

Beginning/End vs. Habitual

Use the preterite to . . .

- tell about the beginning or the end of a past action

El sábado pasado, el partido de fútbol **empezó** a la una. **Terminó** a las cuatro. El entrenador **habló** a las cinco.

Last Saturday, the soccer game began at one. It ended at four. The coach spoke (began to speak) at five.

Use the imperfect to . . .

- talk about the habitual nature of an action (something you always did)

Había un partido todos los sábados. Muchas personas **jugaban** todas las semanas.

There was a game every Saturday. Many people played every week.

Completed vs. Ongoing

Use the preterite to . . .

- express an action that is viewed as completed

El partido **duró** tres horas. **Ganaron** Los Lobos, de Villalegre.

The game lasted three hours. The Lobos of Villalegre won.

Use the imperfect to . . .

- tell what was happening when another action took place and tell about simultaneous events (with **mientras** = *while*)

Yo no vi el final del partido. **Estaba** en la cocina cuando **terminó**.

I didn't see the end of the game. I was in the kitchen when it ended.

Mientras mi amigo **veía** el partido, **hablaba** con su novia.

While my friend was watching the game, he was talking with his girlfriend.

Series of Completed Actions vs. Background

Use the preterite to . . .

- express a series of completed actions

Durante el partido, los jugadores **corrieron**, **saltaron** y **gritaron**.

During the game, the players ran, jumped, and shouted.

Resources: Transparency 56 from *Capítulo 7* can be used to practice preterite vs. imperfect.

