



Use

- We use the **past simple of be** to talk about the past.

Martin **wasn't** at a concert last night. He **was** at home.
Sally and Tom **weren't** at home. They **were** at a concert.



- We often use **was / were** with past time expressions, e.g. *last week, in 2003, 500 years ago, yesterday*.

We **were** in Paris **last week**.
It **wasn't** very hot **yesterday**.

Tip

We use *was / were* with **born**.
*I **was born** in 1998. (NOT ~~I am born~~ in 1998.)*

- We use **There was / There were** to talk about things or people in a place in the past.

- '**Was there** a party at Lisa's house last Saturday?'
- 'Yes, **there was**. **There were** a lot of people at the party.'



Tip

We use *There was / wasn't + a / an* with singular countable nouns:

*There was **an** interesting movie on TV last night.*

We use *There were + some* or a number with plural nouns:

*There were **some** students in the classroom.*

We use *any* for negative sentences and questions with plural nouns:

*Were there **any** exams last week?*

*There weren't **any** cars 200 years ago.*



Form

- *Was* and *were* are the past simple positive forms of *be*:

Positive (+)		
Subject	<i>be</i>	
I He / She / It	was	at home yesterday evening.
You We They	were	

- *Wasn't* and *weren't* are the past simple negative forms of *be*:

Negative (-)		
Subject	<i>wasn't / weren't</i>	
I He / She / It	wasn't	at home yesterday evening.
You We They	weren't	

Tip

Wasn't is the short form of *was not*.
Weren't is the short form of *were not*.

We usually use short forms, but we sometimes use full forms in writing.

- We form *yes / no questions* with *was* and *were* like this:

<i>yes / no questions</i>			<i>Short answers</i>					
<i>Was / Were</i>	subject		Positive (+)			Negative (-)		
Was	I he / she / it	at home yesterday evening?	Yes,	I he / she / it	was.	No,	I he / she / it	wasn't.
Were	you we they			you we they			were.	

Tip

We usually use short forms in negative short answers:

'Were your friends at the party?'

*'No, **they weren't.**' (NOT 'No, they were not.')*



- We form sentences and questions with *there was* like this:

<i>There was</i>		
Positive (+)	There was	a concert at school last Saturday.
Negative (-)	There wasn't	
Questions (?)	Was there	a concert at school last Saturday?
Short answers	Yes, there was. No, there wasn't.	

- We form sentences and questions with *there were* like this:

<i>There were</i>		
Positive (+)	There were	some students in the classroom this morning.
Negative (-)	There weren't	any students in the classroom this morning.
Questions (?)	Were there	any students in the classroom this morning?
Short answers	Yes, there were. No, there weren't.	