

Past perfect (I had done)

A

Study this example situation:

at 10.30



PAUL

at 11.00



SARAH

Sarah went to a party last week. Paul went to the party too, 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 (simple)*:

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.

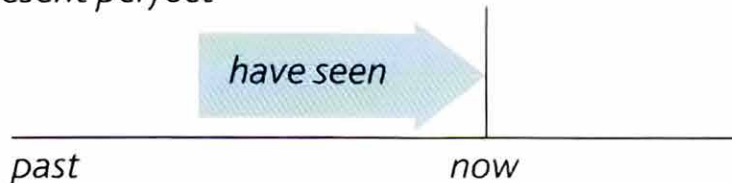
Some more examples:

- ☐ When we got home last night, we found that somebody **had broken** into the flat.
- ☐ Karen didn't want to go to the cinema with us because 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 man sitting next to me on the plane was very nervous. He **hadn't flown** before.
or ... He **had** never **flown** before.

B

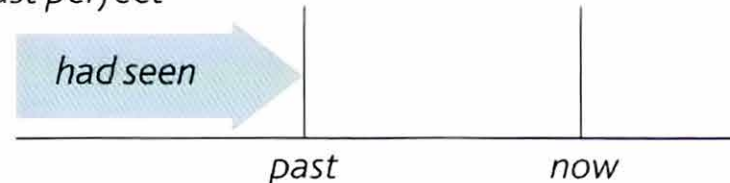
Compare the *present perfect* (**have seen** etc.) and the *past perfect* (**had seen** etc.):

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A: Was Tom there when you arrived?
B: Yes, but he left soon afterwards. <input type="checkbox"/> Kate wasn't at home when I phoned.
She was at her mother's house. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A: Was Tom there when you arrived?
B: No, he had already left. <input type="checkbox"/> Kate had just got home when I phoned.
She had been at her mother's house. |
|---|--|

Exercises

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

- You went to Sue's house, but she wasn't there.
(she / go / out) She had gone out.
- You went back to your home town after many years. It wasn't the same as before.
(it / change / a lot)
- 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)
- It was nice to see Daniel again after such a long time.
(I / not / see / him for five years)
- I offered Sue something to eat, but she wasn't hungry.
(she / just / have / breakfast)

15.2 For each situation, write a sentence ending with **never ... before**. Use the verb in brackets.

- The man sitting next to you on the plane was very nervous. It was his first flight.
(fly) He'd never flown before.
- Somebody sang a song. I didn't know it.
(hear) I before.
- Sam played tennis yesterday. He wasn't very good at it because it was his first game.
(play) He
- Last year we went to Mexico. It was our first time there.
(be there) We

15.3 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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|--|--|
| (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 the police. |
| (b) <u>We arrived at work in the morning.</u> | |
| (c) We called the police. | |
- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| (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. | |
- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Jim came back from holiday a few days ago. | } I met Jim a few days ago. holiday. very well. |
| (b) <u>I met him the same day.</u> | |
| (c) He looked very well. | |
- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Kevin sent Sally lots of emails. | } Yesterday Kevin from Sally. very 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 very surprised. | |

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

- 'Was Paul at the party when you arrived?' 'No, he had gone (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.
- 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.

15.4

- 2 went
- 3 had gone
- 4 broke
- 5 saw ... had broken ... stopped

UNIT 15

15.1

- 2 It had changed a lot.
- 3 She'd arranged to do something else. / She had arranged ...
- 4 The film had already started.
- 5 I hadn't seen him for five years.
- 6 She'd just had breakfast. / She had just had ...

15.2

- 2 I'd never heard it before. /
I had never heard ...
- 3 He'd never played (tennis) before. /
He had never played ...
- 4 We'd never been there before. /
We had never been ...

15.3

- 1 we called
- 2 there was ...
She'd gone / She had gone
- 3 He'd just come back from /
He had just come back from ...
He looked
- 4 got a phone call
He was
He'd sent her / He had sent her ...
she'd never replied to them /
she had never replied to them