Past Perfect

<u>FORM</u>

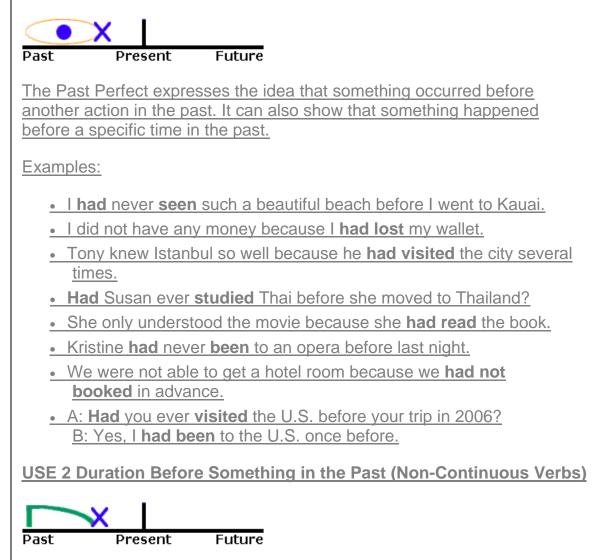
[had + past participle]

Examples:

- You had studied English before you moved to New York.
- Had you studied English before you moved to New York?
- You had not studied English before you moved to New York.

Complete List of Past Perfect Forms

USE 1 Completed Action Before Something in the Past



With Non-Continuous Verbs and some non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, we use the Past Perfect to show that something started in the past and continued up until another action in the past.

Examples:

- We had had that car for ten years before it broke down.
- By the time Alex finished his studies, he had been in London for over eight years.
- They felt bad about selling the house because they had owned it for more than forty years.

Although the above use of Past Perfect is normally limited to Non-Continuous Verbs and non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, the words "live," "work," "teach," and "study" are sometimes used in this way even though they are NOT Non-Continuous Verbs.

IMPORTANT Specific Times with the Past Perfect



Unlike with the Present Perfect, it is possible to use specific time words or phrases with the Past Perfect. Although this is possible, it is usually not necessary.

Example:

• She had visited her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.

MOREOVER

If the Past Perfect action did occur at a specific time, the Simple Past can be used 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.

Examples:

- She had visited her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.
- She visited her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she moved in with them in 1996.

HOWEVER



If the Past Perfect is not referring to an action at a specific time, Past Perfect is not optional. Compare the examples below. Here Past Perfect is referring to a lack of experience rather than an action at a specific time. For this reason, Simple Past cannot be used.

Examples:

- She never saw a bear before she moved to Alaska. Not Correct
- She had never seen a bear before she moved to Alaska. Correct

ADVERB PLACEMENT

The examples below show the placement for grammar adverbs such as: always, only, never, ever, still, just, etc.

Examples:

- You had previously studied English before you moved to New York.
- Had you previously studied English before you moved to New York?

ACTIVE / PASSIVE

Examples:

- George had repaired many cars before he received his mechanic's
 <u>license</u>. ACTIVE
- Many cars had been repaired by George before he received his mechanic's license. PASSIVE

More About Active / Passive Forms