

Past perfect (I had done)

A Study this example situation:



Sarah and Paul went to the same party last week, but they didn't see each other. Paul left the party at 10.30 and Sarah arrived at 11 o'clock.

So when Sarah arrived at the party, Paul wasn't there.

He **had gone** home.

had gone is the *past perfect*:

I/we/they/you he/she/it	had	(= I'd etc.) (= he'd etc.)	gone seen finished etc.
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The past perfect (simple) is **had** + *past participle* (**gone/seen/finished** etc.).

Sometimes we talk about something that happened in the past:

- ☐ Sarah **arrived** at the party.

This is the starting point of the story. Then, if we want to talk about things that happened *before* this time, we use the past perfect (**had** ...):

- ☐ **When Sarah arrived** at the party, Paul **had** already **gone** home.

Some more examples:

- ☐ When we got home last night, we found that somebody **had broken** into the flat.
- ☐ Karen didn't come to the cinema with us. She'd already **seen** the movie.
- ☐ At first I thought I'd **done** the right thing, but I soon realised that I'd **made** a big mistake.
- ☐ The people sitting next to me on the plane were nervous. They **hadn't flown** before.
or They'd never **flown** before.

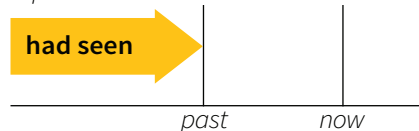
B Compare *present perfect* (**have seen** etc.) and *past perfect* (**had seen** etc.):

Present perfect



- ☐ Who is that woman? I've **seen** her before, but I can't remember where.
- ☐ We aren't hungry. We've just **had** lunch.
- ☐ The house is dirty. They **haven't cleaned** it for weeks.

Past perfect



- ☐ I wasn't sure who she was. I'd **seen** her before, but I couldn't remember where.
- ☐ We weren't hungry. We'd just **had** lunch.
- ☐ The house was dirty. They **hadn't cleaned** it for weeks.

C Compare *past simple* (**left, was** etc.) and *past perfect* (**had left, had been** etc.):

Past simple

- ☐ A: Was Tom there when you arrived?
B: Yes, but he **left** soon afterwards.
- ☐ Kate **wasn't** at home when I phoned.
She **was** at her mother's house.

Past perfect

- ☐ A: Was Tom there when you arrived?
B: No, he'd already **left**.
- ☐ Kate **had** just **got** home when I phoned.
She'd **been** at her mother's house.

Exercises

15.1 Read the situations and write sentences using the words in brackets.

- There was a picture lying on the floor.
(It / fall / off the wall) It had fallen off the wall.
- The people sitting next to you on the plane were nervous. It was their first flight.
(They / not / fly / before) They hadn't flown before.
- You went back to your home town recently after many years. It wasn't the same as before.
(It / change / a lot) It
- Somebody sang a song. You didn't know it.
(I / not / hear / it / before) I
- I invited Rachel to the party, but she couldn't come.
(She / arrange / to do something else)
- You went to the cinema last night. You got to the cinema late.
(The film / already / start)
- Last year we went to Mexico. It was our first time there.
(We / not / be / there / before) We
- I met Daniel last week. It was good to see him again after such a long time.
(I / not / see / him for five years)
- I offered my friends something to eat, but they weren't hungry.
(They / just / have / lunch)
- Sam played tennis yesterday. He wasn't very good at it because it was his first game ever.
(He / never / play / before)

15.2 Use the sentences on the left to complete the paragraphs on the right. These sentences are in the order in which they happened – so (a) happened before (b), (b) before (c) etc. But your paragraph begins with the underlined sentence, so sometimes you need the past perfect.

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|--|---|---|
| 1 (a) Somebody broke into the office during the night. | } | We arrived at work in the morning and found that <u>somebody had broken</u> into the office during the night. So <u>we called</u> the police. |
| (b) <u>We arrived at work in the morning.</u> | | |
| (c) We called the police. | | |
| 2 (a) Laura went out this morning. | } | I went to Laura's house this morning and rang her doorbell, but no answer.
..... out. |
| (b) <u>I rang her doorbell.</u> | | |
| (c) There was no answer. | | |
| 3 (a) Joe came back from holiday a few days ago. | } | I met Joe a few days ago. just
..... holiday.
..... very well. |
| (b) <u>I met him the same day.</u> | | |
| (c) He looked very well. | | |
| 4 (a) James sent Amy lots of emails. | } | Yesterday James
from Amy. surprised.
..... lots of emails,
but |
| (b) She never replied to them. | | |
| (c) <u>Yesterday he got a phone call from her.</u> | | |
| (d) He was surprised. | | |

15.3 Put the verb into the correct form, past perfect (I **had done**) or past simple (I **did**).

- Paul wasn't at the party when I arrived. He'd gone (He / go) home.
- I felt very tired when I got home, so (I / go) straight to bed.
- The house was very quiet when I got home. Everybody (go) to bed.
- Mark travels a lot. When I first met him, (he / already / travel) round the world.
- Sorry I'm late. The car (break) down on my way here.
- We were driving along the road when (we / see) a car which (break) down, so (we / stop) to help.