

Activity Type

Grammar Exercises: gap-fill, changing word forms, unscrambling, matching, sentence completion, writing sentences from prompts

Focus

Past perfect and past simple

Sequence words

Aim

To practice the past perfect with the past simple and sequence words.

Preparation

Make one copy of the two-page worksheet for each student.

Level

Intermediate (B1)

Time

30 minutes

Introduction

This past perfect vs. past simple worksheet helps students learn and practice how to use the past perfect with the past simple and sequence words.

Procedure

Give each student a copy of the two-page worksheet.

Read the introduction together as a class.

Students then complete sentences with the past perfect or past simple form of the verbs in brackets.

Exercise A - Answer key

1. had cut, started
2. asked, had already turned off
3. got, had eaten
4. had bought, found out
5. had already typed, crashed
6. had closed, went
7. arrived, had already started
8. restarted, had stopped

Next, students rewrite sentence parts in the correct order.

Exercise B - Answer key

1. By the time I got home, my parents had already left.
2. Before I started my car, I had cleared the snow off it.
3. After I had finished the book, I went to the book club.
4. I bought the new iPhone but by then they had already released a new version.

Students then move on to match past perfect and past simple sentence halves together.

Exercise C - Answer key

1. h 2. f 3. g 4. a 5. d 6. c 7. e 8. b

After that, students complete past perfect and past simple sentence halves with their own ideas.

Afterwards, review the students' sentences together as a class.

Finally, students answer questions using sequence words.

When the students have finished, review their answers and provide feedback.

The past perfect is used to describe an action that was completed before another action in the past. It is often used with the past simple.

Past perfect structure: *Subject + had + past participle*

Sequence words are often used to help make the chronological order of these actions clearer.

Words and phrases like *after*, *by then* and *as soon as* are used before the past perfect. Phrases such as *by the time* are used before the past simple. Words like *before* and *when* can be used with both tenses.

Example: Silvia had cleaned her house *before* her guests arrived.



A. Complete the sentences with the past perfect or past simple form of the verbs in brackets.

1. After I (cut) the grass, it (start) to rain.
2. My boss (ask) me to e-mail a customer but by then I already (turn off) my computer.
3. By the time my husband (get) home, I (eat) dinner.
4. I (buy) her a watch before I (find out) she wanted a necklace.
5. Ann already (type) ten pages when her computer (crash).
6. As soon as the bar (close), we (go) back to the hotel.
7. I (arrive) at class on time but by then the professor already (start) the lecture.
8. They (restart) the game as soon as the rain (stop).

B. Rewrite the sentence parts in the correct order.

1. my parents had already left / I got home / by the time
.....
2. before / I had cleared the snow off it / I started my car
.....
3. after / I went to the book club / I had finished the book
.....
4. I bought the new iPhone / they had already released a new version / but by then
.....

C. Match the past perfect and past simple sentence halves together.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. As soon as I had finished my sushi, | a. he fed the dog |
| 2. By the time I gave the teacher my essay, | b. as soon as I had landed on the island. |
| 3. After I had bought a new bed, | c. she made a short thank-you speech. |
| 4. After the man had come home, | d. before I saw it with my family. |
| 5. I had watched the film alone | e. before I got married. |
| 6. When she had read all the greeting cards, | f. I had revised it three times. |
| 7. I had already bought my own house | g. I realised I didn't have the space for it. |
| 8. I went straight to the beach | h. I felt sick. |

D. Complete the past perfect and past simple sentence halves with your own ideas.

1. As soon as I had finished the exam
2. Before Alice got angry with me
3. After my mum had told me not to
4. She watched TV after
5. I had been late for my meeting and by the time
6. I didn't go to my interview after
7. The excitement was over as soon as
8. I had shown up for my date but by the time I

E. Answer the questions. Use sequence words in your responses.

1. How did you feel after your last vacation had ended?
.....
2. What interesting things had you already done by the time you reached 14 years old?
.....
3. Which languages had you learnt before you started English lessons?
.....
4. How many phones have you had before you bought your present one?
.....