

Past perfect (*he had written*) and past perfect progressive (*he had been writing*)

A Starting activities

1 What happened first?

Past perfect

- 1 Work in pairs. Write 1 by the action which happened first and 2 by the action which happened after it. Example:
 - *The audience left* (2)
 - *after the film had finished.* (1)
 - a – We got married in 1990,
– just a year after we had fallen in love.
 - b – As soon as I got home, I saw
– that someone had broken into my flat.
 - c – When he crashed the car,
– he had just drunk four glasses of wine.
 - d – Unfortunately we arrived at the cinema
– after the film had started.
 - e – By the time I got home
– they had eaten all the cake.
- 2 One verb in each of the sentences above is in the past simple. The other verb is in the past perfect. Is the past perfect used for the first action or the action which happened after it?
- When you have finished, look at Activity note 11 on page 139.

2 A thing of two halves

Past perfect

- 1 Work in pairs, A and B. Without showing B, A writes the first half only of five sentences using a verb in the past perfect each time, like this: *As soon as we had finished lunch . . .* Start with: *when, by the time, as soon as, after.* Without looking at what A is writing, B writes the second half of five sentences using past simple verbs, like this: *. . . John stayed at home.*

- 2 Put the sentence halves together, changing them until they make sense. Example: *As soon as we had finished lunch John went home.*
- 3 Re-write all five sentences putting B's second halves (with the past simple verbs) first. Example: *John went home as soon as we had finished lunch.*

3 How long?

Past perfect progressive

- 1 Work in pairs. Does the speaker emphasize the length of the action in sentence (i) or sentence (ii)? Example:
 - (i) *By the time I got home they had eaten all the cake.*
 - (ii) *By the time I got home they had been eating for two hours.*
 Answer: (ii)
 - a (i) He had been driving for hours before they caught him.
 - (ii) They caught him before he had driven very far.
 - b (i) As soon as they had cleaned the kitchen, they started on the dining room.
 - (ii) Before they started on the dining room, they had been cleaning the kitchen all morning.
- 2 Are the sentences where the speaker emphasizes the length of the action in the past perfect or in the past perfect progressive?

When you have finished, look at Activity note 46 on page 151.

B Grammar guide

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- 1 **Past perfect** When there are two actions in the past, we use the past perfect for the earlier (first) action. We are looking back from a point in the past to an earlier action.
We got married in 1990, just a year after we had fallen in love.
As soon as I got home I saw that someone had broken into my flat.
- Use the past perfect (not the past perfect progressive) when the action took a very short time (like breaking a window).
When they saw they had broken the window, they ran away.
(NOT *had been breaking*)
 - Use the past perfect (not the past perfect progressive) with some state verbs: *seem, prefer, believe, know, like, suppose.*
I hadn't known about it at the time. (NOT *hadn't been knowing*)
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- 2 **Past perfect progressive** Use the past perfect progressive to emphasize how long something took. As with the past perfect, we are looking back from a point in the past to an earlier action.
By the time I got home they had been eating for two hours.
He had been driving for hours before they caught him.
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- 3 **Link words** *When, after, as soon as, before* and *by the time* are often used in past perfect and past perfect progressive sentences.
When Jane had had her turn, I had mine.
After he had been practising for an hour, James could play the tune perfectly.
As soon as Rosie had finished the meal she went home.
George had been queuing for hours before he got his money.
She had been waiting for two hours by the time I got there.
She had waited for two hours by the time the train came.
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- 4 **Past perfect or past simple?** ■ Sometimes we look back from a point in the past to an earlier action but we do not use the past perfect. We use the past simple instead.
- a We can use the past simple when the first action was short and was closely followed by the second action.
After I broke the window, I just ran off.
Though even here a past perfect is still possible.
After I had broken the window, I just ran off.
 - b When it is clear that we are talking about an earlier action, we use the past simple for any other information about the same action.
When I got back after lunch, Jean told me that somebody had phoned when I was out. (*had been out* would be wrong in that sentence.)
- Use the past simple when two past actions happened at the same time and there is no earlier (past perfect) action.
When he saw her, he screamed.

C Activities

1 A good party

Past perfect progressive

Work in pairs. Imagine that the class had a party last week (where?) but something delayed you on your way there (what?). Decide what people in the class had been doing at the party (and for how long) before you arrived. Use the past perfect progressive, like this: *By the time we arrived at the party, Maria had been dancing for two hours.*



2 An insurance claim

Past perfect and past perfect progressive

Work in pairs, A and B. Last year A went on holiday. It was the worst holiday of A's life. A's wife/husband got food poisoning and had to go to hospital. A also had a car crash. And while A was on the beach, having a good time, somebody broke into the hotel room and stole some clothes, a radio and some jewellery. Fortunately, A had taken out holiday insurance. A is now at the insurance office, making an insurance claim. B is the insurance officer.

Person A: Read Activity note 12 on page 139.

Person B: Read Activity note 50 on page 152.

3 The trial of Sammy Banks

Past perfect, past perfect progressive and past simple

Sammy Banks had been playing cards with some friends. The friends say he had been drinking. He then drove home, late at night, which was wrong of him. He had been driving for half an hour when he hit a pedestrian, who had been walking along a narrow country road. Sammy drove on. When a policeman stopped him Sammy said he was going to report the accident when he got home. This is Sammy's trial.

- 1 Work in pairs (A and B) or in groups of four. In pairs, A is Sammy and B is the lawyer asking questions. In groups of four there is a prosecution and a defence lawyer, both asking questions, Sammy and a judge. The judge controls the activity. Use past perfect, past simple and past perfect progressive questions and answers where you can. Use the ideas below to help you.

Ideas

Exactly how much had Sammy drunk at the card game?

Had Sammy been driving too fast when she/he hit the pedestrian?

Did Sammy stop when she/he hit the pedestrian, or just drive on?

What was the pedestrian wearing? Dark or light clothes?

- 2 Work as a class. The judges from some of the pairs or groups sum up the trial. Make separate lists of past perfect, past progressive and past simple sentences from the trial.

D Accuracy practice

1 Choose verbs from the list to complete the sentences. Use the past perfect.

die, eat, beat, stop, take

- 1 I was the one who made the cake and by the time I got home they _____ it all.
- 2 'Anne went to Mrs Peters' funeral yesterday.'
'Oh dear! I didn't even know that Mrs Peters _____.'
- 3 Charlie beat Fred at tennis for the first time yesterday. He _____ (not) Fred before.
- 4 I saw Sophie smoking. I was disappointed. She told me she _____ last year.
- 5 I'm sorry, I didn't know you lent it to Frances. I thought she _____ it from your room.

2 Choose verbs from the list to complete the sentences. Use the past perfect progressive.

smoke, play, visit, read, steal

- 1 When I went into the room I could smell cigarette smoke. Obviously, somebody _____ in there.
- 2 As soon as they caught him, he told them everything. He _____ money from the company and using it to pay for his holidays.
- 3 By the time the match had finished they _____ for two hours.
- 4 By the time she got better I _____ her in hospital for six months.
- 5 By the end of May I still hadn't finished the book and I _____ it for six months.

3 Past perfect or past simple? Put in the right form of the verb in brackets.

- 1 When Sarah got off the bus it was raining heavily; she _____ (go) into a shop to buy a new umbrella because she _____ (leave) her old umbrella at home.
- 2 He _____ (retire) from work early, but he _____ (work) hard all his life.
- 3 As soon as he _____ (see) her, he just _____ (laugh).
- 4 As soon as he _____ (visit) her in hospital and knew she was all right, he _____ (catch) the next bus home.

4 Past perfect or past perfect progressive in context. Put in the correct form of the verb in brackets.

- PLAYER My best moment in the match was when I realized the game ¹_____ (finish) and I ²_____ (become) a tennis champion. I ³_____ (win)! At that moment I ⁴_____ (become) the best tennis player in the world.
- REPORTER And when you won, how long ⁵_____ (you/play) tennis?
- PLAYER I started just before I finished school. That means I ⁶_____ (play) for about six years when I won Wimbledon.
- REPORTER You ⁷_____ (beat) some good players before you won that tournament.
- PLAYER Yes. Ever since I started as a tennis professional I ⁸_____ (win) games regularly, until my injury.
- REPORTER Yes. What did you do to hurt your shoulder so badly?
- PLAYER I ⁹_____ (not/hit) the ball well for some time, so I practised a lot. Then one day I realized I ¹⁰_____ (damage) my shoulder by trying too hard. I had to give up playing tennis because of it.