Unit 5 Grammar

Past perfect simple, past perfect continuous

Past perfect simple

Form

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
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.*
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.*

Helpful hints

The past perfect simple is often used with the following words and phrases:

- *by* — *I'd finished my homework **by** eight o'clock.*
- *by the time* — ***By the time** 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.*

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

Form

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
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.*

Helpful hints

The past perfect continuous is often used with the following words and phrases:

- *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.)

LIVEWORKSHEETS

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
.....

LIVEWORKSHEETS

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



1 She was tired because ..... (**run**).
2 They were hot because ..... (**dance**).
3 The garden was flooded because ..... (**it / rain / all night**).
4 Did they crash because ..... (**drive / too fast**)?
5 When I arrived, ... (**they / wait / for over half an hour**).
6 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.
A done B been doing

2 Had you already ..... James his birthday present when we gave him ours?
A given B been giving

3 Gail hadn't ..... me that she would help me, so I wasn't angry when she didn't.
A told B been telling

4 Mum had ..... her cup of tea for several minutes before she realised it had salt in it!
A drunk B been drinking

5 We'd ..... ready all day when they called to say the party had been cancelled.
A got B been getting

6 It was a fantastic experience because I'd never ..... in a plane before.
A flown B been flying

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

Dear Diary,

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

LIVEWORKSHEETS