам дар завод <b>кор мекард.</b>	My father used to work at a factory.
Онҳо ҳамеша <b>китоб мехонданд.</b>	They always read books.
Он вақт ман дар институт <b>мехондам.</b>	At that time I studied at the institute.
Ҳар рӯз барои ӯ газетаи нав <b>меовардам.</b>	Every day I would bring him a new newspaper.
Бошандагони ин ду хона дар айёми тобистон шабона дар он ҷо <b>менишастанд.</b>	The inhabitants of these two homes would sit there in the summer evenings.

Ошпаз аз дег ба табақҳо оши палав <b>кашида медод</b> ва ҷавонон он табақҳоро бурда ба пеши меҳмонон <b>мегузошанд</b> ва табақҳои холишударо оварда ба ошпаз <b>медоданд</b> .	The cook would serve and give the plates of pillau from the big pot and the youth would take the plates and put them in front of the guests and bring the empty plates to the cook.
Ман хар шаб мактуб <b>менавиштам</b> .	I used to write a letter every evening.
Суворов ватани худро хеле <b>дӯст медошт</b> .	Suvorov loved his country very much.
Ӯ дар асри XVIII <b>зиндагонӣ мекард</b> .	He lived in the 18 <sup>th</sup> century.
Вай <b>мегуфт</b> : “Душманро бо маҳорат задан даркор аст, на бо сершуморӣ”.	He used to say: “You need to hit your enemies with skill, not with a huge amount (of people)”.
Духтарон суруд хонда пахта <b>мечинданд</b> .	The girls would sing and pick cotton.

The past imperfect cannot be used to refer to a definite time in the past, but instead must refer to a period of time within which the action used to occur. For example, in English we cannot say, “Yesterday I used to go to your house.” We would say, “Yesterday I went to your house.” (simple past)

The past imperfect cannot be used for a definite period of time. If a definite period of time is indicated, the simple past must be used. See these examples:

Мо се сол дар Узбекистон <b>зиндагӣ кардем</b> .	We lived three years in Uzbekistan. (simple past)
Мо дар Узбекистон <b>зиндагӣ мекардем</b> .	We used to live in Uzbekistan. (past imperfect)
Ҳафтаи гузашта ман ба Наҷиб мактуб <b>навиштам</b> .	Last week I wrote a letter to Najib. (simple past)
Вақте ман дар Испания будам, ба Наҷиб бисёр <b>мактуб менавиштам</b> .	When I was in Spain, I wrote lots of letters to Najib. (past imperfect)

The past imperfect tense is also used to express an unreal action (i.e. an unrealized desire, condition, or possibility). See these examples:

Агар ба китобхона <b>мерафтам</b> , барои худ китоб <b>мегирифтам</b> .	If I would have gone to the library, I would have taken a book for myself
Агар ба фолбин <b>мерафт</b> , бе дорую даво <b>табобат мекард</b> .	If he had gone to a fortune teller, he would have been treated without medicine.
Агар китобашро <b>меовард</b> , ҳамроҳ вазифаи хонагиरो <b>иҷро мекардем</b> .	If he had brought his book, we would have done the homework together.
Агар ман духтур <b>мебудам</b> , дармонхонаи хусусӣ <b>мекушодам</b> .	If I had been a doctor, I would have opened a private clinic.
Агар ту дар он ҷо <b>мебудӣ</b> , ҳама кор хуб <b>мешуд</b> .	If you had been there, everything (all the work) would have been good.
Агар ба хона <b>мерасид</b> , ба ман <b>занг мезад</b> .	If he had arrived home, he would have called me.
Агар ӯ хоҳиш <b>медошт</b> , ҳамроҳи мо ба театр <b>мерафт</b> .	If he had wanted, he would have gone with us to the theatre.

The past imperfect tense is also used to express desirability, only in combination with the word *кошки* (if only, I wish).

Кошки <b>медонистам</b> .	If only I knew. <i>or</i> I wish I knew.
Кошки дирӯз ҳамин хел <b>мешуд</b> .	If only yesterday had been like this.
Кошки ӯ <b>меомад</b> .	If only he had come. <i>or</i> I wish he had come
Кошки ӯро <b>намедидам</b> .	If only I hadn't seen him
Кошки ба вай мактуб <b>менавиштам</b> .	I wish I would have written him a letter.

Бояд is followed by the past imperfect tense of a verb to indicate that the subject was obligated to perform an action in the past. This construction is best translated as “had to, should have”. The negative is formed by adding на- to the verb or to бояд.

Ман бояд ... мекардам	I had to do	Мо бояд ... мекардем	we had to do
Ту бояд ... мекардӣ	you had to do	Шумо бояд ... мекардед	you had to do
Вай бояд ... мекард	he/she had to do	Онҳо бояд ... мекарданд	they had to do

Examples:

Онҳо бояд ба Душанбе <b>мерафтанд</b> .	They had to go to Dushanbe.
Ту бояд дар он ҷо <b>намомондӣ</b> .	You didn't have to stay there.
Ту дар он ҷо набояд <b>момондӣ</b> .	You shouldn't have stayed there.

Шояд is followed by the past imperfect tense of a verb to indicate that the subject had the possibility of performing an action in the past (perhaps I would have gone).

Ман шояд ... мекардам	I might have done	Мо шояд ... мекардем	we might have done
Ту шояд ... мекардӣ	you might have done	Шумо шояд ... мекардед	you might have done
Вай шояд ... мекард	he/she might have done	Онҳо шояд ... мекарданд	they might have done

Examples:

Ба ҷояш ту шояд лағмон <b>мехӯрдӣ</b> .	You should have eaten <i>laghman</i> instead.
Ман шояд ба Душанбе <b>намерафтам</b> .	Perhaps I shouldn't have gone to Dushanbe.

Some examples and explanations were taken from these sources:

Забони Тоҷикӣ, С. Арзуманов

The Official Beginners' Guide to Tajiki, Dr. Azim Baizoyev

Tajiki Textbook and Reader, Michael Craig Hillmann

Tajiki, An Elementary Textbook, Nasrullo Khojayori

Ёддоштҳо, С. Айнӣ