

# HDHS #9: El Imperfecto

■ The imperfect is past tense which is used to talk about:

1. Background events in a story (descriptions)
2. Something you used to do (habitual, repeated actions)
3. Continuing past actions (“was/were –ing”)
4. How old someone was
5. What time it was

■ The Imperfect tense is often translated as “used to” or “was/were –ing”.

Yo **hablaba** con Diego por teléfono.  
 Don Miguel **trabajaba** todos los días.  
 Eran las dos y media.

I **was talking** to Diego on the phone.  
 Don Miguel **used to work** everyday.  
 It **was** 2:30.

■ The imperfect is formed by adding the following endings:

SUBJECT PRONOUNS	-AR	-ER, -IR
yo	-aba	-ía
tú	-abas	-ías
él, ella, ud.	-aba	-ía
nosotros (-as)	-ábamos	-íamos
ellos, ellas, uds.	-aban	-ían

Son iguales,  
mis amigos.



NOTE: –ER, –IR forms are the same.

■ The name imperfect implies that this tense might have a lot of irregulars, but that is not the case. In fact, there are no stem changers, no irregular yo’s, and no 3V’s to worry about. There are only three irregular verbs in this tense, making the imperfect tense nearly perfect!

SUBJECT PRONOUNS	SER	IR	VER
yo	era	iba	veía
tú	eras	ibas	veías
él, ella, ud.	era	iba	veía
nosotros (-as)	éramos	íbamos	veíamos
ellos, ellas, uds.	eran	iban	veían