

Activity Type

Grammar Exercises: gap-fill, matching, sentence completion

Grammar Game: miming, guessing (pair work)

Focus

Past perfect simple and past perfect continuous

Aim

To learn the difference between the past perfect simple and the past perfect continuous and to practice using the two tenses.

Preparation

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

Level

Intermediate (B1)

Time

30 minutes

Introduction

This past perfect simple and continuous worksheet helps to teach students how these two tenses are different and how to use them.

Procedure

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

Students begin by reading sentences and completing rules about the past perfect simple and past perfect continuous.

Exercise A - Answer key

1. past perfect continuous
2. past perfect simple

Next, students match past perfect simple and continuous sentence halves together.

Exercise B - Answer key

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

Students then go on to complete sentences with verbs in brackets in the past perfect simple or past perfect continuous.

Exercise C - Answer key

1. had been crying
2. had left
3. hadn't practiced
4. had been cleaning
5. had passed
6. had been working
7. had broken down
8. hadn't done

After that, students complete each sentence with a verb from a box in its past perfect simple or past perfect continuous form.

Exercise D - Answer key

1. had broken
2. had punched
3. had been snoring
4. had been driving
5. had run out
6. had forgotten
7. hadn't been eating
8. had eaten
9. hadn't stolen
10. had been waiting
11. had bought
12. hadn't brushed

Students then complete sentences with their own ideas using either the past perfect simple or continuous.

In the last exercise, students play a miming game with a partner using the sentences they just completed. Students take it in turns to read the first part of the sentence and then mime the part that they wrote. Their partner must try to guess what they wrote from their mime. For each correct guess, students score one point. The student with the most points wins.

The past perfect simple is used to talk about completed events which happened before another event in the past.

I couldn't buy any milk, as **I had left** my wallet at home.

The past perfect continuous is used to describe events that started in the past and continued up until another time in the past.

Tim went to the doctor because **he had been feeling** ill for a long time.

A. Complete the grammar rules with 'past perfect simple' or 'past perfect continuous'.

1. The is constructed like this: *subject + had / hadn't + been + verb + ing*

2. The is constructed like this: *subject + had / hadn't + past participle*

B. Match the past perfect simple and continuous sentence halves together.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Kim looked different, | a. and it tasted really awful. |
| 2. My hands were covered in flour | b. I had won the lottery. |
| 3. Jim hadn't eaten | c. we had been driving for six hours. |
| 4. The milk had gone off | d. as she had lost 15 kilos. |
| 5. Jo was sweating because | e. so he couldn't drive home |
| 6. By the time we arrived, | f. she had been running for an hour. |
| 7. Ken had been drinking all evening, | g. because I had been baking all day. |
| 8. I was delighted when I found out that | h. lunch, so he was starving. |

C. Complete the sentences with the verbs in brackets in the past perfect simple or past perfect continuous.

- Mary (cry) all night, so her face was red.
- The train (leave) by the time I got to the station.
- The team lost the game because they (not / practice) enough.
- I (clean) the floor, so I had a mop in my hand.
- We were celebrating because we (pass) all our exams.
- My eyes were tired, as I (work) on the computer all day.
- Our car (break down), so we had to take the bus..
- I couldn't go out to play, as I (not / do) my homework.

D. Complete each sentence with a verb from the box in its past perfect simple or past perfect continuous form.

snore	not / steal	not / brush	drive	break	forget
buy	punch	run out	not / eat	wait	eat

1. My mother was angry when she found out I her favourite vase.
2. Fred his little sister in the nose, so his parents punished him.
3. Tom's wife woke him up because he really loudly.
4. I too fast, so the policeman stopped me and gave me a ticket.
5. I tried to call you, then I realised I of credit on my phone.
6. The cat was hungry because his owner to feed him.
7. Bob had lost weight as he very much recently.
8. The teacher wasn't happy when I told her the dog my homework.
9. Nobody believed Jack when he said that he the money.
10. By the time the bus arrived, I for over an hour.
11. Peter was upset since nobody him a birthday present.
12. Joe his teeth yet, so his breath smelt terrible.

E. Complete the sentences with your own ideas using either the past perfect simple or continuous.

1. The young boy was crying loudly
2. I couldn't go to Jerry's party
3. I looked in the mirror and realised
4. The old man was arrested
5. I called her to tell her
6. By the time the film ended
7. We were exhausted

F. In pairs, take it in turns to read the first part of the sentence and then mime the part that you wrote. Your partner must try to guess what you wrote from your mime. For each correct guess, score one point. The student with the most points wins.