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home-sitemap-A-Z grammar terms past perfect tense is an English verb tense used for a completed activity in the past. It emphasizes that an action was completed before another action took place. For example: John had baked a cake before you arrived. They had painted the fence before I had a chance to speak to them. Hint:
Most sentences featuring the past perfect tense include the word "before." Table of Contents More Examples of the Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Tables The Other Past Perfect Tense Interactive Verb Conjugation Table
before the team reached him. (First: He took the pill. Next: The team planned its next move. (First: The team planned. Next: I investigated the noise.) The weather changed, but the team had planned its next move. (First: The team planned. Next: The weather changed.) Here is a short, 1-
 minute video on the past perfect tense. video lesson Are you a visual learner? Do you prefer video to text? Here is a list of all our grammar videos. Forming the Past Participle (Regular Verbs) If it's a regular verb, the past participle is the same as the simple past
tense. In other words, it is formed like this: Add "ed" to most verbs: jump > jumped paint > painted If a verb of one syllable ends [consonant-vowel-consonant], double the final consonant and add "ed": chat > chatted stop > stopped If the final consonant is "w," "x" or "y," don't double it: sew > sewed play > played fix > fixed If last syllable of a longer
verb is stressed and ends [consonant-vowel-consonant], double the last consonant and add "ed": incur > incurred prefer > preferred If the first syllable of a longer verb is stressed and the verb ends [consonant-vowel-consonant], just add "ed": open > opened enter > entered swallow > swallowed If the verb ends "e," just add "d": thrive > thrived
guzzle > guzzled If the verb ends [consonant + "y"], change the "y" to an "i" and add "ed": If it's an irregular verb, the past participle is formed in all sorts of different ways. Here are some examples: arise > arisen catch > caught choose > chosen know > known You just have to learn them. Read more about irregular verbs (includes a list of the most
common irregular verbs). If you need the negative version, you can use the following construction: "had not taken the police before I investigated the noise in the garden. The weather changed, and the team had not planned its next move. Remember that
 "had not" is sometimes written as the contraction "hadn't." If you need to ask a question, you can use the following word order for a yes/no question: "had the team planned its next move before the weather changed? You can use the following word order
for a question-word question: [question word] + "had" + [subject] + [past participle] Why had Silverfinger taken the pill before the team reached him? Where had the team planned its next move before the team reached him? Where had the team planned its next move before the team reached him? Where had the team planned its next move before the team reached him? Where had the team planned its next move before the team planned its next move before the team reached him? Where had before the team planned its next move before th
You had > You'd He had > He'd She had > She'd It had > It'd We had > We'd They had > They'd Also, for the negative version, you will commonly see "hadn't" instead of "had not." Read more about contractions. The tables below show all 12 tenses so you can see the past perfect tense among the other tenses. (You can change the verb by clicking one
of the green buttons.) Person I you he/she/it we you they past tense past ten
the scene for another action, had past participle had been present participle had been participle had been participle had been participle had been
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doesn't refer to someone who used to be flawless but isn't anymore. (Talk about a back-handed compliment.) The name for this verb tense comes from the Latin perfect tense — and why isn't regular past tense good enough? The past perfect tense is a
form of past tense conjugation that shows that the action or in a different period of the past. She had met him back in college. The plane had left by the time I got to the airport. I had written the email before he apologized.
Kate had wanted to see the movie, but she arrived too late. The following are more examples of past perfect tense in sentences. We were able to stay at the hotel since we had lived there for five years. He understood the math
test because he had been tutored all week. I did not have any cash because I had lost my purse. I had seen him, I would have told him the news. Before he did his homework, he had stayed after school for help. The cat had chased the bird before it flew out of the yard. We had just called home when my mom texted
us about returning the car. She had visited several doctors before she found out what the problem was with her hand. If we had called ahead, we would not have needed to wait so long for a table. To form the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense, the formula is simple: Add had (the past tense of the linking verb to have) to the past perfect tense of the linking verb to have the past perfect tense of the linking verb to have the past perfect tense of the linking verb to have the past perfect tense of the linking verb tense of the linki
the past participle of irregular verbs is not the same as the verb's past tense form. Verb Had + Past Participle Example Sentence prepared the basics of algebra before I started trigonometry. know had known We had known the truth for
quite a while before Carl confessed, see had seen Kelly had seen her parents a few days ago, have had had You had had a question before I finished talking. If the above examples feel a little formal to you, that's probably because you're used to using the contraction for had in past perfect tense. Just add an apostrophe and "d" to the subject of your
 sentence instead of had. I had met Carlos back in college. I'd met Carlos back in college. You had promised not to be late. She had lived in California before moving to Texas. It may be tempting to skip the past perfect tense and just use past tense instead. But when the
verbs in your sentence occur at different times — or when you want to be more precise about when an action occurs — the past perfect tense comes in handy. Use the past perfect when one action in your sentence happened before another action (which is usually in simple past tense). She stayed up all night because she had received bad news. They
won many of the games because they had practiced. Anthony had met Ryan before you introduced him to us at the party. You had studied Italian before you moved to Rome. When something happens right before another action, use past perfect with the adverb just. She had just left the scene when the ambulance arrived. He had just put the dog on
the leash when we got there. The bus had just left when we got to the stop. I had just gone outside when it started to rain. You can use past perfect in negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that an action didn't happen before another negative sentences to show that all the show the show that all the show that all the show that all the show that all the show t
that movie before. Kyle had never been to Mexico. You had not asked me for permission before another event. They can occur before a specific period in time. She had established her company before 2008. He had never played football
until last week. They had gotten engaged before last year. I had fallen asleep before eight o'clock. Another use of past perfect tense includes indirect quotations, also known as reported speech, when a narrator or another person reports what someone else said. The teacher asked if I had studied for the exam. The usher reminded us that we had paid
for different tickets. My neighbor asked if Tim had seen her dog. The boss said that we had done a wonderful job on the presentation. Past perfect tense can also show events that didn't happen when you're writing in the subjunctive mood (a hypothetical or wishful condition). We wished we had purchased the winning ticket. I wished I had told the
truth. She wished she had seen her friend. The boy wished he had asked another question. The past perfect tense works when an action from the past is finished. But what happens when that action continued for a while before ending? Use the past perfect progressive tense to show when an ongoing action ended before another action to avoid
potential verb tense errors in your writing. Past perfect tense definition: The past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense definition. The past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense is a verb tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express actions that occurred in the past perfect tense used to express action to express 
 finished in the past before another action started. That other action also occurred in the past. Because the past perfect is a part of the "perfect" tense, it expresses completed actions. That is, the action that started in the past perfect is a part of the "perfect" tense, it expresses completed actions. That is, the action that started in the past perfect is a part of the "perfect" tense, it expresses completed actions. That is, the action that started in the past perfect is a part of the "perfect" tense, it expresses completed actions. That is, the action that started in the past perfect is a part of the "perfect" tense, it expresses completed actions. That is, the action that started in the past perfect is a part of the "perfect" tense, it expresses completed actions.
perfect tense is used to express a few different things. The past perfect is used to express: completed action before another begins (both in past) After we had purchased tickets, we were able to enter the venue. actions of duration before another begins (both in past) After we had purchased tickets, we were able to express a few different things.
 statements If had purchased tickets, we would have been able to enter the venue. reported speech The official asked if we had purchased tickets. What is it Used For? Let's look at some additional past perfect tense example to fully understand its many uses. For actions
completed before another begins (both in past): I had never flown in an airplane before I went to London. After she had attended college, she became a police officer. They had forgotten the answer until the teacher reminded them. These examples indicate that the action began and ended in the past. Furthermore, they began and ended BEFORE
second event occurred. That second event is also in the past. For actions of duration before something in the past. I had attended the event for years without ever having to purchase tickets. He had admitted his fault to her repeatedly. They would have never known the truth without investigating. These examples indicate that the action began and
ended in the past. Additional, the event also lasted for a period of time (duration) but has now ended. For actions expressing conditional statements: If I had listened during class, I would not have waited. These examples indicate a
conditional action that occurred in the past. The conditional action is a prerequisite to the consequence of the condition. For reported speech: The boss had said it would be a long day. The child had wondered how many stars were in the past. Each of
these actions is finished, or complete. It is possible that they occurred more than once or over a period of time. For showing dissatisfaction with the past: I wished I had returned the item. He wished he had ordered a different meal. We wished we had brought our dog on vacation. These examples indicate an event that did not happen actually happen
The speaker shows dissatisfaction with his decision (not stated in the sentence) and states the action he wishes had occurred. Other Perfect Tenses There are two other primary perfect tenses: the present perfect tenses: the present perfect tenses actions that happened
at time that is not specific and actions that started in the past but continue to the present perfect is used to express: actions in the past but continue to present perfect is used to express actions that
started in the past but stopped recently Future Perfect Tense What is the future perfect tense? The future perfect tense expresses actions that will be finished at some point in the future perfect tense expresses actions that will be finished at some point When we
leave, the sun will have set. actions that occur in the future will continue beyond a certain point in the future We will have worked together for eight years in September. Summary Define past perfect tense: the definition of past perfect tense is the tense denoting that an action was completed before another specified past time or past action. In
summary, the past perfect tense is a verb from to express completed actions such as: actions before another past event. It is often used with
 adverbs or adverb phrases like by the time and before, which clarify a sequence. Form the past perfect tense by using had + the past perfect negative by
adding not between had and the past participle (e.g., had not seen). Form a question in the past perfect tense by beginning the subject between it and the past perfect operates and how to use it correctly, with rules and
examples. The AI writing assistant for anyone with work to do Table of contents What is the past perfect tense Past perfect tense Common regular and irregular verbs in the past perfect tense Past
perfect tense FAQs What is the past perfect tense? The past perfect tense, also called the pluperfect, is a verb tense used to indicate that something happened earlier than another specified time in the past. It's useful for showing a sequence when it's especially important to understand what happened in what order. Here's an example of how the past
perfect establishes sequence: She had left by the time he arrived. The use of the past perfect (had left) in partnership with the simple past vs. past perfect and the simple past refer to different levels of the past, and they often
 work closely together to do that. When you're using the simple past to discuss some point in the past, and then you need to reference an event that happened even earlier, using the simple past to discuss some point in the past—to something that happened
or was true at that time and is currently no longer happening or true. It's called simple for a reason; it's your go-to tool for straightforward discussions of the past, because it refers to a level of the past that is earlier than a
more recent level that is either explicitly identified or implied. One way that it can do this is alongside the simple past tense, as in the following example: She got home and noticed that something had changed is in the past perfect. What this tells us is that (at some point in the
past) the subject, she, got home and noticed that (at some earlier point in the past) something had changed. Notice that we don't need to know exactly when these two points in time were; what is important is the sequence of events, which is made clear by the use of the two past tenses. Examples of the past perfect tense Here are a few more
examples of sentences using the past perfect tense to show sequence in a variety of ways: By the time Bilal turned 15, he had finished growing. When I called, they had just left. Kai woke up this morning and saw that they had missed a call from their mother. How to use the past perfect tense To become adept at using the past perfect tense, it's
important to understand how to conjugate verbs in it, when you need it, and how to correctly construct sentences that use it. In this section, we'll cover all of that, with examples. The past perfect formula for the past perfect tense is had + [past participle]. Had here is the simple past tense form of to have, and it functions as an auxiliary
verb in the past perfect. It doesn't matter if the subject is singular or plural or what person it is in; the formula doesn't change. I had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. They both had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. They both had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before. You had given that vase as a gift before in the property of the proper
Here's a tip: Want to make sure you're using the past perfect tense correctly? Grammarly can save you from grammar and punctuation mistakes. It even proofreads your text, so your work is extra polished wherever you write. When you need the past perfect tense correctly? Grammarly can save you from grammar and punctuation mistakes. It even proofreads your text, so your work is extra polished wherever you write.
events to be unambiguous. Here are a pair of sentences that illustrate how it makes that sequence clear: Ambiguous: I was relieved that the children used washable paint. Unambiguous: I was relieved that the children used washable paint.
that the children used washable paint are in the speaker was relieved, when it happened) in comparison to when it happened) in comparison to when it happened is set (in effect, when it happened) in comparison to when it happened is set (in effect, when it happened) in comparison to when it happened is set (in effect, when it happened) in comparison to when it happened is set (in effect, when it happened) in comparison to when it happened is set (in effect, when it happened is set (in effect, when it happened) in comparison to when it happened is set (in effect, wh
paint, for example. The unambiguous sentence's use of the past perfect in the restrictive clause makes it clear: First, a specific instance of the children using washable paint occurred; at some later point, the speaker discovered that fact and was relieved about it. Adverbs and adverbial phrases such as by the time, before, and until often signal a need
for the past perfect tense. In the following example, Before yesterday is the more recent past before which the action of the main clause took place: Before yesterday, we had eaten there times. Another time to use the past perfect is when you are expressing a condition and a result: If Tobias had woken up earlier this
morning, he would have caught the bus. The past perfect is used in the past perfect tense Don't use the past perfect tense if there's no sequence of past events you need to convey. This morning, I
had cleaned the kitchen floor. If you said the above sentence on its own to someone, your listener would be waiting for you to describe what happened next, because using the past perfect implies that your action of cleaning the floor occurred before something else happened. The "something else" doesn't always have to be explicitly mentioned, but
context needs to make it clear. In this case there's no context, so the past perfect doesn't make sense, as it goes on to describe what happened next, in the simple past. Don't use the past perfect tense
repetitively, after the level of the past that you're writing about has already been established by using the past perfect. In narrative writing, the past perfect tense is frequently necessary to show that the action it describes happened before other past actions—whether in the same sentence or preceding ones—that are described in the simple past
 remembered that just last week I had noticed what a muddy white color they were, and I had thought about other colors for them. I even went online then and looked at paint colors. In the first sentence, the writer uses the simple past to narrate what happened this morning (I remembered), and then establishes that there was a further-back level of
 past time in which what they remembered occurred, indicated by the past perfect of had noticed and had thought. Then, in the second sentence, they can switch back to the simple past and be understood as still referring to that earlier time (last week). How to make the past perfect tense negative The formula for making the past perfect tense
 negative is identical to the regular past perfect formula except for the addition of not: had + not + [past participle]: By the time we left, the band had not can be combined into the contraction hadn't: Aida hadn't heard
 about the resignation of the college president when we saw her on Monday. How to ask a question in the past perfect tense The formula for asking a question in the past perfect tense is had + [subject] + [past participle]. Had Meredith lived in other neighborhoods before they moved to ours? Had you eaten before you arrived there? This inverted
 interrogative structure for the past perfect tense applies to open-ended questions as well as yes-no questions: Where had you been before you met us at the restaurant? What had Saro said before the meeting began to make everyone so cheerful? Common regular and irregular verbs in the past perfect tense Regular verbs follow expected patterns in
had made had not made to go had gone had not gone to take had not gone to take had not come allows you to make the sequence of past events and situations clear, which
is essential whether you're writing historical fiction or taking meeting notes. A solid grasp of the nuances of how to avoid it when it would be incorrect is an important tool to have in your writer's kit. Past perfect tense FAQs How do you know
 when to use the past perfect tense? Use the past perfect tense when writing about two or more past actions that happened at different times, especially to clarify sequence or otherwise avoid ambiguity about two or more past and the past perfect? The simple past
describes completed actions in the past perfect indicates a past action that was completed before another, more recent, past. How do you form sentences in the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect tense? The past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the past perfect is formed by placing the auxiliary verb had before the auxil
 number. In declarative sentences, the subject comes before had and the past participle (She had been there before). In questions, the subject comes between had and the past participles of verbs, and irregular verbs have
 happened first. It is important to use the past perfect tense when describing two past events to make the order of events clear. The past perfect tense shows that something was finished in the past before something else happened. It is often used with words like before, after, already, and yet to show the sequence of actions. The simple past tense is
 different because it only talks about a single action that happened at a specific time in the past. Definition The Cambridge Dictionary defines the past perfect tense as "the form of a verb that is used to show that an action had already finished when another action happened." According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary, the past perfect tense
 tense as "a tense indicating an action as completed or a state as having ended before a specified or implied time in the past." This tense is sometimes also called the "pluperfect tense." Past Perfect Tense Structure This is used when describing an action that was completed before another past action. It is formed by using the auxiliary verb had with
the past participle of the main verb. Sentence Structure: Positive Sentence: Subject + had + past participle + rest of the sentence Example: She hadn't finished her homework before dinner. Interrogative
Sentence: Had + subject + past participle + rest of the sentence? Example: Had she finished her homework before dinner? Unlock your potential with Aditya Sir's transformative English-speaking course. Gain confidence, fluency, and the skills you need to excel. Start your journey today! Join Now Past Perfect Tense Formula The basic formula is:
Subject + had + past participle + rest of the sentence Example: I had eaten lunch before my friend arrived. Past participle of the main verb to the past participle by using the auxiliary verb had with the past participle of the main verb. The word had is used with all subjects (I, you, he, she, it, we, they). Regular verbs form the past participle by
 adding -ed to the base verb (e.g., play \rightarrow played). Irregular verbs have unique past participles (e.g., go \rightarrow gone, write \rightarrow written). The past perfect tense is often used for the first action, and the simple past tense is used for the
 second action. Purpose of Past Perfect Tense It is used to show that an action was completed before a specific point in the past. It can describe expectations, hopes, or regrets about the past. It is useful for indirect speech when reporting past events. Examples: She had locked the door before
 leaving the house. By the time we arrived, the train had already left. I had never seen such a beautiful beach before our trip. They had finished their work before my family came home. He had left the office before the meeting started. She had completed
the project before the deadline. They had never traveled abroad before last summer. We had cleaned the house before our guests arrived. Unlock your potential with Aditya Sir's transformative English-speaking course. Gain confidence, fluency, and the skills you need to excel. Start your journey today! Join Now Exercise Rewrite the following
sentences using the past perfect tense: She wrote a letter to her friend. The teacher explained the topic before you recommended it. The rain stopped before we reached the park. We ate lunch before visiting the museum. The guests left before we
arrived. He learned to drive before turning 18. She met her friend before joining college. We heard the newspaper. Answers She had written a letter to her friend. They had finished their homework before going out to play. I had seen that movie before you
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            (not/eat) anything because he had already eaten lunch. When I got to the cinema, the movie
before they decided to move there. Before he arrived at the party, she
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  (finish) eating. I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        (not/see) that movie before last night. She
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           (not/visit) her grandparents for a long time before last summer. By the time they arrived at the airport, the plane
 Answers had finished had already left had not eaten had started had visited had already left had finished had already left frequently Asked Questions Q1: What does the past perfect tense mean? A: The past perfect tense is used to show that one event in the past had pready left had not seen had not visited had already left frequently Asked Questions Q1: What does the past perfect tense mean? A: The past perfect tense is used to show that one event in the past had not seen had not visited had already left frequently Asked Questions Q1: What is the
formula for past perfect tense? A: Subject + had + past perfect tense? A: Subject + had + past perfect tense different from the simple past tense? A: The simple past tense? A: The simple past tense? A: Subject + had + past perfect tense different from the past perfect tense? A: Subject + had + past perfect tense? A: The simple past tense? A: The simple p
tense? A: Yes. She had finished her homework before dinner. Q5: Why is the past perfect tense important? A: It helps make the order of past events clear, avoiding confusion. This comprehensive guide on the Past Perfect Tense explains its usage, sentence structures, and examples with easy-to-follow tables. Designed for students and ESL learners,
the article provides a clear explanation of the past perfect tense structure. Plus, practice what you've learned with exercises at the end! We use past perfect tense to speak about an action completed before a given moment in the past or that has already been completed in the past. Example: When I reached home, she had already cleaned the room. In
the above sentence, the action words are 'reached' and 'had cleaned'. Both action would be in the past action would be in the past action would be in the past action would be in the simple past tense. We
use Past Perfect when one past action was completed before another past action. We use Simple Past to express an action that happened in the past. Read also: Past Continuous Tense There are some rules that are discussed below about the use of past perfect tense in sentences in following the situations. Rule 1: to talk about an action that happened in the past.
 before another action in the past: Example: My mother had cooked dinner before we arrived. Rule 2: to talk about an action that had finished cooking. Rule 3: When the two actions are performed in the past, the first action will be in the Past Perfect form
and the rest will be in Simple Past form. The perfect form will be placed before I did. Example: He had come before I did
cooking when I called her. After: The train left the station after we had reached the station. Before: The patient had died before the doctor came. Just: I had just finished my homework when my friend arrived. Ever/Never: They had never seen such a beautiful sunset in their lives. Read also: Past Perfect Continuous Tense The examples of Past Perfect
Tense structure in different sentences have been presented in the following. Get them for practical use while speaking or writing. Structure Subject + Had + Verb (Past-Participle Form) + Object. Table Person Singular Plural1stI had eaten rice. You had eaten rice. Yo
rice. They had eaten rice. Other Examples He had played football. Students had made mistakes. You had read history. John had done the work. We had gone to school. Structure Subject + Had + not + Verb (Past-Participle Form) + Object Table Person
 had not eaten rice.3rdHe / She / (It) had not eaten rice. They had not eaten rice. Other Examples He had not played football. Students had not gone to school. Structure Had+Subject+Verb (Past-Participle Form)+Object? Table Person Singular Plural1stHad I
eaten rice?Had we eaten rice?2ndHad you eaten rice?2ndHad you eaten rice?3rdHad he/she/(it) eaten rice?Had you read history? Had John done the work? Had you watched the movie? Structure Had+Subject(If Pronoun) + Not + Verb (Past-Participle
Form)+Object?Had + Not + Subject (If Noun)+ Verb(Past-Participle Form) +Object? If the Subject is "NOUN", "Not" will be placed before "Subject". Example:- Have they not completed the task? Table Person
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      Has not John(N) eaten rice? Had they not eaten rice? Other Examples Had he not played football? Had she not completed the task? Had you not read history? Had not John done
the work? Had you not watched the movie? In many cases, it is seen that the outcome of another action depends on some action in the past participle of the
corresponding main verb. But the verbs in the other clauses (on which the above verbs depend) are only in the past perfect tense. For Example: If Ravi had studied have reached the top of the ladder. Had the boy been more attentive he could have
 sentence, the fact that Sita would have finished the work on time depends on her starting the work early. For such dependent clauses as 'Sita would have', and 'might have', according to sense and then put the past participle of the corresponding main verb. But the verbs in the other clauses
(on which the above verbs depend) are only in the past perfect tense. But if this clause starts with 'if' then 'had' before the 'subject'. For Example, Had I been in your position, I would have resigned. If I had been in your position, I would have
resigned. Had the boy been more attentive, he might have scored good marks. If the had been more attentive, he might have scored good marks. No sooner .... than, Hardly with when, and Scarcely with before (or when) should be used, and
 'had' is placed before the subject. For Example, No sooner had the rain stopped than he started. Scarcely had the rain stopped when he started.
. (flee) before the police arrived.(c) After the children . ...... (stand) in a row, the Headmaster began to speak.(d) He
                                                  ..(die). The French past perfect shows a past action happening before another past action. In French, the past perfect is built with the imperfect helps in describing hypothetical situations in the past with "si" clauses. The French past perfect, or pluperfect—known in
French as le plus-que-parfait—is used to indicate a past action that occurred before another past action. The most recent past action can be mentioned in the same sentence or implied. The plus-que-parfait is the compound form of the imperfect of the appropriate helping verb, avoir or être (have or be) and
the participe passé (past participle) of the verb. Its English equivalent is "had" and the past participle. The table below provides some examples; for clarity, the prior action is in parentheses in some cases. French Pluperfect English Translation II n'avait pas mangé (avant de faire ses devoirs). He hadn't eaten (before doing his homework). J'ai fait du
shopping ce matin. J'avais déjà fait la lessive. I went shopping this morning. I had already done the laundry. J'étais déjà sorti (quand tu as téléphoné). I had already left (when you called). Nous voulions te parler parce que nous ne t'avions pas vu hier. We wanted to talk to you because we didn't see you yesterday. The pluperfect is also used in si
 clauses to express a hypothetical situation in the past contrary to what actually happened. Si clauses or conditionals produced by that condition. In English, such sentences are called "if/then" constructions. The French si means "if" in
 English. There is no equivalent for "then" per se in French conditional sentences. French Pluperfect With Si Clause English Translation Si tu m'avais demandé, j'aurais répondu. If you had asked me, I would have answered. Nous y serions allés si nous avions su. We would have gone if we had known. The French past perfect is a compound conjugation
 which means it has two parts: Imperfect of the auxiliary verb (either avoir or être) Past participle of the main verb Like all French compound conjugations, the past participle must agree with the subject. When the auxiliary verb is avoir, the past
participle may have to agree with its direct object. Conjugating the French le plus-que-parfait (the past perfect or pluperfect) requires knowing when to use avoir, être, or a pronominal, as the table demonstrates for the verbs aimer (to become), and lavar (to wash). Aimer (auxiliary verb is avoir) j' avais aimé tu avais aimé il, elle avait
 aimé nous avions aimé vous aviez aimé ils,elles avaient aimé Devenir (être verb) j' étais devenu(e) tu étais devenu(e) il sétait devenu nous étions devenu(e) il sétait devenu nous étions devenu(e) il sétait devenu nous étions devenu(e) il sétait devenu elles était devenue elles était devenu nous étions devenu(e) il sétait devenu nous étions de la mous devenu nous étions de la mous de la mous devenu nous etions de la mous de la mous de la mous de l
lavé(e)s vous vous étiez lavé(e)(s) elle s'était lavée elles s'étaient lavées French pronominal," which means "relating to a pronoun." All conjugated verbs, except the imperative form, require a subject pronoun. > You are here:
 France > French grammar > Verbs > Imperfect, pluperfect About-France.com - French grammar Page index: The imperfect In addition to the two main past tenses, the preterite and the pluperfect. Generally speaking, these
correspond to the past progressive and past perfect in English, but their uses are not quite the same. The imperfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive and past perfect tense in French is used to express ongoing or lasting action in the past progressive action a
imperfect tense is used much more frequently than the English past progressive, as it is also used to express continuing or repeated actions in the preterite. See examples 2 and 3 below. This is notably the case for verbs that intrinsically imply duration, such as savoir, connaître, vivre, etc.
for which the imperfect is a very common, if not the most common, past tense in French. One common use of the imperfect is in sentences that relate two past events to each other, one expressing an ongoing situation, the other a specific action. See examples 7 and 8 below. In cases where two related past events both imply duration, in French
both verbs will normally be in the imperfect. In English, by contrast, only one of them - and sometimes neither of them - may be expressed using a verb in the past progressive - notably when the verbs intrinsically imply duration. See examples 9 and 10 below. Just occasionally, the imperfect is used as an alternative to the preterite, as a past
 narrative tense; in this usage it is sometimes referred to as the picturesque past, le passé pittoresque, and was used as a technique of style by writers such as Georges Simenon and Mario Ropp. For all verbs, the imperfect tense is formed with the endings:
--ais, -ais, -ais, -ais, -ais, -aient. Sample verb: porter --Singular: Je portais, tu portais, tu portais, the imperfect tense is formed with the endings:
--ais, -ais, -ait, -ions --iez -aient. Sample verb: porter --Singular: Je portais, tu portais, tu portais, the imperfect tense is formed with the endings:
--ais, -ait, -ions --iez -aient. Sample verb: porter --Singular: Je portais, tu portais, the imperfect tense is formed with the endings:
--ais, -ait, -ions --iez -aient. Sample verb: porter --Singular: Je portais, tu portais, the imperfect tense is formed with the endings:
--ais, -ait, -ions --iez -aient. Sample verb: portais, the imperfect tense is formed with the endings:
--ais, -ait, -ai
 il/elle/on portait Plural: Nous portions, vous portiez, ils/elles portaient Examples: 1. Je blaguais.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   At the time, the house belonged to me. 3. Il achetait souvent des livres rares.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               He often bought rare books . 4. Au moment de l'accident la voiture roulait très vite.
                                                                                                                                                                                   The man often used to work in his garden very late in the evening. 6. J'allais vous dire que je reconnaissais cet homme.

I was going to tell you that I recognised that man. 7. Je suis tombé de mon vélo alors que je sortais du garage.
 accident the car was going very fast. 5. L'homme travaillait souvent dans son jardin très tard le soir.
                                                                                                                                                               I was snoozing when I heard the alarm. 9. Quand nous vivions à Paris nous n'avions pas de voiture. When we were living in Paris we didn't have a car. 10. Je ne savais pas qu'il parlait russe. I didn't know that he spoke Russian. The pluperfect tense
 in French is used to express action in a distant past. One common use of the pluperfect is in sentences that relate two historic past events to each other, where one of the events took place further in the past than the other. In this situation, the French pluperfect corresponds to the past perfect in English. However French can also use the
 pluperfect in some cases where English would use the preterite or present perfect: in these instances, the function of the pluperfect is simply to imply an action that is very much in the past, and long since terminated. See examples 5 and 6 below. The pluperfect is also used in past reported speech, to report a statement originally expressed using the
 composite past. See examples 7 and 8 below. For all verbs, the pluperfect tense is formed with the imperfect of avoir (or in specific cases of être), followed by the past participle:
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          Sample verb: porter Singular: J'avais porté, tu avais porté, il avait porté Plural: Nous avions porté, vous aviez porté, ils avaient porté Sample verb: aller
                                                                                                                                                                        I'd spoken to my lawyer before coming 2. A peine avait-il fini de ranger ses outils, qu'il se mit à pleuvoir.
good look at the house before buying it . 4. J'avais pensé que tu pourrais venir cet après-midi.
                                                                                                                                                                        I'd thought you might come this afternoon. 5. La construction du pont avait été commencé par les Romains.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    The building of the bridge was started under the Romans. 6. Je vous connais, parce que ma mère avait souvent parlé de vous.
you, because my mother often talked about you. 7. Il disait qu'il avait déjà assez bu.
                                                                                                                                                       He said he'd already drunk enough. 8. Je savais que tu me l'avais déjà dit.

I knew you'd already told me. Return to Verb tenses 1: the preterite and composite past The past perfect tense, also known as the pluperfect tense, is essential in English. It describes
 events that happened before a particular point in the past. Understanding this tense helps you create detailed and complex sentences about its structure, usage, common time expressions, and how to use it correctly. Understanding Past Perfect Tense
The Past Perfect Tense is used to show that an action was completed before another action in the past. It is often used to clarify the order of events. PinPast Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Formation of Past Perfect Tense - Created by 7ESL Form
 this pattern: Subject + had + past participle For example: I had eaten They had gone Negative sentences use "had not" or "hadn't": She had not finished We hadn't seen Questions invert the subject and "had": Had you left? Had they arrived? Examples of Past Perfect Tense Examples make the use of Past Perfect Tense clear. By the time she arrived, I
had already left. He had finished his homework before the movie started. They had lived in Paris before moving to London. Tabs for better clarity: Sentence Explanation By the time she arrived, I had left. Action 1: I left. Action 1: I left. Action 1: I left. Action 2: It started. Action 1: I left. Action 2: It started. They had lived in Paris before moving to London. Tabs for better clarity: Sentence Explanation By the time she arrived, I had left. Action 1: I left. Action 1: I left. Action 2: It started. They had lived in Paris before the moving to London. Tabs for better clarity: Sentence Explanation By the time she arrived, I had left. Action 1: I left. Action 2: I left. Action 2: It started. They had lived in Paris before the moving to London. Tabs for better clarity: Sentence Explanation By the time she arrived, I had left. Action 2: It started. They had lived in Paris before the moving to London. Tabs for better clarity: Sentence Explanation By the time she arrived. Action 2: It started. They had lived in Paris before the moving to London. Tabs for better clarity: Sentence Explanation By the time she arrived. Action 2: It started. They had lived in Paris before the moving to London. Tabs for better clarity: Sentence Explanation By the time she arrived. Action 2: It started. They had lived in Paris before the moving to London. The lived in Paris before the moving to London. Tabs for better clarity and the lived in Paris before the moving to London. The lived in Paris before the moving to London. The lived in Paris before the moving to London. The lived in Paris before the lived in Paris before the moving to London. The lived in Paris before the moving to London. The lived in Paris before the moving to London. The lived in Paris before the lived in Par
1 happened earlier. Past Perfect Tense helps make the sequence of past actions clear. Usage of Past Perfect tense is useful for indicating that one action was completed Actions The past perfect tense is useful for indicating that one action was completed Actions The past perfect tense is useful for indicating that one action was completed before another action in the past perfect tense is useful for indicating that one action was completed Actions The past perfect tense is useful for indicating that one action was completed before another action in the past.
to show that an action was finished before another past action (finishing homework) was completed before the second action (going out to play). This tense helps to create a clear timeline of events. Showing Cause and Effect This tense can also
illustrate cause and effect. For instance, "They were hungry because they had not eaten all day." Here, the reason for being hungry (cause) is clear because of the past perfect tense used for the action of not eating (effect). It makes relationships between actions easy to understand. Describing Sequential Actions The past perfect tense is effective in
describing actions that happen one after another. For example, "After he had saved some money, he bought a new bike." The saving happened first, then the bike purchase followed. This use helps to set up a sequence of events so the reader knows what happened and in what order. Negative Statements and Ouestions Negative statements in the past
perfect tense use the formula "had not" followed by the past participle of the verb. Questions in the past perfect tense, add "not" after "had." For example, "She had not seen the movie." The past participle of the
verb remains the same. Subject Auxiliary Verb Negation Past Participle I had not finished They had not left In contractions, "had not" becomes "hadn't," such as "He hadn't eaten breakfast." This form is less formal and often used in spoken English. Constructing Questions To ask questions in the past perfect tense, place "had" before the subject and
follow with the past participle of the verb. For example, "Had they left before you arrived?" This structure is essential for correct syntax. Auxiliary Verb Subject Past Participle Had you seen Had she finished his work?" or "Had he not finished his work?" or "
work?" Both are correct and vary depending on formality and emphasis. Conditional Sentences and Reported Speech The past perfect tense is often used in both conditional sentences and reported speech. This helps show that one action happened before another in the past. Using Past Perfect in Conditional Sentences with the past
perfect tense describe situations that did not happen in the past. They often use an "if" clause. For example, "If he had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test." Here, "had studied more, he would have passed the test
perfect, would have + past participle Examples include: If she had left earlier, she would have caught the bus. If they had known the truth, they might have reacted differently. Understanding these patterns can make it easier to talk about past possibilities. Past Perfect in Reported Speech Reported speech often needs past perfect tense when dealing
with prior events. This shows when actions happened before the main message was conveyed. For instance, direct speech might be: "I have finished my homework." When reported speech helps clarify time sequences. Some other examples include: Direct: "She
had already left." Reported: "He said she had already left." Similarly: Direct: "They had been waiting for hours." These changes in tense are essential for clear communication about past events. Practice and Exercises Practicing the past perfect tense helps cement the understanding of how
actions relate to one another in time. Students can use various exercises to become more confident in this tense. Fill in the Blanks Complete the sentences using the past perfect tense: By the time they arrived, the movie
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               (start). She
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          (finish) her homework before dinner. We (see) that movie already. Sentence Rewriting Rewrite the
sentences with the given cues: She lost her keys. She found them later. After she (lose) her keys, she (find) them later. They visited London. They went to Paris a week later. After they (visit) London, they
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                (go) to Paris a week later. Short Writing Prompts Write a short paragraph about a memorable experience using at least three
past perfect tense verbs. Focus on the sequence of events: Prompt Example: Describe a day when everything seemed to go wrong but ended well. Matching Match the past perfect tense verbs with their past simple counterparts: Past Perfect Tense Past Simple had eaten ate had left left had written wrote PinPast Perfect - Created by 7ESL Verb
Tenses in English Learn all (12) tenses in English with useful grammar rules, examples and ESL worksheets. Verb Tenses Chart
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