

Velle (to want) in the past tense

In Latin, you can use 'velle' in the past continuous or simple past tense to show when someone wanted to do something in the past. The two tenses look like this:

<i>past continuous</i>	<i>simple past</i>	
volebam	volui	I wanted
volebas	voluisti	you wanted
volebat	voluit	he/she/it wanted
volebamus	voluimus	we wanted
volebatis	voluistis	y'all wanted
volebant	voluerunt	they wanted

In English, you can translate both past tenses of velle (+ infinitive verb) as 'wanted'.

Exercise 1 – What did I want (or not want) to do yesterday?

The following sentences contain a mixture of past continuous and simple past versions of 'velle'. Translate the sentence into English using 'I wanted'. The first one is done for you.

1. heri dormire volebam.

Yesterday I wanted to sleep.

heri yesterday

2. heri ridere volebam.

Yesterday I wanted to laugh.

3. heri montem ascendere volui.

Yesterday I wanted to go up the mountain.

4. heri scribere non volui.

Yesterday I didn't want to write.

5. heri per campos currere volebam.

Yesterday I wanted to run through the fields.

6. heri fabulam narrare volui.

Yesterday I wanted to tell the story.

7. heri in taberna laborare non volebam.

Yesterday I didn't want to work in the shop.

Velle (to want) in the past tense

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Exercise 2 – Who wanted (or didn't want) to do what?

Translate the sentence into English working out who was doing the wanting and then what they wanted to do. The first one is done for you.

1. pastor silvam invenire voluit.

The shepherd wanted to find the forest.

2. laete cantare volebamus.

We wanted to sing happily.

3. equi aquam consumere voluerunt.

The horses wanted to drink water.

4. urbem magnam videre voluistis.

Y'all wanted to see the big city.

5. dux respondere voluit.

The leader wanted to reply.

6. canem servare non volebas?

You didn't want to save the dog?

7. rex insulas frigidas visitare volebat.

The king wanted to visit the cold islands.

8. "navem delere non volumus!" clamaverunt magi.

"We don't want to destroy the boat!" shouted the wizards.

9. infantes lacrimare volebant.

The children wanted to cry.

10. cur gladium celare voluisti?

Why did you want to hide the sword?