

## Present Simple vs. Past Simple

Verbs in the **Past Simple** tense

Verbs in the **Present Simple Tense** tense

It **was** a hot, steamy day of May, 1982. I **was** 14 years old and **lived** with my parents and my sister in a nice small village in Iowa. My father **worked** at a huge consulting company 10 miles away. My mother **was** a housewife, so she **didn't work** outside.

My sister and I were coming home from school when something surprising and terrible **occurred**. We **passed** the cinema of the town, and **turned** left when, all of a sudden, it **started** to rain heavily and we **could hear** a strong wind blowing. My sister and I were sitting together at the back of the bus and **got** really frightened because we **didn't know** what was happening. We **could** only **see** people running here, there and everywhere.

The storm **continued** for a while, then it **stopped**, and nothing **could be heard**, the sky **turned** orange. As time **passed**, things **became** more and more amazing. We had never had such an exciting experience before. But the worst **was** to come... Then we **heard** it and **looked** through the windows of the bus. We all **realized** that the immense spinning column was coming towards us. The driver **told** all of us to go to the rear and I **could see** nothing. My schoolmates **started** to cry and **ran** to our seats. I **got up** and **told** the excited screaming children to shut up... All of them **were** shocked.

As we had seen on TV, it **was** a fierce immense brown wall of dust, objects, and even animals from time to time. Now I **can remember** it as something oddly fascinating to look at the houses disappearing along with the rest of the objects in its path.

Suddenly, when the tornado **was** about to reach the bus, it **turned** right. We all **stopped** screaming and **looked** at it completely engrossed. It **kept on** devastating the long street of the town. When it **was** far away, we **got off** the bus and **could see** our parents running to pick us up. They **had** a very worried look on their faces. Suddenly we **thought** of our mum. She **was** at

home, and the tornado was leading there. My father rang her but nobody answered the phone. When we got home, there was no house. My mother was standing in front of the place where it had once been, crying and really excited, but she was safe.

To our surprise, our house was the only one completely destroyed in our neighbourhood. Our neighbour across the street came out and with a friendly penetrating voice told us he had never seen such a dreadful thing!

Nowadays, we live in the same place but our house is bigger and far more resistant.