**The Imperfect**

The imperfect tense is used to refer to actions in the past that occurred repeatedly.

I used to walk every day.  
Yo **caminaba** cada día.

The imperfect tense is also used to refer to actions in the past that occurred over an extended period of time.

I used to eat paella frequently.  
Yo **comía** frecuentemente paella.

The imperfect tense is also used to "set the stage" for an event that occurred in the past.

We were coming home when we saw Juan.  
**Veníamos** para casa cuando vimos a Juan.

Actions which are not physical, that is feelings and mental actions, usually use the imperfect tense.

Juan was feeling sick.  
Juan **estaba** enfermo.

The imperfect is frequently associated with phrases that describe the frequency of past actions.

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| **a menudo**  often | **Frecuentemente**  frequently |
| **Generalmente**  usually | **en aquella época**  at that time |
| **muchas veces** many time | **a veces**  sometimes |
| **cada día**  every day | **cada año**  every year |
| **con frecuencia**  frequently | **de vez en cuando**  from time to time |
| **mucho** a lot | **nunca** never |
| **por un rato** for awhile | **siempre** always |
| **tantas veces** so many times | **todas las semanas** every week |
| **todos los días** every day | **todo el tiempo** all the time |
| **varias veces** several times |  |

Regular forms of the imperfect are formed by adding the following endings to the stem of the verb:

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| -ar verbs | example: hablar |
| aba abas aba ábamos abais aban | hablaba hablabas hablaba hablábamos hablabais hablaban |
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| **-er verbs, -ir verbs** | | **example: vivir** | |  |
| ía ías ía íamos íais ían | vivía vivías vivía vivíamos vivíais vivían | |  | |

**Only three verbs are irregular in the imperfect:**

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| **ser** | **ver** | **ir** |
| era  eras era éramos erais eran | veía veías veía veíamos veíais veían | iba ibas iba íbamos ibais iban |