

Past Perfect & Past Perfect Continuous

Past perfect can be quite confusing for people. This is due to two things:

- 1) it is connected to the order of events which is not always the same as the order people speak in
- 2) often native speakers do not use it or they rearrange the sentences which use it.

Below is some explanation about the function:

Grammar	Function	Example
Past Perfect Simple had + past participle	to show an action that happened before an established action in the past	Use the past perfect when you move back through time: I moved to Spain in 2006. Before then I had lived in many countries.
		I had lived in many countries now
		I moved to Spain in 2006. Before then I had lived in many countries. I have lived in many countries. (1979 - 2022)
		I lived in many countries now I lived in many countries before I moved to Spain in 2006.
		Use past simple when you tell the story chronologically.
Past Perfect Continuous	An action in progress up to an established time in	I moved to Spain in 2006. I had been living in the UK. I moved to Spain in 2006. I had been living in the UK.
had been + verb+ing	the past.	I had been living in the UK 2006 now



Exercise 1

Choose the correct tense: Past simple or Past Perfect?

1.	The storm destroyed the sandcastle that we (build)
2.	He (not / visit)Cape Town before 1997.
3.	When she went out to play, she (do / already)her homework.
4.	When I to ride a bike.
5.	My brother ate all of the cake that our mum (make)
6.	The doctor took off the plaster that he (put on)six weeks before
7.	The waiter brought a drink that I (not / order)
8.	My son (hurt) his leg last week.
9.	I could not remember the poem we (learn)the week before.
10.	The children collected the apples that (fall) from the tree.
11.	(he / phone)Angie before he went to see her in London.

Exercise 2

Can you write any past perfect sentences for the prompts below? (Are there any other you can do?)

1) Mr Johnson

Appointments:

- 01/03/14 headache, insomnia
- 01/04/14 headache worse, insomnia, dizziness

12. She (not / ride) a horse before that day.

• Today: 06/04/14 - acute head pain, visual disturbances, dizziness

2) Mrs Edwards

Presented:

• Yesterday: Reports 'feeling weak and nauseous' - 2 weeks

3) Sarah Slattery

- March 2017: Sister died in car accident
- June 2017: Experiencing acute symptoms of grief withdrawn, lethargic, unwilling to eat. Refer to bereavement support
- Today: July 14th 2017 showing self-harm and suicidal tendencies. Refer psychiatrist urgently



Answers

Exercise 1

- 1. The storm destroyed the sandcastle that we (build) had built.
- 2. He (not / visit) had not visited Cape Town before 1997.
- 3. When she went out to play, she (do / already) had already done her homework.
- 4. When I was 5 years old I (learn) learned to ride a bike.
- 5. My brother ate all of the cake that our mum (make) had made.
- 6. The doctor took off the plaster that he (put on) had put on six weeks before.
- 7. The waiter brought a drink that I (not / order) had not ordered.
- 8. My son (hurt) hurt his leg last week.
- 9. I could not remember the poem we (learn) had learned the week before.
- 10. The children collected the apples that (fall) had fallen/ were falling / fell from the tree.
- 11. (he / phone) **He called / He had called** Angie before he went to see her in London.
- 12. She (not / ride) had not ridden a horse before that day.

Exercise 2

1) Mr Johnson

Past Simple/Past continuous

On the 1st April, Mr Johnson **presented** with a 1-month history of headaches & insomnia. Additionally he **was experiencing** dizziness.

Past Perfect

On the 1st April, Mr Johnson **presented** with headaches, insomnia and dizziness. He **had been experiencing** headaches and insomnia for the previous month.

Present Perfect

Mr Johnson's condition has deteriorated.

Mr Johnson's symptoms have worsened.

2) Mrs Edwards

- Yesterday, Mrs Edwards reported that she had been feeling weak and nauseous for two weeks.
- Mrs Edwards presented at our clinic yesterday, and reported that he <u>had been feeling</u> weak and nauseous for 2 weeks / had been experiencing weakness & nausea
- Yesterday, Mrs Edwards reported that she had been feeling weak and nauseous for 2 weeks
- Yesterday, he reported that he <u>has been feeling</u> weak and nauseous for the last 2 weeks
- Before presentation, Mrs Edwards had felt nausea and weakness.



3) Sarah Slattery

Miss Slattery presented in June with symptoms of grief, including being withdrawn, and lethargic, and unwillingness to eat. Her sister had died two months previously