

The Perfect Tense of the פָּעַל Pattern

You have already learned the following verb forms in the perfect tense.

XX̣X̣	he guarded	שָׁמַר	הוא
הX̣X̣X̣	she guarded	שָׁמְרָה	היא
וX̣X̣X̣	they (<i>m</i>) guarded	שָׁמְרוּ	הם, הֵמָּה
וX̣X̣X̣	they (<i>f</i>) guarded	שָׁמְרוּ	הֵנָּה

The forms you have learned belong to a verb pattern called the פָּעַל pattern.¹⁰ This is one of seven Hebrew patterns. The perfect tense forms in the פָּעַל pattern are made by adding Signal Letters to the end of a verb root. These Signal Letters are the same in all seven patterns of the perfect tense.

The chart below shows all the perfect tense forms of the verb ש.מ.ר in the פָּעַל pattern. In the forms below, the Signal Letters are outlined and the root letters are black.¹¹

שָׁמְרֵנוּ	שָׁמַרְתִּי
we guarded	I guarded
שָׁמַרְתֶּם	שָׁמַרְתָּ
you guarded (<i>m pl</i>)	you guarded (<i>m sg</i>)
שָׁמַרְתֶּן	שָׁמַרְתְּ
you guarded (<i>f pl</i>)	you guarded (<i>f sg</i>)
שָׁמְרוּ	שָׁמַר
they guarded	he guarded
שָׁמְרוּ	שָׁמְרָה
they guarded	she guarded

Whenever we show you a new pattern, we will ask you to memorize it. This means that you need to read it, write it, and say it over and over until it is as familiar to you as the multiplication tables or the ABC's.