

11 Past perfect

I can form and use the past perfect tense with appropriate time expressions.



When we are already talking about the past, we use the past perfect to talk about events that happened at an earlier time.

*We went to the cinema last night, but Michael stayed at home. He **had seen** the film before. (= We saw the film last night. Michael saw the film before that.)*

When we talk about the past using the past simple, we normally put events in the order they happened.
*We **ate** a big lunch. Then we **slept** for two hours!*

We often use the past perfect with the past simple to show that events are not in the order they happened.
*We **slept** for two hours. We'd **eaten** a big lunch!*

We often use the past perfect in sentences with conjunctions like **when**, **by the time**, **before**, **after**.
***By the time** she arrived at the station, the train **had** already left.*

*I **hadn't packed** my bags **when** the taxi arrived.
Had you read the book **before** you saw the film?*

We can use **already**, **just**, **never** with the past perfect. We put these words before the past participle.
*I'd **just started** my homework **when** my friend phoned.
She'd **never been** to London, so she was looking forward to the trip.*

We can also use the past perfect with the phrase **It was the first time ...**

*We went to India last year. **It was the first time** I'd ever **travelled** on a plane.*

See page 175 for the form table.

* 1 Circle the correct option.

- ▶ She went back to school because she'd **left** / **leaved** her bag in the classroom.
- 1 Sam wanted to pay but he'd **forgot** / **forgotten** his wallet.
- 2 When he woke up, everyone **had finished** / **finished** breakfast.
- 3 I've / I'd just repaired the bike, when Harry crashed it again.
- 4 They **had** / **did** spent all their money, so they couldn't take the bus home.
- 5 It was only eight o'clock but she'd **already fallen** / **she already fell** asleep.
- 6 Jill and Lucy weren't there. Where **they had** / **had they** gone?
- 7 By the time Dickens died, how many books he **had** / **had he** written?
- 8 Peter didn't understand the homework because he **didn't** / **hadn't** listened to the teacher.

* 2 Complete the sentences with the past perfect form of the verbs in brackets.

- ▶ Ben had eaten two burgers but he was still hungry. (eat)
- 1 Sally _____ the book but she couldn't remember the story. (read)
- 2 Although he _____ a ticket, he decided not to go to the concert. (buy)
- 3 His mum was angry because he _____ his room. (not tidy)
- 4 William decided to celebrate because he _____ his exam. (pass)
- 5 By the time they arrived at the shop, it _____ . (close)
- 6 Lucy _____ the news when Helen phoned her. (not hear)
- 7 It was the first time we _____ her. (meet)
- 8 After Jim _____ enough money, he bought himself a new phone. (save)

3 11.1 Complete the sentences with *just*, *already* or *never* and the past perfect form of the verb in brackets. Listen and check.



▶ She'd already been there for two hours when her friends arrived. (be)

- 1 They were really tired. They _____ playing football. (finish)
- 2 Tom was nervous. He _____ before. (fly)
- 3 She felt sick. She _____ two pieces of chocolate cake. (eat)
- 4 Her grandmother didn't know what to do. She _____ a computer before. (use)
- 5 I _____ asleep when the sound of the phone woke me up again. (fall)

- 6 Mary _____ Paris twice but she wanted to go again. (visit)
- 7 This was Vicky's first race. She _____ in a competition before. (run)
- 8 Robert _____ the trousers, so he couldn't take them back to the shop. (wear)
- 9 We were lucky. We _____ at the cinema when the film started. (arrive)
- 10 I tried to open the door, but the key didn't work. I couldn't understand it. This _____ before. (happen)

4 GAME Peter went away for a week on a school trip. He came back a week later and his bedroom looked very different. What had his parents done? Look at the pictures and write sentences with the past perfect.

▶ They'd emptied the bin.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____

5 Look at the example. What had you done by the time you were eight? Ask and answer questions using the verbs below or your own ideas.

buy a mobile phone travel on a plane
learn to swim sleep in a tent
start English lessons walk to school alone

Had you learnt to swim?

Yes, I had.



6 11.2 Listen. Which event happened first? Write 1 and 2.



- ▶ Bill arrived at the station. ☒ 2
His friends bought tickets. ☒ 1
- 1 Bill arrived at the station. ☐
His friends bought tickets. ☐
- 2 Katy went to a café. ☐
She met Sue. ☐
- 3 Katy went to a café. ☐
She met Sue. ☐
- 4 It started to rain. ☐
They stopped playing. ☐
- 5 It started to rain. ☐
They stopped playing. ☐
- 6 John's family had breakfast. ☐
He woke up. ☐
- 7 John's family had breakfast. ☐
He woke up. ☐
- 8 He crossed the road. ☐
He saw Fred. ☐
- 9 He crossed the road. ☐
He saw Fred. ☐

7 Circle the correct options.

- ▶ Paul ~~didn't finish~~ / hadn't finished the exam when the teacher said / ~~had said~~, 'Stop!'
- 1 When I looked / ~~had looked~~ at my watch, it stopped / ~~had stopped~~.
- 2 This was her first visit to Paris. In fact, she never went / ~~had never been~~ abroad before.
- 3 They didn't play / ~~hadn't played~~ tennis because Anna forgot / ~~had forgotten~~ her racket.
- 4 By the time we reached / ~~had reached~~ the ski resort, it started / ~~had started~~ snowing.
- 5 When the show ended / ~~had ended~~, all the restaurants closed / ~~had closed~~.
- 6 Harry already cleaned / ~~had already cleaned~~ his teeth before he had / ~~had had~~ breakfast.
- 7 Daisy screamed / ~~had screamed~~ because she just saw / ~~had just seen~~ a spider.
- 8 Lucy knew / ~~had known~~ Tom for two years when they got / ~~had got~~ married.
- 9 Where did everyone go / ~~had everyone gone~~ when she needed / ~~had needed~~ help with the washing-up?
- 10 He didn't win / ~~hadn't won~~ the race because he didn't practise / ~~hadn't practised~~ enough.

8 Rewrite the two sentences as one sentence, using the past simple and past perfect.

- ▶ Mary ate dinner. Then she met her friends.
Mary had eaten dinner when she met her friends.
- ▶ Robert got up early. But he didn't feel tired.
Although Robert had got up early, he didn't feel tired.
- 1 She lived in Spain for six years. Then she went to university.
She _____ when _____.
- 2 Jack didn't read my email. Then I phoned him.
He _____ when _____.
- 3 I had a shower. Then I got dressed.
After _____, I _____.
- 4 I bought a ticket for the cinema. Then Alex invited me to a party.
I _____ when _____.
- 5 Jane learnt some Chinese at school. But she didn't understand people in Beijing.
Although _____, she _____.
- 6 She made 25 films. Then she won her first award.
By the time _____, she _____.
- 7 Someone stole my wallet. I couldn't pay for the bus.
I _____ because _____.
- 8 They ate a lot of chocolate. Then they had lunch.
They _____ before _____.
- 9 I cleaned my room. Then my parents gave me my pocket money.
My parents _____ after _____.

9

Work in pairs. Student A says a sentence starting *By the time ...*, using a verb from box A. Student B completes the sentence using a verb from box B.

A arrive at school film start find my money
get home lesson finish leave school

B fall asleep go home have dinner
miss the bus lesson start shops close

By the time the film started ...

he'd fallen asleep.