

THE PAST PERFECT



I HAD FINISHED A
MEETING
WITH MY FRINEDS
WHEN SARA
JOINED US

The past perfect is a verb tense that is used to express actions which have finished at some point in the past. Specifically, it is used to clarify that one event happened before another.

To put things in perspective, let's check the following examples:

Carl **had gone out**, when we arrived at the bus station.

In the above sentence, we can see that there are **two events**:

- 1- Carl had gone out.
- 2- We arrived at the bus station.

So, the first part of the sentence has the first event (Carl had gone out), and the second part has the following event (we arrived in the bus station). Since both events happened in the past, the past perfect (in this case, "Carl had gone") is used to illustrate that one event happened before the other.

More Examples

- I **had bought** some candles before the lights went out.
- When they arrived, we **had already started** the party.
- I **had lit** a fire, before it went all dark.
- She was exhausted because she **had not** slept well.

WHEN TO USE THE PAST PERFECT

- 1- When two actions have finished in the past: As we mentioned earlier, this tense is used to make it clear which action happened first in the past before another. Moreover, it is often used to provide a reason for why something happened.

Examples:

- I had eaten brunch, so I was not hungry.
 - It has snowed that night, so we couldn't go out.
- 2- We can also use the past perfect to talk about an event or action that happened in the past and continued until another one.
 - On the 15th of June, I had lived here for two weeks.
 - 3- When talking about things that we wish we could change in the past.
 - I wish I had not gone to bed so late.
 - He could have passed the exam if he had studied harder.
 - If I had known about these profitable stocks, I would have invested in them.

HOW TO USE THE PAST PERFECT

It is easy to form the past perfect tense, and it doesn't change no matter if the subject is singular or plural. **The positive form** of this tense is as follow:

Had + [past participle].

Examples:

- I had been
- You had played
- She had cooked
- He had slept
- It had rained
- We had travelled
- They had bought

To form **the negative form**, you can just add the negation word “Not” after had.

- I had not been
- You had not played
- She had not cooked
- He had not slept
- It had not rained
- We had not travelled
- They had not bought.

To form **the “yes, no question”**, you just need to put the word “had” before subject.

- Had I seen it?
- Had you read?
- Had he eaten?
- Had she left?
- Had it rained?
- Had we met?
- Had they come?

To for the “Wh questions” you just need to put the question at the beginning.

- When had I come?
- Why had you left?
- Where had she been?
- How had he performed?
- When had it rained?
- How had we met?
- where had they studied?