The simple past   Αόριστος

The Αόριστος tense in Greek truly represents a great step in your knowledge of the language. Once you know the two stems, the Ενεστώτας and the Αόριστος, you will have a full command of the key alternations in Greek verbs which will enable you to form all the tenses needed in both conversational and literary Greek. It is therefore extremely crucial to commit these forms to memory. Some of these forms can be deduce via a simple rule, which should make memorization a little easier.

Endings
The endings of the Αόριστος tense are the same for the Παρατατικός

-α	-αμε
-ες	-ατε
-ε	-αν(ε)

Augment
The augment of the Αόριστος is also the same as Παρατατικός; this means that it appears only if it can be accented.

Forming the stem
A large number of stems especially for verbs of the first class are formed by the following rule.
Add -σ- to the stem of the Present and then the past tense endings
For example
ακού-ω :   άκου-σ-α, άκουσ-ες, άκουσ-ε, ακούσ-αμε, ακούσ-ατε, άκουσ-αν

One tricky spot about this rule is to know what the product of a specific combination between the end consonant of a stem and the σ of the Aorist stem is.
For the verb γράφω we have
ε-γραφ-σ-α = έγραψα
If you recall that ψ is really π+σ then we can start seeing the logic behind these forms

More examples
τρέχ-ω: ε-τρεχ-σ-α = έτρεξα
παίζ-ω: ε-παιζ-σ-α = έπαιξα
διαβάζ-ω: ε-διαβαζ-σ-α = διάβασα

The Aorist for verbs of the second class
For most second class verbs there is a simple rule that reminds us of the way the Paratatikos is formed. Here instead of -ουσ- we insert -ησ-
Example
αγαπώ: αγαπ-ησ-α = αγάπησα
αργώ: αργ-ησ-α = άργησα

Some irregular Aorists

βλέπω	είδα	look/see
λέω	είπα	say
τρώω	έφαγα	eat
κάνω	έκανα (same as Paratatikos)	do
δίνω	έδωσα	give
θέλω	θέλησα	want
μένω	έμεινα	stay
πίνω	ήπια	drink
μπαίνω	μπήκα	enter
βγαίνω	βγήκα	exit
κοιτάζω	κοίταξα	look
ξεχνώ	ξέχασα	forget
πηγαίνω	πήγα	go

Practice
For the above Aorist verb forms try to separate the stem. This means stripping away the augment and then the endings. Whatever is left, however small is the stem.