# Past perfect

# The past perfect is made from the verb ****had**** and the [past participle](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/1353)of a verb.

# \*I **had finished**the work. \*She **had gone**.

The past perfect **continuous**is made from **had been**and the [**-ing** **form**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/1384)of a verb:

\*I **had been** work**ing** there for a year.  
\*They **had been** paint**ing** the bedroom.

The past perfect is used in the same way as the [present perfect](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/11093), but it refers to a time in the past, not the present. We use the past perfect:

-For something that **started in the past** and **continued up to a given time in the past**:

\*When Ibrahim died, he and Khadidja **had been married**for nearly fifty years.  
\*She didn't want to move. She **had lived**in Liverpool all her life.

For this use, we often use the past perfect continuous:

\*She didn't want to move. She **had been living**in Liverpool all her life.  
\*Everything was wet. It **had been raining**for hours.

-For something that **happened several times before a point in the past** and **continued after that point**:

\*He was a wonderful guitarist. He **had been playing**ever since he was a teenager.  
\*He **had written** three books and he was working on another one.

-When we are**reporting our experience up to a point in the past**:

\*My eighteenth birthday was the worst day I **had**ever **had.**  
\*I was pleased to meet Ibrahim. I **hadn’t met**him before, even though I **had met**his wife several times.

-For something that **happened in the past** and **is important at a later time in the past**:

\*I couldn't get into the house. I **had lost** my keys.  
\*Ouiem wasn't at home. She **had gone** shopping.

-We often use **expressions with for and since** with the past perfect:

\*I was sorry when the factory closed. I **had worked** there **for ten years**.   
\*I **had been watching** that programme every week **since it started**, but I missed the last episode.

We do **not**normally use the past perfect continuous with **[stative verbs](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/1401)**. We use the **past perfect simple**instead:

\*Up until that moment, I'**d** never **believed**(NOT ~~been believing~~) in astrology.