

PAST PERFECT

FORM [had + past participle]

Positive	Negative	Interrogative	Neg-Inter
I had finished .	I had not finished .	Had I finished?	Had I not finished?
You had finished .	You had not finished .	Had you finished?	Had you not finished?
We had finished .	We had not finished .	Had we finished?	Had we not finished?
They had finished .	They had not finished .	Had they finished?	Had they not finished?
He had finished .	He had not finished .	Had he finished?	Had he not finished?
She had finished .	She had not finished .	Had she finished?	Had she not finished?
It had finished .	It had not finished .	Had it finished?	Had it not finished?

USE

1 Completed Action Before Something in the Past

The Past Perfect expresses the idea that something occurred before another action in the past. It can also show that something happened before a specific time in the past.

- I **had** never **seen** such a beautiful beach before I went to Kauai.
- I did not have any money because I **had lost** my wallet.
- Tony knew Istanbul so well because he **had visited** the city several times.
- **Had** Susan ever **studied** Thai before she moved to Thailand?
- She only understood the movie because she **had read** the book.
- Kristine **had** never **been** to an opera before last night.
- A: **Had** you ever **visited** the U.S. before your trip in 2006?
B: Yes, I **had been** to the U.S. once before.

2 Duration Before Something in the Past (Non-Continuous Verbs)

With Non-Continuous Verbs and some non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, we use the Past Perfect to show that something started in the past and continued up until another action in the past.

- We **had had** that car for ten years before it broke down.
- By the time Alex finished his studies, he **had been** in London for over eight years.
- They felt bad about selling the house because they **had owned** it for more than forty years.

3 As part of the third conditional.

- If I **had known** you were ill, I would have visited you.

Exercise 1 : put the verbs in brackets into all the forms of past perfect tense

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. I (study) Japanese before. | 9. We (reserve) our places. |
| 2. She (bake) a lot before. | 10. I (be) to India before 1986. |
| 3. We (have) a lot of trouble. | 11. They finally (succeed). |
| 4. Brian (know) many people at the club. | 12. Chris (own) that car for 5 years. |
| 5. They (study) English. | 13. Sharon (be) very sick. |
| 6. You (enjoy) the movie. | 14. I (move) to Spain. |
| 7. She really (like) him. | 15. You (cook) a lot. |
| 8. Amy (take) the test. | 16. She (stop) eating junk food. |

Exercise 2: put the verbs in brackets into the past perfect tense.

1. The storm destroyed the sandcastle that we (build).

2. He (not / be) to Cape Town before 1997.
3. When she went out to play, she (do / already) her homework.
4. My brother ate all of the cake that our mum (make).
5. The doctor took off the plaster that he (put on) six weeks before.
6. The waiter brought a drink that I (not / order).
7. I could not remember the poem we (learn) the week before.
8. The children collected the chestnuts that (fall) from the tree.
9. He (phone) Angie before he went to see her in London?
10. She (not / ride) a horse before that day.
11. I thought I knew her. I thought I (see) her before.
12. He (drive) only twice in his life before the accident.
13. Bonny no longer had her car. She (sell) it.
14. I tried to find Mr Jones but he wasn't around. Then I found out he (die).
15. He didn't need to borrow the car because he (have) his bike repaired.
16. Jenny (just get) home when the phone rang.

Exercise 3 : put the verbs in brackets into the simple or the past perfect tense.

1. Jill (to phone) Dad at work before she (to leave) for her trip.
2. Susan (to turn on) the radio after she (to wash) the dishes.
3. When she (to arrive) the match already (to start).
4. After the man (to come) home he (to feed) the cat.
5. Before he (to sing) a song he (to play) the guitar.
6. She (to watch) a video after the children (to go) to bed.
7. After Eric (to make) breakfast he (to phone) his friend.
8. I (to be) very tired because I (to study) too much.
9. They (to ride) their bikes before they (to meet) their friends.
10. William (live) in Boston for six years before he (move) to New York.
11. The blue car (cross) the street after the lights (turn) red.
12. When James (try) to ring us, we (leave / already) the house.
13. After Joanna (finish) her presentation, we (ask) our questions.
14. By the time we (get) there, they (already / sell) the car.
15. We went to the cinema after the match (finish).
16. When we (arrive) at the airport, the plane (take) off.
17. The factory owner (be) angry because the employees (arrive) late.
18. Everyone _ (understand) the situation because it (happen) before.
19. After Fred (to spend) his holiday in Italy he (to want) to learn Italian
20. The patient (die) before the doctor (arrive).
21. As the fire (break) out, people (hurry) out of their house.
22. I (meet) him yesterday.
23. I (recognize) him immediately as I (see) him before.
24. I wish I (stay) with my friend during his last days.
25. By the time the firemen (arrive), the fire (destroy) many huts.
26. Long before the chief guest (arrive), the invitees (assemble).
27. I wish I (send) my application in time.
28. I (not speak) to him, as I (not introduce) to him.
29. If he (apply) in time, he would have got the job.

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

FORM

[had been + present participle]

Examples:

- You **had been waiting** there for more than two hours when she finally arrived.
- **Had you been waiting** there for more than two hours when she finally arrived?
- You **had not been waiting** there for more than two hours when she finally arrived.

USE 1 Duration Before Something in the Past

We use the Past Perfect Continuous to show that something started in the past and continued up until another time in the past. "For five minutes" and "for two weeks" are both durations which can be used with the Past Perfect Continuous. Notice that the duration does not continue until now, it stops before something else in the past.

Examples:

- They **had been talking** for over an hour before Tony arrived.
- She **had been working** at that company for three years when it went out of business.
- How long **had you been waiting** to get on the bus?
- Mike wanted to sit down because he **had been standing** all day at work.
- James **had been teaching** at the university for more than a year before he left for Asia.

USE 2 Cause of Something in the Past

Using the Past Perfect Continuous before another action in the past is a good way to show cause and effect.

Examples:

- Jason was tired because he **had been jogging**.
- Sam gained weight because he **had been overeating**.
- Betty failed the final test because she **had not been attending** class.

REMEMBER Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs cannot be used in any continuous tenses. Also, certain non-continuous meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be used in continuous tenses. Instead of using Past Perfect Continuous with these verbs, you must use Past Perfect.

Examples:

- The motorcycle **had been belonging** to George for years before Tina bought it. *Not Correct*
- The motorcycle **had belonged** to George for years before Tina bought it. *Correct*

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You had **only** been waiting there for a few minutes when she arrived.
- Had you **only** been waiting there for a few minutes when she arrived?

Exercise 1 :

Make the past perfect continuous positive:

1. I (work) all day, so I didn't want to go out.
2. She (sleep) for ten hours when I woke her.
3. They (live) in Beijing for three years when he lost his job.
4. When we met, you (work) at that company for six months.
5. We (eat) all day, so we felt a bit ill.
6. He was red in the face because he (run).
7. It (rain), and the road was covered in water.
8. I was really tired because I (study).
9. We (go) out for three years when we got married.
10. It (snow) for three days

Make past perfect continuous questions:

1. When you got sick, (you / eat) enough?
2. There was water everywhere, (what / the children / do)?

3. (it / rain) when you left the restaurant?
4. (how long / she / live) in London when she found that job?
5. (why / you / study) so hard?
6. Why was the house so messy? (what / she / do)?
7. (how long / we / wait) when the bus finally arrived?
8. (how long / he / play) football when he was injured?
9. (I / work) that day?
10. (she / see) him for long when they moved to Paris?

Make the past perfect continuous negative:

1. I (not / work) there long when she quit.
2. She (not / work) but she was tired anyway.
3. It (not / rain) long when I got home.
4. He was in trouble with the teacher because he (not / go) to classes.
5. We (not / live) in London for three years when we got married! It was more like five years.
6. Although it was hot in the kitchen, Julie (not / cook).
7. I (not / sleep) long when there was a knock at the door.
8. He didn't feel healthy, because he (not / go) to the gym.
9. I caught a cold because I (not / eat) properly.
10. She looked tired, but she (not / study).