

V- Past perfect



I went to a party last week. Tom went to the party too. Tom went home at 10:30. So, when I arrived at 11:00, Tom wasn't there.

When I arrived at the party, Tom wasn't there.
He had gone home.

This is the *past perfect (simple)* tense:

I/he/she (etc.) **had** (= I'd / he'd / she'd, etc.) **gone**
I/he/she (etc.) **hadn't gone**
had you/he/she (etc.) **gone?**

Rule

We form the past perfect with **had** + the *past participle* (**gone/opened/written**, etc.). For irregular past participles see Appendix 2.

Sometimes we talk about something that happened in the past:

- **I arrived** at the party.

We use the past perfect to say that something had already happened before this time:

- **When I arrived** at the party, Tom **had** already **gone** home.

Here are some more examples:

- When I got home, I found that someone **had broken** into my apartment and **had stolen** my fur coat.
- George didn't want to come to the movies with us because he **had** already **seen** the film twice.
- It was my first time in an airplane. I was very nervous because I **had never flown** before.

Cases

b

The past perfect (**I had done**) is the past of the present perfect (**I have done**). Compare these situations:

Present

I'm not hungry. I've just **had** lunch.
The house is dirty. We **haven't cleaned** it for weeks.

Past

I wasn't hungry. I'd just **had** lunch.
The house was dirty. We **hadn't cleaned** it for weeks.

Rules

C Compare the past perfect (**I had done**) and the simple past (**I did**):

- “Was Tom there when you arrived?” “No, he **had** already **gone** home.”
but: “Was Tom there when you arrived?” “Yes, but he **went** home soon afterward.”
- Ann **wasn’t** home when I **called** her. She **was** at work.
but: Ann **had** just **gotten** home when I **called** her. She **had been** at work.

Practice I

Complete these sentences using the verbs in parentheses (...).

You went back to your home town after many years, and you found that many things were different.

Example: Most of my friends were no longer there. They had left(leave).

- 1. My best friend, Kevin, was no longer there. He (go) away.
- 2. The local movie theater was no longer open. It (close) down.
- 3. Mr. Johnson was no longer alive. He (die).
- 4. I didn't recognize Mrs. Johnson. She (change) a lot.
- 5. Bill no longer had his car. He (sell) it.

Practice II

Complete these sentences as in the example. Use the verb in parentheses.

Example: Mr and Mrs Davis were in an airplane. They were very nervous as the plane took off because they (never/fly) had never flown before.....

- 1. The woman was a complete stranger to me. I(never/ see) before.
- 2. Margaret was late for work. Her boss was very surprised. She(never/ be/ late)
- 3. Jane played tennis yesterday- at least she tried to play tennis. She wasn't very good at it because she (never/ play)
- 4. It was Carl's first driving lesson. He was very nervous and didn't know what to do. (Henever/ drive)