

How to Pronounce the Past -ed Form of Regular Verbs

The past forms (2nd and 3rd forms) of all regular verbs in English end in “-ed”. Sometimes “-ed” is pronounced **uhd**, sometimes **d**, and sometimes **t**. It depends on the **sound** (not the spelling) at the end of the infinitive form of the verb:

1. If the verb ends with a **t** sound, “-ed” is pronounced as an extra syllable **uhd**
e.g. “accepted” is pronounced uh Kse ptd All of these verbs (and more) follow this pattern:

accept, admit, alienate, attempt, attract, chat, cheat, communicate, complete, correct, create, debate, distract, doubt, exist, experiment, fascinate, fit, hate, hunt, invent, invite, last, paint, point, post, print, protect, start, suggest, tempt, test, text, trust, visit, wait, want, waste

2. If the verb ends with a **d** sound, “-ed” is pronounced as an extra syllable **uhd**
e.g. “wanted” is pronounced Won td All of these verbs (and more) follow this pattern:

add, applaud, ascend, attend, avoid, decide, descend, end, explode, extend, fade, fold, forward, guard, include, intend, load, mend, need, recommend, record, succeed, suspend, trade

3. If the verb ends with a vowel sound – any vowel sound – “-ed” is pronounced as **d**
e.g. “admired” is pronounced uh Dmaiyd All of these verbs (and more) follow this pattern:

admire, agree, allow, annoy, appear, bother, care, continue, deliver, employ, empty, enjoy, enter, fry, glue, lie, matter, offer, order, owe, play, prefer, reply, share, spare, try, weigh, worry

4. If the verb ends with a *voiced* consonant sound “-ed” is pronounced as **d**. Voiced consonant sounds are: b, g, v, th, r, w, y, m, n, ng, l, z, zz, j
e.g. “cleaned” is pronounced Kleend All of these verbs (and more) follow this pattern:

clean, complain, earn, explain, happen, imagine, join, learn, listen, loan, open, own, phone, rain, return, stain, train, apologise, close, erase, praise, realise, suppose, surprise, use, charm, climb, dream, form, perform, seem, achieve, arrive, behave, improve, live, love, move, preserve, boil, call, fill, handle, pull, travel, arrange, challenge, change, manage, bathe, beg, belong, rob

5. If the verb ends with an *unvoiced* consonant sound “-ed” is pronounced as **t**. Unvoiced consonant sounds are: tt, p, k, s, sh, ch, h, f, hh
e.g. “baked” is pronounced Beikt All of these verbs (and more) follow this pattern:

bake, book, check, kick, knock, like, look, talk, thank, walk, work, fax, fix, guess, kiss, pass, promise, pronounce, match, reach, touch, watch, finish, push, rush, wash, hope, stop, laugh

Final advice: the main thing is to avoid saying **uhd** when it is not necessary. The **d** and **t** sounds actually sound very similar, so don't worry if you get them mixed up sometimes. To sum up – learn the five rules on this page, and focus on avoiding an unwanted **uhd**