

Tenses Overview



COMPARE TENSES



The Perfect Tenses	The Perfect Progressive Tenses
give the idea that one thing <i>happens before</i> another time or event	give the idea that one event is <i>in progress immediately before, up to, until another time or event.</i>
have + V3 / V (- ed) (past participle)	have + been + V (- ing) (present participle)

1

THE PAST PERFECT TENSE



The Past Perfect Tense Meaning



1. The PAST PERFECT TENSE expresses ***an activity that was complete before another activity or time in the past.***

*Ann **had** already **left** when Sam arrived.*

***By the time** Sam got there, Ann **had** already **left**.*

Sam arrived at 10:00. Ann left at 9:30.

In (a): 1st: Ann left.

2nd: Sam arrived.

The Past Perfect Tense Meaning

2. The PAST PERFECT TENSE is used to describe an action that happened before a specific time in the past.

Christine had never been to an opera before last night.

The Past Perfect Tense Meaning

3. The PAST PERFECT TENSE is used to describe cause and effect (combine with Past Simple).

I got stuck in traffic because there had been an accident.

The Past Perfect Tense Meaning

4. The PAST PERFECT TENSE is used to describe the result of an activity in the past.

I had been to London twice by the time I got a new job in New York.

The Past Perfect Tense Meaning

5. The past perfect is often found in more formal writing such as fiction. The fiction writer uses the simple past to say that an event happened (Bill felt great = the starting point of the story), and then uses the past perfect to explain what had happened *before that event*.

Written: Bill felt great that evening. Earlier in the day, Annie had caught one fish, and he had caught three. They had had a delicious picnic near the lake and then had gone swimming again. It had been a nearly perfect vacation day.

The Past Perfect Tense Meaning

6. The past perfect is commonly used in reported speech.

If the actual spoken words use the simple past, the past perfect is often used in reporting those words.

Common reporting verbs: tell (someone), say, find out, learn, and discover.

Actual spoken words: *I lost my keys.*

Reported words: *Jenny said that she had lost her keys.*

The Past Perfect Tense Meaning

7. If either **before** or **after** is used in the sentence, the past perfect is often not necessary because the time relationship is already clear.

The simple past may be used, as in (b) and (d).

note: (a) and (b) have the same meaning;

(c) and (d) have the same meaning.

a) Sam had left before Ann got there.

b) Sam left before Ann got there.

c) After the guests had left, I went to bed.

d) After the guests left, I went to bed.

The Past Perfect Tense Formation

+ Affirmative Sentences

Subject + had + V3 / Ved (Past Participle)

I, you, we, they + had ('d) + seen

he, she, it + had ('d) + been + finished

The Past Perfect Tense Formation

? Interrogative Sentences

had + subject + V3 / Ved (past participle)

Had + I, you, we, they + seen?

Had + he, she, it + talked?

The Past Perfect Tense Formation

- Negative Sentences

Subject + had + not + V3 / Ved

I, you, we, they + had not (hadn't) + slept
he, she, it + had not (hadn't) + known

The Past Perfect Tense Formation

The adverbs of frequency:

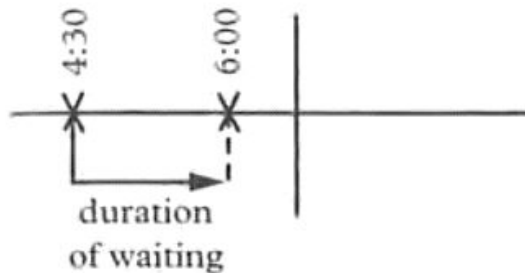
- before
- after
- until
- by the time
- always
- never
- ever
- for
- since
- yet
- only
- still
- just

2

THE PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSE



The Past Perfect Progressive Tense Meaning



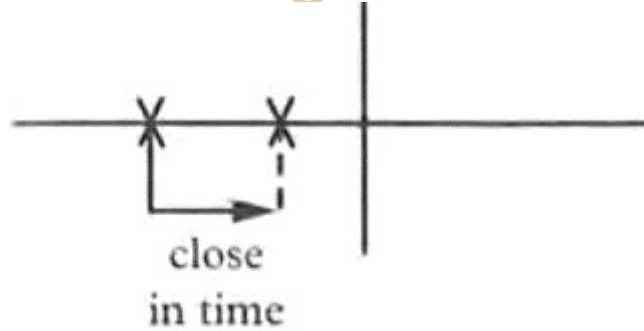
1. The past perfect progressive emphasizes the duration of an activity that was in progress before another activity or time in the past.

*Eric finally came at six o'clock. I **had been waiting** for him **since** four-thirty.*

*The police **had been looking** for the criminal **for** two years before they caught him.*

note: The past perfect progressive is used infrequently compared to other verb tenses.

The Past Perfect Progressive Tense Meaning



2. This tense also may express an activity in progress close in time to another activity or time in the past.

- *When Judy got home, her hair was still wet because she had been swimming.*
- *I went to Ed's house after the funeral. His eyes were red because he had been crying.*

The Past Perfect Progressive Tense Formation

+ Affirmative Sentences

Subject + had + been + V (-ing) (Present Participle)

I, you, we, they + had('d) + been + working

he, she, it + had ('d) + been + working

The Past Perfect Progressive Tense Formation

? Interrogative Sentences

Had + subject + been + V (- ing) (present participle)

Had + I, you, we, they + been + talking?

Had + he, she, it + been + talking?

The Past Perfect Progressive Tense Formation

- Negative Sentences

Subject + had + not + been + V (- ing)

I, you, we, they + had not (hadn't) + been + sleeping

he, she, it + had not (hadn't) + been + sleeping

The Past Perfect Progressive Tense Formation

The adverbs of frequency

- when
- before
- by the time
- for
- since...

PAST PERFECT VS PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSE

Past Perfect Tense

1. expresses a past action; already finished when another past action happened.

*I met them **after they had divorced**.*

2. emphasizes the result of an activity in the past.

*I **had been to London twice** by the time I got a job in New York.*

Past Perfect Progressive Tense

1. describes a past action which started in the past and continued after another action or time in the past.

*Sara **had been working here for two weeks** when she had the accident.*

2. emphasizes the duration of an activity in the past.

*Richard needed a holiday because **he had been working hard for six months**. (past perfect continuous)*

**Work in pairs. One student looks at the photo and writes sentences about it in the simple past tense.
The other one adds sentences in the past perfect tense.**



Student # 1 - Simple Past:

Jane was surprised to get a phone call from her internship supervisor.

Student # 2 - Past Perfect:

Jane had just interviewed for the Management Training Internship in the USA.

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Simple Past

Student 2 # –
Past Perfect

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