

Changing Verb Tense: A WritingFix Overhead handout

Rule 1: Changing present tense verbs to progressive tense (-ing) form: When adding *-ing* to most verbs, which will make the verb progressive tense, simply add the *-ing*, even when the verb ends in *y*.

Verbs ending with a consonant, like *p*'s and *d*'s and *t*'s go back and forth between being doubled and not being doubled when adding *-ing*. It's safest to always check in the dictionary if you are not sure.

If the verb you're changing ends in *e*, drop the *e* when adding the *-ing*, except in rare circumstances.

- Examples of the above rules:
- hurry --becomes-->hurrying
- interpret --becomes-->interpreting
- diagram --becomes-->diagramming
- swipe --becomes-->swiping

Rule 2: Changing present tense to past tense (-ed) with regular verbs: When adding *-ed* to most verbs, to make them past tense (as if the action happened yesterday or a minute ago), sometimes you have to change a *y* to an *i*.

Verbs ending with a consonant, like *p*'s and *d*'s and *t*'s, go back and forth between being doubled and not being doubled. It's safest to always check in the dictionary if you are not sure.

If the present tense verb ends in *e*, just add the *d* to make the verb past tense.

- Examples of the above rules:
- simplify --becomes-->simplified
- interpret --becomes-->interpreted
- diagram --becomes-->diagrammed
- loathe --becomes-->loathed

Rule 3: Changing present tense to past tense with irregular verbs:

With certain verbs, making them past tense involves changing the form of the word slightly. These are your verbs that don't sound quite right when you go to past tense by adding an *-ed*.

Sound out similar sounding words as you search for the past tense form of irregular verbs.

- Examples of the above rules:
- think --becomes-->thought
- teach --becomes-->taught
- know --becomes-->knew
- deal --becomes-->dealt

