The Past Perfect & Past Perfect Progressive Tenses

| Type your information in the space below. |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student Name: | Date: |
| Instructor: | Course: |

# About This DLA

Important Note

All the activities (3) in the DLA must be completed in their entirety before receiving credit for completion. Students are welcome to meet with a tutor if they need help, but please be aware that students might need a second appointment for review and signature in that case. If your instructor wants evidence of this completed DLA, return this form to him or her with the tutor’s signature included.

## Learning Outcomes

Through computer and other independent work, this activity will familiarize you with and help you create sentences with accurate use of the past perfect and past perfect progressive tenses.

## Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

# The Past Perfect Tense

Use the past perfect tense to express:

**1. An action that happened/didn’t happen BEFORE another action/specific time in the past**

The past perfect expresses actions that happened before another action and/or specific time in the past. If you have two actions, put the action that happened first in the **past perfect** and the action that happened second in *simple past*.

Example: The movie **had started** when I *arrived*.

Example: She **hadn’t finished** school before she *got* the job.

Example: *By*\* the time we *got* to the station, the bus **had left**. *By*\* 1995, I **had** already **moved** here.

***\*By*** *is another word for before.*

**2. To show the cause of a past action**

When you want to talk about **why** something happened, use the past perfect.

Example: Kim *had* a car accident **because she *hadn’t gotten* enough sleep the night before**.

**3. Past Perfect vs. Simple Past**

If the past perfect action occurred at a specific time, you can use the simple past instead of the past perfect when *before* or *after* is used in the sentence. The words *before* and *after* actually tell you what happens first, so the past perfect is optional. For this reason, both sentences below are correct.

Example: She **had visited** her relatives once in 1999 ***before*** she *moved* in with them in 2001.

Example: She **visited** her relatives once in 1999 ***before*** she *moved* in with them in 2001.

**4. Non-action verbs that were on-going before a specific time/ another action in the past**

Because non-action verbs cannot be put into a progressive form, use the past perfect for those verbs if they occurred *before* another action or a specific time in the past.

Example: He **had loved** me for a year ***before*** we *dated*.

Example: *By* 2010, I **had owned** a house for eight years.

# How to Form the Past Perfect

**{ had + past participle }**

Examples: I **had** *never* **flown** *before* I went to Hawaii. He **had** *already* **given** me the check by noon.

\*Notice that adverbs like *already, never, just,* come after **had**.

Do not use the past form of the verb. You need to use the past participle, which sometimes looks like the past form, but at other times it does not. Here are some verbs and their past participles:

| **Simple Form** | **Past Participle** | **Simple Form** | **Past Participle** | **Simple Form** | **Past Participle** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| awake | awoken | get | gotten | see | seen |
| be | been | give | given | sell | sold |
| become | become | go | gone | send | sent |
| begin | begun | grow | grown | sing | sung |
| blow | blown | have | had | sit | sat |
| break | broken | hear | heard | sleep | slept |
| buy | bought | keep | kept | speak | spoken |
| catch | caught | know | known | stand | stood |
| choose | chosen | lay | laid | steal | stolen |
| come | come | leave | left | sweep | swept |
| do | done | lie | lain | swim | swum |
| draw | drawn | lose | lost | take | taken |
| drink | drunk | make | made | teach | taught |
| drive | driven | mean | meant | tell | told |
| eat | eaten | meet | met | think | thought |
| fall | fallen | pay | paid | throw | thrown |
| feel | felt | ride | ridden | understand | understood |
| find | found | rise | risen | wear | worn |
| fly | flown | run | run | win | won |
| forget | forgotten | say | said | write | written |

# The Past Perfect Progressive Tense

Use the past perfect progressive (also called past perfect continuous) tense to express:

**1. An action that was in progress BEFORE another action/specific time in the past**

The past perfect progressive is used for actions that were going on before another action and/or specific time in the past. If you have two actions, put the action that started first in the **past perfect progressive** and the action that happened second in *simple past*.

Example: *By* the time I *came* to the U.S., I **had been studying** English for two years.

Example: She **had been driving** for twenty minutes *when* her tire *blew out*.

**2. To show the cause of a past action**

When you want to talk about **why** something happened, use the past perfect progressive for on-going actions.

Example: Kim *had* a car accident **because she *had been driving* for 12 hours non-stop.**

# How to Form the Past Perfect Progressive

**{ had + been + verb-ing }**

Example: The students **had been waiting** for twenty minutes *when* the professor finally *arrived*.

\*Non-action verbs (mental states, emotional states, possession, *be*) are usually not in a progressive form.

Example: He **had loved** her for a year before they *dated*. (NOT had been loving)

# How to Make Questions and Negative Statements

**Past Perfect and Past Perfect Progressive**

## Negative Statements:

Start with the *subject*, then ***had***, followed by**not**, and then ***the rest of the verb***.

Examples:

I had left.

He had paid his fees.

You had been working.

I ***had* not *left***.

He ***had* not *paid*** his fees.

You ***had*** **not** ***been working***.

## Questions:

Start with the helper (***had***), then the *subject*, and then ***the rest of the verb***. You can add a *wh*- word at the beginning if you need it.

Examples:

She had finished the project.

I had already started it.

They had been working on it.

***Had*** *she* ***finished*** the project?

***Had*** *you* ***started*** it?

***Had*** *they* ***been working*** on it?

What ***had*** *she* ***finished***?

What ***had*** *you* ***started***?

How long ***had*** *they* ***been working***?

# Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

## 1. ***Review the Past Perfect and Past Perfect Progressive Tenses***

Review the information on this sheet. Then, answer the following questions.

a. In what situations do we use the past perfect tense?

| Write Answer Here |
| --- |
|  |

b. In what situations do we use the past perfect progressive tense?

| Write Answer Here |
| --- |
|  |

## 2. Online Quiz

Go to http://tinyurl.com/PastPerfectTensesDLAQuiz and take the [Past Perfect Tenses Quiz](http://tinyurl.com/PastPerfectTensesDLAQuiz). You must score at least 80% on the exercises before seeing a tutor. After you complete the task, **PLEASE ASK A LAB TUTOR OR FRONT DESK ATTENDANT TO PRINT THE PAGE THAT HAS YOUR SCORE. DO NOT EXIT THE PROGRAM UNTIL THIS PAGE HAS BEEN PRINTED (FREE OF CHARGE).** If you have any other questions, do not hesitate to ask a lab tutor.

## Choose 3a or 3b Below

## 3a. Practice with Your Own Writing

Collect some of your graded work. Find and write down examples of sentences that contain the following:

1. An action that happened before another action in the past:

| Write Answer Here |
| --- |
|  |

2. A past action and its cause:

| Write Answer Here |
| --- |
|  |

3. An action that happened before a specific time in the past:

| Write Answer Here |
| --- |
|  |

4. An action that was in progress before another action in the past:

| Write Answer Here |
| --- |
|  |

**If you do not have your own essay to work with, please complete the supplemental activity below (3b).**

## 3b. Create Sentences

Look at the timeline of Nelson Mandela’s life below. Write five different sentences using the **past perfect** or the **past perfect progressive**. Also, remember to include the **simple past** when you use words like *by the time, before,* or *when*.

* ***Example*:** By the time Mandela **married** Winnie Nomzamo Madikizela, he **had started** the first black law firm in South Africa.

| Year | Event |
| --- | --- |
| 1918 | Nelson Mandela is born. |
| 1952 | Mandela starts the first black law firm in South Africa. |
| 1958 | Mandela marries Winnie Nomzamo Madikizela. |
| 1961 | Mandela helps found the guerilla faction of the African National Congress. |
| 1964 | Mandela is sentenced to life imprisonment for conspiring to overthrow the state. |
| 1990 | Mandela is released from prison. |
| 1993 | Mandela wins the Nobel Peace Prize with F.W. de Klerk for ending apartheid peacefully. |
| 1994 | Mandela becomes the first black president of South Africa. |
| 1996 | Mandela and his wife, Winnie, divorce. |
| 2004 | Mandela retires from public life. |
| 2013 | Mandela dies from a respiratory infection at age 95. |

| Type your sentences in the spaces below. |
| --- |
| 1. |
|  |
| 2. |
|  |
| 3. |
|  |
| 4. |
|  |
| 5. |
|  |

## 4. Review the DLA

Go to https://mtsac2.mywconline.com and use the [Mt. SAC Writing Center Appointment System](https://mtsac2.mywconline.com/) to make a DLA appointment, or sign-up to see a tutor on the “**Walk-in**” list in the Writing Center. During your session with a tutor, explain your work to demonstrate your understanding of the past perfect tenses. Refer to your own graded writing (or the completed activity) and explain to the tutor strategies that you used to create sentences with the past perfect and past perfect progressive.

| Sign and date in the space below. |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student’s signature: | Date: |
| Tutor’s Signature: | Date: |

If you are an individual with a disability and need a greater level of accessibility for any document in The Writing Center or on The Writing Center’s website, please contact the Mt. SAC Accessible Resource Centers for Students, [access@mtsac.edu](mailto:access@mtsac.edu), (909) 274-4290.

Revised 04/12/2022