



ENGLISH GRAMMAR



VERBS AND TENSES

The Past Perfect Simple

We use the **Past Perfect Simple** to refer to:

- a past action that happened before another stated time in the past or another past action.

E.g. Sandra **had read** the novel 'Tess' **before** she saw the film.

- a finished past action whose effect is visible later on, in the past.

E.g. Sandra enjoyed watching the film 'Tess'; she knew the story because she **had read** the novel.

Time words/phrases/connectors: *when, before, after, until / till, already, just, since, for, ever, never, by the time*, etc.

E.g. The teacher **had already checked** the test papers *when* he asked for an extra revision.

By the time I got on the bus, the driver **had already sold** the last ticket.

On my way home I got soaking wet *because* the rain **hadn't stopped yet**.

Affirmative (same verb form for all subjects)

Subject + HAD + Past Participle (3rd form)

Tom **had built** a chalet at the foot of the hill.

They **had learned** to drive at the age of 18.

Negative (same verb form for all subjects)

Subject + HAD NOT / HADN'T + Past Participle (3rd form)

The horse **hadn't drunk** any water yet.

We **had not painted** the new house.

Interrogative (same verb form for all subjects)

HAD + subject + Past Participle (3rd form)

Had Jessica **cured** her terrible cough?

Had you **fed** all the puppies in the street?

The Past Perfect Continuous

We use the **Past Perfect Continuous**:

- to emphasise the duration of a past action finished before another past action or before a stated time in the past.

E.g. We **had been lying** in the sun **since** morning **when** we felt the sunburn.

- for a past action that lasted for a while and whose result was visible in the past:

E.g. Henry **had been cycling** in the park; *that's why* he could hardly catch his breath.

Time words: *since, for, how long*, etc.

E.g. **How long had you been travelling** on that train when we met?

Affirmative (same verb form for all subjects)

Subject + HAD + BEEN + verb + -ing

The birds **had been flying** in circles above the city.

She **had been swimming** in the pool for minutes.

Negative (same verb form for all subjects)

Subject + HAD NOT / HADN'T + BEEN + verb + -ing

I **had not been baking** cakes since noon.

Jenny **hadn't been dancing** for hours.

Interrogative (same verb form for all subjects)

HAD + subject + BEEN + verb + -ing

Had he **been reading** magazines since morning?

Had the kids **been playing** soccer?

The Past Continuous versus The Past Perfect Continuous

PAST CONTINUOUS

- an action in progress when another action interrupted it:

E.g. Anna **was studying** in Oxford **when** I arrived in the UK.

- an action in progress at a stated time in the past:

E.g. Jenny **was knitting** a coat for her puppy yesterday at this time.

- setting the scene:

E.g. The clouds **were covering** the sky and the cold raindrops **were splashing** noisily on the windows.

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

- an action that started in the past and continued up to another action or time in the past:

E.g. Anna **had been studying** in Oxford **for** a year **when** I arrived in the UK.

- emphasising duration for an action started and finished in the past:

E.g. **How long had you been practising** cycling **before** you took up swimming?

E.g. Mathew **had been working** hard **for** days **before** he decided to have a short holiday.

Ways of Expressing the Future

- **Present Simple with a future meaning** is used to express timetabled events.

E.g. The plane to Madrid **takes off** tomorrow at 10 a.m.

- **Present Continuous with a future meaning** is used to express plans or arrangements.

E.g. My cousins and I **are visiting** our grandparents in the countryside next weekend.

- **Future Simple** is used to make predictions based on our opinion, to express on-the-spot decisions, promises, threats or offers, or future facts which cannot be influenced.

E.g. I think reggae music **will remain** as authentic as it has always been. (predictions based on our opinion)

Your luggage looks very heavy; **I'll help** you get on the train! (on-the-spot decision)

Mom, I promise I **will rake** the dry leaves in the garden. (promise)

The kitten **will be** a month tomorrow. (future fact)

- **Future Continuous** is used to express events in progress at a certain time in the future.

E.g. The ship **will be sailing** along the coast this time tomorrow.

- **Be going to** is used to express intentions or make predictions based on evidence.

E.g. Our friends **are going to travel** around the world next year. (intention)

The wind is blowing hard, so the sea waves **are going to get** higher. (predictions based on evidence)

Future in the Past

- We use the **Future in the Past** to describe a future action from a past perspective.

In the present → Future Simple	In the past → WOULD + short infinitive
I think our children will study Architecture.	I thought our children would study Architecture.
The gardener says there will be lots of apples.	The gardener said there would be lots of apples.

Be Going To in the Past

- We use **Be going to in the past** for expressing plans, intentions or predictions.

In the present → BE GOING TO + short infinitive	In the past → WAS / WERE GOING TO + short infinitive
He is going to change his car next year .	He was going to change his car the next year .
We are going to choose the presents today .	We were going to choose the presents that day .

Expressing Obligation and Necessity Using Modal Verbs

Modals in the Present

- **MUST / MUST NOT (MUSTN'T)** expresses strong obligation, often decided by the speaker; it is also used for rules and regulations.

E.g. You **must write** this paper in ink.

You **mustn't cycle** without a helmet on.

- **NEED TO** is used both as a modal and a main verb to express necessity.

E.g. The doctor **needs to operate** on the patient as soon as possible to save his life.

- **NEEDN'T / NOT TO NEED TO** shows lack of obligation or necessity.

E.g. We **don't need to follow / needn't follow** this path to get to the river.

Modals in the Past

- **HAD TO + short infinitive** is used to express a past obligation for both 'must' and 'have to' in the past.

E.g. We **had to wear** special costumes during the experiment.

- **NEEDED TO + short infinitive** is used to express a past necessity.

E.g. He **needed to exchange** the foreign currency before leaving the country.

- **DID NOT / DIDN'T HAVE TO + short infinitive** and **DID NOT / DIDN'T NEED TO + short infinitive** express a lack of necessity in the past (the subject didn't do something because it wasn't necessary).

E.g. I **didn't have to change / didn't need to change** the hotel for the extra weekend.

- **NEEDN'T HAVE + Past Participle** expresses a lack of necessity in the past (the subject did something, although it wasn't necessary).

E.g. The receptionist **needn't have accepted** to host that noisy group of people.