

c Circle the correct form. If both forms are possible, circle them both.

- 1 How long have you known / been knowing your boyfriend?
- 2 She's gone / been going to the same hairdresser for years.
- 3 They've worked / been working in that bank since 2003.
- 4 He's slept / been sleeping since three o'clock!
- 5 How long have you lived / been living here?
- 6 They've looked / been looking for a new flat for ages.
- 7 How long have you had / been having your bike?

### Past perfect and past simple

#### Past perfect

##### Affirmative

I / You / He / She / It /  
We / You / They had  
finished.

##### Negative

I / You / He / She / It /  
We / You / They hadn't  
changed.

##### Questions

Had I / you / he / she / it /  
we / you / they arrived?

##### Short answers

Yes, they had.  
No, I hadn't.

#### Use

The past simple is used to talk about a finished action which happened at a specific time in the past.

Two months ago Laura gave Fred an mp3 player for his birthday.

The past perfect is used to talk about an action in the past which happened **before** another more recent past action. The events do not need to be presented in chronological order as the tense shows which happened first.

Last week Fred **lost** the mp3 player that Laura **had given** him for his birthday.

First action: Laura gave Fred an mp3 player.

Second action: Fred lost the mp3 player.

The programme **had started** when I **turned on** the TV.

First action: The programme started.

Second action: I turned on the TV.

Arnold **celebrated** after he **had passed** his exams.

First action: Arnold passed his exams.

Second action: He celebrated.

1. Fill in the blanks with the past perfect tense:

- a. The storm destroyed the sandcastle that we (build) \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. He \_\_\_\_\_ (not / be) in Cape Town before 1997.
- c. When she went out to play, she (do / already) \_\_\_\_\_ her homework.
- d. My brother ate all of the cake that our mum (make) \_\_\_\_\_.
- e. The doctor took off the plaster that he (put on) \_\_\_\_\_ the week before.
- f. The waiter brought a drink that I (not / order) \_\_\_\_\_.
- g. I could not remember the poem we (learn) \_\_\_\_\_ the week before.
- h. (He/phone) \_\_\_\_\_ Angie before he went to see her in London?

2. Now put the verbs in brackets in the correct tense: past perfect or simple past. Remember that the action signaled by the past perfect happened before the action signaled by the simple past.

Pat \_\_\_\_\_ (live) in London before he \_\_\_\_\_ (move) to Rome.

Answer: Pat **had lived** in London before he **moved** to Rome.

- 1) After Fred \_\_\_\_\_ (spend) his holiday in Italy he \_\_\_\_\_ (want) to learn Italian.
- 2) Jill \_\_\_\_\_ (phone) Dad at work before she \_\_\_\_\_ (leave) for her trip.
- 3) Susan \_\_\_\_\_ (turn on) the radio after she \_\_\_\_\_ (wash) the dishes.
- 4) When she \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive), the match \_\_\_\_\_ already \_\_\_\_\_ (start).
- 5) She \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) a video after the children \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to bed.
- 6) After Eric \_\_\_\_\_ (make) breakfast he \_\_\_\_\_ (phone) his friend.