

PAST PERFECT X PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

WHEN DO WE USE THE PAST PERFECT?

We use the **Past Perfect** to talk about what happened first when there are two (or more) situations in the past.

STRUCTURE:

Subject + had + past participle

Examples:

Affirmative:

1. When I got to the party, Tom **had already left**. (1st Tom left and then I got to the party)
2. The thieves **had stolen** nearly \$50,000 by the time the police caught them. (1st they stole the money and then the police caught them)

Negative:

1. I thought I was late, but the meeting **hadn't started** yet.
2. The burglar walked right in because John **hadn't locked** the door. (1st John didn't lock the door and then the burglar walked right in)

Interrogative:

1. What **had** you **eaten** before the allergic reaction?
2. What **had** the dog **seen** that made him run away?

HOW TO CREATE SENTENCES IN THE PAST PERFECT TENSE

AFFIRMATIVE SENTENCES:

Subject + had + past participle

Ex. **We had looked at over 30 houses before choosing this one.**

Ex. **Paul had spent nearly \$50,000 on medical bills before figuring out his diagnosis.**

Ex. **By the time I got to the meeting, our boss had already left.**

NEGATIVE SENTENCES:

Subject + had + not + past participle

Ex. **We thought we were late, but the meeting hadn't started yet.**

Ex. **Jenny hadn't regretted her decision to not have children until her mother passed away.**

Ex. **The burglar walked into the house because I hadn't locked the door.**

*had + not = hadn't

INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES (QUESTIONS):

Had + subject + past participle...?

Ex. **What had you eaten before the allergic reaction?**

Ex. **What had she done that made her run away?**

Ex. **Had she met him before last night?**

PAST PERFECT X PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

■ WHAT HAPPENED FIRST?

1. Stephanie was walking down the street and suddenly she turned around and looked behind her. Someone had called her name.

A: Someone called Stephanie's name

2. After Kevin arrived in Madrid, he called his wife. He had promised to call her as soon as he arrived.

A: Kevin promised to call his wife

3. When I saw my son, I laughed a lot. He had put lipstick all over his face.

A: My son put lipstick all over his face.

4. When Katie arrived, Josh wasn't there. He had already left.

A: Josh left

5. I invited Janet to see the new Star Wars movie, but she said she had seen it before and wasn't interested in watching it again.

A: Janet saw the Star Wars movie

6. Edna arrived at the theater on time, but she couldn't get in. She had left her ticket at home.

A: Edna left her ticket at home

■ WHEN DO WE USE THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS?

We use the **Past Perfect Continuous** to talk about what **was happening** and **how long** that event was happening **before another past event**.

STRUCTURE:

Subject + had + been + present participle (-ING form of the verb)

Examples:

Affirmative:

We **had been waiting** for nearly 20 minutes before someone helped us.

Negative:

Sheila **hadn't been working** for 3 weeks when her boss decided to fire her.

Interrogative:

How long **had** it **been raining** before the basement started to flood?

PAST PERFECT X PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

HOW TO CREATE SENTENCES IN THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

AFFIRMATIVE SENTENCES:

Subject + had + been + present participle (-ING form of the verb)

Ex. **We had been living there for over 10 years before the hurricane hit.**

Ex. **Julie had been working on the project for nearly 10 months before she was fired.**

Ex. **Maggie had been waiting on the phone for nearly 2 hours when someone finally helped her.**

NEGATIVE SENTENCES:

Subject + had + not + been + present participle (-ING form of the verb)

Ex. **We hadn't been feeling well for about 2 weeks before we made a doctor's appointment.**

Ex. **The company hadn't been making any profits for about 2 years before they filed for bankruptcy.**

Ex. **My computer hadn't been working for about 3 days until it finally crashed.**

*had + not = hadn't

INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES (QUESTIONS):

Had + subject + been + present participle (-ING form of the verb)...?

Ex. **How long had you been waiting before the tow truck came?**

Ex. **How long had it been raining before the basement flooded?**

Ex. **How long had the neighbors been arguing before you called the cops?**

MORE EXAMPLES

1. I **had been waiting** for 3 hours by the time Peter showed up.
2. Jessica **had been trying** to get pregnant for 2 years before she finally got pregnant.
3. A family of rabbits **had been living** in our basement for months before anyone discovered them.
4. Emily **had been living** in an orphanage for nearly 12 years by the time she was adopted.
5. Mr. Smith **had been working** at the same company for 25 years, when he was let go/laid off.

PAST PERFECT X PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

SUPER TIP!

What is the difference between the past continuous and the past perfect continuous?

- When there is a duration of time = past perfect continuous
- When there isn't a duration of time = past continuous

Examples:

1. I **was sleeping** when you called. (past continuous - no duration of time)

I **had been sleeping** for 4 hours when you called. (past perfect continuous - "4 hours" is the duration of time)

2. We **were waiting** for class to start when the fire alarm went off. (past continuous - no duration of time)

We **had been waiting** for nearly 30 minutes when the fire alarm went off. (past perfect continuous - "30 minutes" is the duration of time)

MORE EXAMPLES USING THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS:

- We **had been waiting** for 30 minutes in the rain before someone offered us a ride.
- I **had been sleeping** for 9 hours when the phone rang and woke me up.
- Shelly **had been working** at the company for over 25 years when they let her go.

MORE EXAMPLES USING THE PAST CONTINUOUS:

- We **were waiting** in the rain when someone offered us a ride.
- I **was sleeping** when the phone rang and woke me up.
- Kelly **was talking** on her cell phone when she hit the stop sign.

REVIEW

We use the **Past Perfect** to talk about **what happened first** between two (or more) past events.

had + past participle

- I looked for Julie, but she **had left** the building.

We use the **Past Perfect Continuous** to talk about **what was happening** and for **how long before another past event**.

had + been + present participle (-ING form of the verb)

- I **had been looking** for Julie for 5 hours when she finally showed up.