

THE PAST PERFECT TENSE

FORM

AFFIRMATIVE

Subject+ had+ past participle of the main verb.

NEGATIVE

Subject+ hadn't+ past participle of the main verb.

INTERROGATIVE

Had +subject+ past participle of the main verb.

■ It's used to talk about events that took place before a specific time in the past:
I had already got married by then.

■ It's also used to talk about an action that took place before another past action. The action that happened first is put in the Past Perfect and the other one

in the Past Simple:

The film had already begun by the time I arrived at the cinema.

■ The past perfect is the past of the present perfect, so it is used in a similar way but in a past context.

Who is that girl? I have never seen her before.

I didn't know who she was. I had

never seen her before.

Therefore, this tense is used to report sentences that were said in direct speech using the past simple or the present perfect.

■ When a sentence in direct speech is in the past perfect we can't change this tense as there is no other tense that can go one more step back into the past.

ALREADY - JUST - NEVER - WHEN - BY THE TIME - AFTER - BEFORE - UNTIL

■ **ALREADY** is used in affirmative sentences before the past participle:

I had already rung Mary.

■ **JUST** is used before the past participle to mean that something had happened not a long time ago:

I had just left my office.

■ **NEVER** is used before the past participle to mean you had not experienced something in your life until a certain time in the past:

I had never eaten caviar until I went to Russia last year.

■ **WHEN** is used with the past perfect to show that something is completely finished:

When I had finished the exercises I went out.

■ **BY THE TIME** is used with the past simple to state a point in the past before which something else had happened:

By the time I got home the child had already gone to bed.

■ **AFTER**, **BEFORE** and **UNTIL** are used with the past simple and past perfect with no difference of meaning:

After he finished the report he went home or After he had finished the report he went home.

He didn't leave until he spoke to his boss or He didn't leave until he had spoken to his boss.



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Complete the sentences using a suitable verb from the list in the Past Perfect. (The past simple is also possible in some sentences)

BRUSH NOT CLIMB FEED SCORE HIDE FIND
DO BECOME LEAVE TELL SEE WIN HAVE
RIDE NOT FINISH GRADUATE PUT WRITE

- By the time the bell rang, Mark _____ his lunch at the canteen.
- Bob's cat _____ up a tree before the day it saw the neighbour's new bulldog.
- Jim's mother _____ just _____ him a beautiful tale when somebody rang the door bell.
- Peter and his dog _____ under the table by the time Peter's father started looking for them.
- Dave _____ already _____ his teeth before his mother told him to go to bed.
- They _____ never _____ a ride in a gondola until they went to Venice last year.
- By the time the match finished, the boys _____ three goals.
- They _____ already _____ best friends before they started going to primary school.
- Bob couldn't lift the bag as he _____ a lot of books in it.
- Ted started to run after he _____ the dangerous dog.
- The bus _____ already _____ by the time he arrived at the bus stop.
- Henry _____ just _____ the dog when he heard a strange noise upstairs.
- Lara _____ the ironing by the time her husband returned home.
- Tina _____ her new bike only twice before someone stole it.
- They went on a trip round the world as they _____ a lot of money one year before.
- Alan _____ already _____ by the time his parents moved to London.
- He _____ just _____ his girlfriend a letter when she phoned him to tell him she was in town.
- Lisa got pregnant two months after she _____ a good job in an important firm.