The Past Perfect Tense

We use the past perfect tense

• to describe a past action which happened before another past action. We use the past perfect tense for the first action and the simple past tense for the second action.

By the time I went out at the museum I had felt like a time traveller in the large archives of life.

I had never seen so many animal fossils and plants from all around the world.

Affirmative

Subject +Had+ Verb3

I / He / She / It / We / You / They had slept when the film ended.

Negative

Subject +had not (hadn't) + Verb3

I / He / She / It / We / You / They hadn't slept when the film ended.

Interrogative

Had +Subject+ Verb3….?

Had I / he / she / it / we / you / they slept when the film ended?

NOTE: We usually use the past perfect tense with the simple past together with these common conjunctions:

WHEN + simple past, past perfect

When our guests came, my mother had already laid the table.

Simple past, BECAUSE + past perfect

I went straight to bed, because I had been really tired

AFTER + past perfect, simple past

After Karen had had her breakfast, she left home for school.

BEFORE + simple past, past perfect

Before the police arrived the crime scene, the thief had run away.

AS SOON AS + past perfect, simple past

As soon as she had opened the door, she went straight to the kitchen and prepared something to eat.

BY THE TIME + simple past, past perfect

By the time the fire brigade arrived, a large part of the building had burnt.

Exercise 2 : Put the verbs into the correct form; past perfect or past simple.

1. A: Was your father at home when you arrived?

B: No, he_____ (go) out to meet his old friends.

2. Before they _____ (buy) a new house, they _____(sell) their old one.

3. After I _____ (spend) tiring and long hours at work, I _____(go) straight to

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the bathroom to take a warm shower.

4. As soon as Nick _____ (hear) happy news, he_____ (congratulate) me.

5. The policeman _____ (take) the man to the police station because he_____

(rob) the bank.

6. Sheila _____ (take) a nap after she _____ (prepare) something for dinner.

7. We_____ (be) 10 minutes late when the film_____ (start).

8. Last week, I _____ (see) one of my school friends. I _____ (not/see) him for

years before that.

9. He _____(pay) the bills as soon as he._____(get) the money from the bank.

10. By the time the ambulance _____(arrive), the injured man_____ (die) of bleeding.

Exercise 3 : Put the verbs into the correct form; past perfect or past simple.

1. After Jason _____ (spend) his twenty years studying on DNA, he _____(devote) himself to

save lives.

2. Fred _____ (phone) his wife at work before he _____ (leave) for his trip to Paris.

3. Her family _____ (publish) her last book after she _____ (die) in an accident.

4. When she_____ (come) to the class, the lesson _____ (already / start).

5. By the age of 20, he _____(learn) five languages and_____ (do)better in his work.

6. Before I_____ (go) to sleep last night, I _____(watch) a documentary on space.

7. The man_____ (make) a great donation to the museum after he _____ (complete) his visit.

8. By the time the ambulance _____(arrive), passersby _____ (help) the injured students on the school bus.

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Exercise 4 : Write the first halves of the sentences using the past perfect and then match the halves.

1. Our parents / know / each other / for six years

_____

2. My best friend / never / be / to Italy

_____

3. Most of our students / never / see / a dinosaur skeleton

_____

4. My sister / never / win / a gold medal

_____

5. After / my mother / learn / the truth

_____

6. As Mary / never/ fly / before

_____

a. she felt better and called everyone to give the news.

b. until she got her best score in the last tournament last year.

c. before they got married in Paris in 1979.

d. she felt very nervous during the flight.

e. before she went there for a language course.

f. by the time we organised a visit to a nature and science museum

Complete the following sentences, using The ***Past Perfect*** or The ***Simple Past*** form of the verbs in brackets.

1. Nicolas..... (*buy*) **this** villa after he.....*(work)* for fifteen years.
2. They..... *(finish)* their work so they..... *(sit)* down to talk.
3. Yesterday my wife..... *(tell)* me about a beautiful dress she..... *(see)* a few days earlier.
4. After the little girl..... *(jump)* into the sea, she..... *(begin)* to cry for help.
5. The sailors..... *(not send)* any messages, until they..... ***(find)*** out the facts.
6. Before I..... *(hear)* from Victor, I..... *(not do)* anything on this matter.
7. How long..... Mr. Scaton..... *(be)* abroad before he.....*(come)* here?
8. Mark..... *(lose)* his money, so he..... *(not buy)* a new calculator.
9. They..... *(never be)* in Rome before so they..... *(want)* to see the historical places.
10. My father..... *(feel)* a little better after he..... *(take)* the medicine.

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Past perfect by FULAY **F B**

Rewrite* the *following sentences, using the words or instructions in brackets.

1. Joe is very poor. He can't buy an expensive car. *(enough to)*

Joe isn't rich enough to buy an expensive car.

2. Your car is very small. It can't hold five people. *(too)*

Your car is too small to hold five people.

3. The police arrived at the art gallery at 10.30. The burglars left at 10.00. *(before)*

.....

4. Paul went to bed at 11.00. Jill called him at 11.40. *(after)*

.....

5. Mrs. Grant last wrote to me when 1 was in Berlin. *(since)*

.....

6. Some books aren't as interesting as the others. *(comparative)*

.....

7. The man gave her biscuits. He also gave her some apples. Bui she didn't eat any of them. *(although / both.....and)*

.....

8. My wife last smoked 8 months ago, but now she isn't smoking. ***(used to)***

.....

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