

VERBS, PAST PERFECT SIMPLE

THE PAST PERFECT SIMPLE

The **past perfect simple** is used to indicate that the **actions or events happened and completed in the past**.

Past perfect is formed with “**had**” plus a **past participle**.

The **past participle** of regular verbs is identical to the past tense of regular verbs.

The **past participle** is discussed in detail in **REGULAR AND IRREGULAR PAST PARTICIPLES** class.

Past Simple

She went to school.

The bus left town.

The traffic got heavy.

I was sick.

Past Perfect

She **had gone** to school.

The bus **had left** town.

The traffic **had gotten** heavy.

I **had been** sick.

When the **past simple** and **past perfect** are together in a sentence, verbs in **past simple** describe actions that were complete at a time in the past that was closer to the time of discussion while verbs in **past perfect** describe actions that took place earlier in the past.

Let’s compare the meaning of sentences when **past simple** and **past perfect** are used:

I **had gone** to school when he dropped by. (“I **had gone** to school” took place before “he dropped by”)

I **went** to school when he dropped by. (“I **went** to school” took place at the same time “he dropped by”)

She was upset because he **had been** dishonest. (“She was upset” took place after “he **had been** dishonest”)

She was upset because he **was** dishonest. (“She was upset” took place at the same time “he **was** dishonest”)

They learned that he **had passed** away. (“he **had passed** away” took place before “They learned”)

They learned that he **passed** away. (“he **had passed** away” took place at the same time “They learned”)

The weather **had gotten** worse by the time we arrived. (“The weather **had gotten** worse” took place before “we arrived”)

The weather **got** worse by the time we arrived. (“The weather **got** worse” took place at the same time “we arrived”)

Practice1: Change the sentences from the past simple to the past perfect tense.

1. His friend **drove** with him to work.
2. She **went** to the library after school.
3. Jim **stopped by** at dusk.
4. They **fought** to the end.
5. She **got up** before dawn.
6. He **won** the competition.
7. Everyone **wore** traditional dresses.
8. I **had** good feelings when he **was** around.
9. He **had** his parents over for dinner.
10. I **understood** his feeling.
11. She **wrote** to him every week.
12. They **broke** the world record.
13. She **slept** late.
14. He **ran** the marathon.
15. She **taught** her kids how to behave.
16. They **were** rude to the customers.
17. Uncle Bill **rode** on a train.
18. She **thought** he **was** wrong.
19. I **saw** a doctor.
20. The teacher **gave** them the assignments.

Answers1:

1. His friend **had driven** with him to work.
2. She **had gone** to the library after school.
3. Jim **had stopped by** at dusk.

4. They **had fought** to the end.
5. She **had gotten up** before dawn.
6. He **had won** the competition.
7. Everyone **had worn** traditional dresses.
8. I **had had** good feelings when he **had been** around.
9. He **had had** his parents over for dinner.
10. I **had understood** his feeling.
11. She **had written** to him every week.
12. They **had broken** the world record.
13. She **had slept** late.
14. He **had run** the marathon.
15. She **had taught** her kids how to behave.
16. They **had been** rude to the customers.
17. Uncle Bill **had ridden** on a train.
18. She **had thought** he **had been** wrong.
19. I **had seen** a doctor.
20. The teacher **had given** them the assignments.

Practice2: change the verbs describing actions that took place **earlier in the past** to **past perfect**. Keep the verbs describing actions that took place later in the past in **past simple**.

1. The train already left when we got there.
2. They lost their confidence before the competition started.
3. We went out to celebrate because I passed the entrance exam.
4. The police came looking for him, but he was away.
5. She trained very hard, so she deserved to make the team.
6. Jim applied for many jobs before he was hired.
7. The coach taught them very well. The result was a championship season.
8. Alice finally retired after she had a successful career.
9. He was devastated when he found out that his friend passed away.
10. I felt responsible because my parents struggled to raise me.
11. She cancelled tennis after she felt ill.
12. They broke the world record when no one expected.
13. She studied engineering before she came to the US.
14. We already read the book by the time we saw the movie.
15. The traffic got heavy when we started to drive to work.
16. They were rude to the customers. She quit working with them.
17. He flew into New York then took the train to Washington DC.
18. She concluded that he was unfaithful.
19. I moved to Boston after I lived in New York for twenty years.
20. The teacher dismissed the class after he gave students their assignments.

Answers2:

1. The train **had** already **left** when we got there.
2. They **had lost** their confidence before the competition started.
3. We went out to celebrate because I **had passed** the entrance exam.
4. The police came looking for him, but he **had been** away.
5. She **had trained** very hard, so she deserved to make the team.
6. Jim **had applied** for many jobs before he was hired.
7. The coach **had taught** them very well. The result was a championship season.
8. Alice finally retired after she **had had** a successful career.
9. He was devastated when he found out that his friend **had passed** away.
10. I felt responsible because my parents **had struggled** to raise me.
11. She cancelled tennis after she **had felt** ill.
12. They broke the world record when no one **had expected**.
13. She **had studied** engineering before she came to the US.
14. We **had** already **read** the book by the time we saw the movie.
15. The traffic **had gotten** heavy when we started to drive to work.
16. They **had been** rude to the customers. She quit working with them.
17. He **had flown** into New York then took the train to Washington DC.
18. She concluded that he **had been** unfaithful.
19. I moved to Boston after I **had lived** in New York for twenty years.
20. The teacher dismissed the class after he **had given** students their assignments.

THE PAST PERFECT NEGATIVE

For negative statement in the past perfect, “**not**” is added after “**had**”.

I **had studied** algebra -> I **had not studied** algebra.

He **had made** important decisions -> He **had not made** important decisions.

She **had worked** at the pharmacy -> She **had not worked** at the pharmacy.

The dog **had napped** -> The dog **had not napped**.

We **had run** late -> We **had not run** late.

They **had had** second thoughts -> They **had not had** second thoughts.

“**had not**” is often abbreviated as “**hadn’t**”

I **had not studied** algebra -> I **hadn’t studied** algebra

They **had not had** second thoughts -> They **hadn’t had** second thoughts.

Practice3: Change the sentences to past perfect negative statements.

1. His friend **had driven** with him to work.
2. She **had gone** to the library after school.
3. Jim **had stopped by** at dusk.
4. They **had fought** to the end.
5. She **had gotten up** before dawn.
6. He **had won** the competition.
7. Everyone **had worn** traditional dresses.
8. I **had had** good feelings when he **had been** around.
9. He **had had** his parents over for dinner.
10. I **had understood** his feeling.
11. She **had written** to him every week.
12. They **had broken** the world record.
13. She **had slept** late.
14. He **had run** the marathon.
15. She **had taught** her kids how to behave.
16. They **had been** rude to the customers.
17. Uncle Bill **had ridden** on a train.
18. She **had thought** he **had been** wrong.
19. I **had seen** a doctor.
20. The teacher **had given** them the assignments.

Answers3:

1. His friend **had not driven** with him to work.
2. She **had not gone** to the library after school.
3. Jim **had not stopped by** at dusk.
4. They **had not fought** to the end.
5. She **had not gotten up** before dawn.
6. He **had not won** the competition.
7. Everyone **had not worn** traditional dresses.
8. I **had not had** good feelings when he **had not been** around.
9. He **had not had** his parents over for dinner.
10. I **had not understood** his feeling.
11. She **had not written** to him every week.
12. They **had not broken** the world record.
13. She **had not slept** late.
14. He **had not run** the marathon.
15. She **had not taught** her kids how to behave.
16. They **had not been** rude to the customers.
17. Uncle Bill **had not ridden** on a train.
18. She **had not thought** he **had not been** wrong.
19. I **had not seen** a doctor.
20. The teacher **had not given** them the assignments.

Answers3: with abbreviations

1. His friend **hadn't driven** with him to work.
2. She **hadn't gone** to the library after school.
3. Jim **hadn't stopped by** at dusk.
4. They **hadn't fought** to the end.
5. She **hadn't gotten up** before dawn.
6. He **hadn't won** the competition.
7. Everyone **hadn't worn** traditional dresses.
8. I **hadn't had** good feelings when he **hadn't been** around.
9. He **hadn't had** his parents over for dinner.
10. I **hadn't understood** his feeling.
11. She **hadn't written** to him every week.
12. They **hadn't broken** the world record.
13. She **hadn't slept** late.
14. He **hadn't run** the marathon.
15. She **hadn't taught** her kids how to behave.
16. They **hadn't been** rude to the customers.
17. Uncle Bill **hadn't ridden** on a train.
18. She **hadn't thought** he **hadn't been** wrong.
19. I **hadn't seen** a doctor.
20. The teacher **hadn't given** them the assignments.

THE PAST PERFECT QUESTIONS

For questions with the past perfect, “**had**” switches position with the **subject**.

Tom **had mowed** the lawn -> **Had** Tom **mowed** the lawn?

I **had made** good of my promise -> **Had** I **made** good of my promise?

She **had worked** on her project -> **Had** she **worked** on her project?

We **had had** a great time -> **Had** we **had** a great time?

They **had exhibited** their works -> **Had** they **exhibited** their works?

We **had bet** on his success -> **Had** we **bet** on his success?

Practice4: Change the sentences to past perfect questions.

1. His friend **had driven** with him to work.
2. She **had gone** to the library after school.
3. Jim **had stopped by** at dusk.
4. They **had fought** to the end.
5. She **had gotten up** before dawn.
6. He **had won** the competition.
7. Everyone **had worn** traditional dresses.
8. I **had had** good feelings when he **had been** around.
9. He **had had** his parents over for dinner.
10. I **had understood** his feeling.
11. She **had written** to him every week.
12. They **had broken** the world record.
13. She **had slept** late.
14. He **had run** the marathon.
15. She **had taught** her kids how to behave.
16. They **had been** rude to the customers.
17. Uncle Bill **had ridden** on a train.
18. She **had thought** he had been wrong.
19. I **had seen** a doctor.
20. The teacher **had given** them the assignments.

Answer4:

1. **Had** his friend **driven** with him to work?
2. **Had** she **gone** to the library after school?
3. **Had** Jim **stopped by** at dusk?
4. **Had** they **fought** to the end?
5. **Had** she **gotten up** before dawn?
6. **Had** he **won** the competition?
7. **Had** everyone **worn** traditional dresses?
8. **Had** I **had** good feelings when he **had been** around?
9. **Had** he **had** his parents over for dinner?
10. **Had** I **understood** his feeling?
11. **Had** she **written** to him every week?
12. **Had** they **broken** the world record?
13. **Had** she late?
14. **Had** he **run** the marathon?
15. **Had** she **taught** her kids how to behave?
16. **Had** they **been** rude to the customers?
17. **Had** Uncle Bill **ridden** on a train?
18. **Had** she **thought** he had been wrong?
19. **Had** I **seen** a doctor?
20. **Had** the teacher **given** them the assignments?