

3

The past perfect



Usage

We use the past perfect tense to:

1. talk about a past action that happened and ended **before another past action**.

e.g. Lily **had left** before we arrived at the airport.



2. **report** what people said in the simple past, present perfect or past perfect tenses.

e.g. 'I **went** hiking yesterday,' Jimmy said. (The simple past)

→ Jimmy said that he **had gone** hiking the day before. (The past perfect)

e.g. 'I've never **worn** a kimono before,' Sue told us. (The present perfect)

→ Sue told us that she **had never worn** a kimono before. (The past perfect)

e.g. 'I **had been** a chef for 30 years before my retirement,' Eric said. (The past perfect)

→ Eric said that he **had been** a chef for 30 years before his retirement.
(The past perfect)

We usually use the past perfect tense with the following time expressions:

just already yet never when after before as soon as by the time

e.g. Mary wrote the book report as soon as she **had finished** reading the book.



Part 1 Statements

We form statements in the past perfect tense in the following ways:

Positive statement				Negative statement			
I / You / We / They / He She / It	had / 'd	gone ↑ past participle	before the pop star arrived.	I / You / We / They / He She / It	had not / hadn't	gone ↑ past participle	before the pop star arrived.



Educator's Tips



We use the past perfect tense **before** *when*, *before* and *by the time*; while we use it **after** *as soon as* and *after*.

e.g. Sam and Alice **had bought** a house when / before / by the time they got married.

e.g. Sam and Alice got married as soon as / after they **had bought** a house.

We put *when*, *before*, *by the time*, *as soon as* and *after* either **in the middle of a sentence** or **at the beginning of a sentence with a comma**.

e.g. Mary **had washed** her hands before she ate the ice cream.

(=Before Mary ate the ice cream, she **had washed** her hands.)

We usually put *just*, *already* and *never* **between had** and the past participle.

e.g. The shop **had already / just closed** when we arrived.

e.g. The beggar **had never eaten** enough food before the charity helped him.

Exercise 1

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

1. Last Sunday, Sam and I (a) went (go) swimming at the beach. Before we went there, we (b) _____ (not swim) for nearly a year. We (c) _____ (spend) almost five hours there. Both of us (d) _____ already _____ (get) sunburned by the time we left.



2. Yesterday, Ann from the volleyball team (a) _____ (call) me. She said that she (b) _____ (not eat) anything the whole day to keep fit. I told her that she (c) _____ (do) lots of exercises so she should eat more. Finally, she (d) _____ (eat) some bread after I (e) _____ (talk) to her.



Part 2 Yes / No-questions

We form *yes / no*-questions and short answers in the past perfect tense in the following ways:

Question			
Had	I / you / we / they / he / she / it	entered the hall ordered the food seen that girl	before the party began?



Short answer		
Yes,	I / you / we / they / he / she / it	had.
No,		had not / hadn't.

Exercise 2

Form questions and answers using the past perfect tense, simple past tense and the words in brackets.

1. Mum: Had the telephone rung before I came back?

(the telephone ring / before I come back)

Ellen: No, it had not / hadn't.

Mum: _____

(Patrick feed the dog / by the time he go out)

Ellen: Yes, _____.

2. Ben: _____

(the concert start / when you arrive)

Tony: No, _____.

Ben: _____

(you take any photos / before you enter the stadium)

Tony: Yes, _____.

Ben: _____

(you buy any concert souvenirs / by the time you leave)

Tony: No, _____.



Part 3 Subject + wish / If only

We use 'subject + wish' or *if only* with the past perfect tense to show regret.

We use the **positive** form to show regret for **not doing** something in the past:

e.g. *The books are too heavy. Fiona wishes / If only she **had asked** for help.*



We use the **negative** form to show regret for having **done** something in the past:

e.g. *If only / I wish I **had not eaten** so many pancakes.*



Educator's Tips



Remember to change the form of *wish* according to the subject.

e.g. *I wish I **had helped** the beggar.*

e.g. *She wishes she **had done** more revision.*

Exercise 3

Correct the underlined mistakes in Column B by writing the correct form of verbs above them. Then match the sentences in Column B with those in Column A to present sensible ideas showing regret. Write the letters in the Answer column. Each letter can be used **ONCE** only.

Column A	Answer	Column B
1. I did not finish my homework.	e	a. If only I <u>stayed</u> alert to thieves.
2. James was late for school.		b. If only we <u>were studying</u> harder.
3. My wallet was stolen.		c. She <u>wish</u> she hadn't stayed up late.
4. Rachel fell asleep in class.		d. I <u>wishes</u> I had kept it in the fridge.
5. Daisy hurt her arm badly.		<i>had not gone out / hadn't gone out</i> e. I wish I <u>didn't go out</u> for the whole day.
6. Mike and I failed the English test.		f. He <u>wish</u> he had got up earlier.
7. The milk turned sour this morning.		g. If only she <u>wasn't playing</u> volleyball.



Unit Recap

Alice wrote a newspaper article about a domestic violence case, but she made some mistakes about the verbs. Correct the underlined mistakes by writing the correct words above them.

A5

HONG KONG DAILY

25th April, 20XX

Son Hurts Mother With Cutter

injured

A 15-year-old teenager (1) had injured his mother with a paper cutter at home last night during a quarrel.

The domestic violence (2) has happened in Lam Tin at about 7 pm yesterday. At that time, Leung, a Secondary 3 student, and his mother, 43, (3) had dinner at home. Leung wanted to go out as soon as he (4) has got a call from his friend. However, his mother (5) was not letting him go. Then they started a bitter quarrel. Mrs Wong, a neighbour of the Leung family, recalled that they (6) had shouted at each other while she was watching TV. The **hassle** (7) had continued for almost half an hour.

It was then said that the mother and the son had started fighting. Leung (8) has taken out a paper cutter from his school bag and hurt his mother's right arm. He was so scared that he fled home at once. The mother, whose arm (9) had bled heavily, called the police and was sent to hospital. She went home as soon as she (10) has received medical treatment, and the son was later caught by the police for **wounding** others.

According to the mother, Leung (11) was a nice son before she separated with her husband last year. Their divorce (12) was not having a positive impact on Leung, who (13) became more rebellious. 'I won't blame him as I believe that he didn't mean to hurt me,' said the forgiving mother, 'He actually didn't know what he (14) has done to me at that time. I wish I (15) didn't argue with him.'

This is the third domestic violence incident this month.



Vocabulary:

hassle (n.): a situation causing difficulty or trouble

wound (v.): to injure part of the body