

SPANISH VERB "BEHAVIOR"

(Present vs. Preterite — AR, ER, IR)

1 -AR Verbs

Present Tense

- Some stem-change (pensar → pienso, cerrar → cierro)
- Pattern: change in **yo, tú, él/ella/usted, ellos/ellas/ustedes**
- No change in **nosotros**

Preterite Tense

NEVER stem-change. Ever.

- pensar → **pensé**
- cerrar → **cerré**
- almorzar → **almorcé** (spelling change, NOT a stem change)

Behavior summary for AR Verbs:

Present: sometimes change

Preterite: NEVER change

2 -ER Verbs

Present Tense

- Some stem-change (volver → vuelvo, entender → entiendo)
- Same pattern as -AR: change in **yo, tú, él/ella/usted, ellos/ellas/ustedes**; no change in **nosotros**

Preterite Tense

NEVER stem-change. Ever.

- volver → **volví**
- entender → **entendí**

Behavior summary:

Present: sometimes change

Preterite: NEVER change

3 IR Verbs

IR verbs are the only group with *three* behavior patterns.

CLASS I — Regular IR Verbs (no stem change)

Examples: vivir, abrir, escribir, recibir, decidir

Present Tense

- No stem change at all • vivir → vivo, vives, vive, vivimos, viven

Preterite Tense

- No stem change • vivir → viví, viviste, vivió, vivimos, vivieron

Behavior summary for Class I:

Present: **no change**

Preterite: **no change**

CLASS II — Stem-Changing IR Verbs (bigger change — diphthong)

These use the **bigger diphthong changes**: • o → ue • e → ie

Examples: dormir, morir, sentir, preferir

Present Tense

- dormir → duermo • sentir → siento • Change in yo, tú, él/ella/usted, ellos/ellas/ustedes • No change in nosotros

Preterite Tense

NO diphthong in the preterite • dormir → dormí, dormiste, **durmió**, dormimos, **durmieron** • sentir → sentí, sentiste, **sintió**, sentimos, **sintieron**

Behavior summary for Class II:

Present: **bigger diphthong change**

Preterite: **NO diphthong** (but may show a *small* change because it behaves like Class III in the preterite)

CLASS III — Stem-Changing IR Verbs (smaller change)

These use the **smaller, compact changes**: • e → i • e → í (tiny group: reír, sonreír)

Examples: pedir, repetir, servir, reír, sonreír

Present Tense

• pedir → pido • repetir → repito • reír → río • Change in yo, tú, él/ella/usted, ellos/ellas/ustedes • No change in nosotros

Preterite Tense

ONLY change in 3rd person (él/ella/usted + ellos/ellas/ustedes) • pedir → pidió / pidieron • repetir → repitió / repitieron • servir → sirvió / sirvieron • reír → rió / rieron • dormir → durmió / durmieron (o→u) • sentir → sintió / sintieron (e→i)

Behavior summary for Class III:

Present: **smaller change**

Preterite: **smaller change ONLY in 3rd person**

THE WHOLE IR SYSTEM IN ONE SENTENCE

Class I = no change.

Class II = bigger diphthong change (present only).

Class III = smaller change (present + 3rd-person preterite).