

Past perfect simple

had + past participle

| statement | negative | question |
|--|--|--|
| I/you/he/she/it/we/they had ('d) written ... | I/you/he/she/it/we/they had not (hadn't) written ... | Had I/you/he/she/it/we/they written ...? |

| Use | Example | Helpful hints |
|---|--|---|
| Actions and states before a moment in the past | I'd finished my homework a few minutes before the lesson started. Mrs Cross had been a teacher for twenty years before she became a head teacher. | The past perfect simple is often used with the following words and phrases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by <i>I'd finished my homework by</i> eight o'clock. • by the time <i>By the time</i> I got to class, the lesson had started. • before The teacher had checked the answers before the lesson. • after I left after I'd finished the test. • just Simon had just finished the test when the bell rang. • when I left when I'd finished the test. |
| Finished actions and states where the important thing is the result at a moment in the past | We were happy because we'd all done our homework. | |

Watch out!

- Whether we use the past simple or the past perfect simple can change the meaning of a sentence.
 - ✓ The lesson **started** when I arrived. (= I arrived and then the lesson started.)
 - ✓ The lesson **had started** when I arrived. (= The lesson started and then I arrived.)
- Some verbs have irregular past participle forms. See page 182.

Past perfect continuous

had + been + -ing

| statement | negative | question |
|---|---|---|
| I/you/he/she/it/we/they had ('d) been writing ... | I/you/he/she/it/we/they had not (hadn't) been writing ... | Had I/you/he/she/it/we/they been writing ...? |

| Use | Example | Helpful hints |
|---|---|--|
| Actions continuing up to, or stopping just before, a moment in the past | We'd been doing grammar exercises for over an hour, so we were really bored! They had a break because they'd been working so hard. | The past perfect continuous is often used with the following words and phrases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for Tony had been studying for hours, so he had a headache. • since She'd been hoping to win the competition since the summer. • before We'd been talking about the Internet before the lesson started. • all day/night/etc I'd been studying all day. |

Watch out!

- The past perfect simple often emphasises the result of an action:
✓ **She'd written** an article for the school newspaper. (= She'd finished it.)
- The past perfect continuous often emphasises the action, and the time spent on the action, rather than the result:
✓ **She'd been writing** an article for the newspaper. (= She'd started, but she hadn't finished it.)

A Complete using the correct past perfect simple form of the verbs in brackets.

- 1 By the time I arrived, everyone (**leave**)!
- 2 Steve (**already / see**) the film, so he didn't come with us to the cinema.
- 3 Tina (**not / finish**) doing the housework by seven o'clock, so she called Andrea to tell her she would be late.
- 4 (**you / just / speak**) to Billy when I rang?
- 5 The car broke down just after (**we / set off**).
- 6 I didn't eat anything at the party because (**I / already / eat**) at home.
- 7 (**you / hear**) about the accident before you saw it on TV?

B Choose the sentence (A or B) which means the same as the first sentence.

- 1 We'd had dinner when Wendy arrived.
 - A Wendy arrived and then we had dinner.
 - B We had dinner and then Wendy arrived.
- 2 I read the book after I'd seen the film.
 - A I saw the film and then I read the book.
 - B I read the book and then I saw the film.
- 3 By the time Dad came home, I'd gone to bed.
 - A I went to bed before Dad came home.
 - B I went to bed after Dad came home.
- 4 She didn't go to bed until her mum had come home.
 - A She went to bed and then her mum came home.
 - B Her mum came home and then she went to bed.
- 5 Mr Banks hadn't arrived at the office by the time I got there.
 - A I arrived before Mr Banks.
 - B Mr Banks arrived before me.
- 6 They'd bought the plane tickets before they heard about the cheaper flight.
 - A They bought the plane tickets and later they heard about the cheaper flight.
 - B They heard about the cheaper flight and then they bought the plane tickets.
- 7 The girls had tidied the house when the visitors arrived.
 - A The visitors arrived and later the girls tidied the house.
 - B The girls tidied the house and then the visitors arrived.

C Write sentences using the prompts. One of the verbs must be in the past perfect simple.

- 1 we / just / hear / the news / when / you / ring

.....

- 2 I / already / think of / that / before / you / suggest / it

.....

- 3 when / I / turn on / the TV / the programme / already / start

.....

- 4 she / be / hungry / because / she / not / eat / anything / all day

.....

- 5 by the time / I leave / school / I / decide / to become / a musician

.....

D Look at the pictures and complete the sentences. Use the correct form of the past perfect continuous.



- She was tired because (run).
- They were hot because (dance).
- The garden was flooded because (it / rain / all night).
- Did they crash because (drive / too fast)?
- When I arrived, (they / wait / for over half an hour).
- When I got there, (they / not / wait / long).

E Choose the correct answer.

| | |
|--|---|
| 1 I'd only the washing-up for a few minutes when Clare came home, so she offered to finish it. | 4 Mum had her cup of tea for several minutes before she realised it had salt in it! |
| A done | B been doing |
| 2 Had you already James his birthday present when we gave him ours? | 5 We'd ready all day when they called to say the party had been cancelled. |
| A given | B been giving |
| 3 Gail hadn't me that she would help me, so I wasn't angry when she didn't. | 6 It was a fantastic experience because I'd never in a plane before. |
| A told | B been telling |

F If a line is correct, put a tick (✓). If there is an extra word in a line, write the word.

Dear Diary,

- had
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This morning my exam results finally ~~had~~ came. I'd been expecting them for the last week. I knew I'd been done quite well, but I was still nervous as I had opened the envelope. Before I'd had a chance to look at them, my sister ran up and pulled them out of my hand! She had read them out one by one. 'English A, maths A, biology A, French A ...' This was the news I'd been waiting for. I'd got As in every subject – even geography, which I hadn't been making sure about! When Mum and Dad heard the news, they immediately started been shouting with joy. By the time I'd had breakfast, Mum had already called Grandma and Grandpa and had yet told the neighbours!
