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Format of past perfect continuous tense

Past Perfect vs Past Perfect Continuous! What is the difference between Past Perfect and Past Perfect Continuous Tense? Learn the differences with useful rules and examples. **Past Perfect vs Past Perfect Continuous** We form the Past Perfect with had and the past participle: Had + Past Participle **Past Perfect Continuous Tense:** We form the Past Perfect Continuous with had been and the -ing form of the verb: Had been + V-ing **Past Perfect vs Past Perfect Continuous Differences in Usage** The past perfect tense expresses a past action, already finished when another past action happened; the past perfect continuous tense describes a past action which started in the past and continued to happen after another action or time in the past. Examples: I met them after they had divorced. (past perfect) Sara had been working here for two weeks when she had the accident. (past perfect continuous) The past perfect tense emphasizes the result of an activity in the past; In contrast, the past perfect continuous tense emphasizes the duration of an activity in the past. Examples: I had been to London twice by the time I got a job in New York. (past perfect) Richard needed a holiday because he had been working hard for six months. (past perfect continuous) The past perfect tense shows two events in the past that are linked, while the past perfect continuous tense shows the cause of a past action. Example: I couldn't take my flight because I had forgotten my boarding pass. (past perfect) I had been travelling all night, so I was tired. (past perfect continuous) **Difference between Past Perfect and Past Perfect Continuous | Picture** Learn all (12) tenses in English with useful grammar rules, examples and ESL worksheets. **Verb Tenses Chart** The past perfect progressive shows that an action started in the past and continued up to another time or action, also in the past. It does not specify if the action continues after that point. This is a very uncommon verb form: less than .1% of verbs in spoken English are in this form. Continue reading to learn how to form the past perfect continuous and when to use it, including loads of examples and charts!Just to be clear, continuous and progressive are just different names for this same thing. In some countries, one word is more common, but continuous is more common around the world, so we use that! **Chart for Past Perfect Continuous Tense in English** The past perfect continuous is really difficult. Lots of websites will claim to explain this tense in just a quick article, and this just isn't possible (sorry!). We use this verb form in a few different situations, and it can have different meanings depending on the situation. Here are some examples:We were wet because it had been raining for hours. I knew the city well at that point because I had been living there for a few years.. When I met your mom I was in pretty good shape because I had been working constructionNote that these correspond pretty closely with the different ways that we use the present perfect continuous form:Recently Completed ActionsActions Still Happening (with for/since)New Routines and HabitsThe past perfect continuous is basically the same, except shifted into the past time frame.It is worth mentioning that, in many situations the past perfect and past perfect continuous are interchangeable.Here are a few more examples:That had been a difficult month. She had been working long hours. I'd been going to the gym a lot back then. We'd been cooking at home more at that point. Forming the past perfect continuous isn't difficult. You will always use the same formula: had + been + VERBingYou could also think of it as simple steps, too:First, use had (this is the past part)Then use been (this is the perfect part)Then use your main verb with -ing (this is the continuous part)Here is the verb work conjugated into the past perfect continuous. **Past Perfect Continuous Tense Verb Conjugation Singular Plural** 1st person I had been working we had been working 2nd person you had been working you had been working 3rd person he had been working they had been working she had been working it had been working Notice that we can see both the perfect and the continuous aspect in this form. Had been is the perfect aspect. Been verb-ing is continuous aspect. **Been verb-ing is continuous aspect.**Other Forms of the past Perfect continuous**Negative Sentences**You always have two helping verbs in the past perfect continuous: had and been. To make a negative, simply make it had not been.I had not been practicing for very long. I had not been living in Boston for years, and I missed it. I had not been studying, so I was doing poorly in school. Because the past perfect continuous uses so many words, we often use contractions with not to make it a little shorter: I hadn't been practicing for very long. I hadn't been living in Boston for years, and I missed it. I hadn't been studying, so I was doing poorly in school. To make a question, put had before the subject:Why did they break up? Had he been cheating? How long had the car been running for when it finally died? Why had you been studying Chinese if you were planning to move to France? Making passive sentences with rarer and more complicated verb forms like the past perfect continuous is extremely uncommon and almost always a bad idea. We really recommend that you rephrase a sentence to avoid creating such an awkward sentence. They had been being observed a lot at work. Hopefully you can see how awkward this sentence is. If you really need to make a passive sentence in this form, you should use the get passive to avoid the awkward combination of been and being.Put get in the past perfect continuous (had been getting) and then the perfect form of the main verb. We had been getting observed a lot at work lately. I'd been getting kicked off the internet every 5 minutes. **Comment** Most people know the three main tenses: past, present, and future. But English is a lot more complicated than that. There are many more tenses and moods, and some of them are harder to understand than others. Two past tenses that can be difficult to understand are the past perfect and the past continuous tenses. You might also know them by their names pluperfect and past progressive, respectively. In this blog post, I'll cover everything you need to know about these two tenses. **Contents:**Past PerfectPast ContinuousWhy Use These Tenses? The past perfect, or pluperfect, tense is used to talk about events that occurred in the past in relation to other events. An easy explanation for the past perfect is something happened before. It refers to things that occurred before the point in time you are describing. When we write in the past tense, the simple past tense is the moment in time we are describing. To refer to things that happened before, we use the past perfect tense. **Simple Past:** I went to the store yesterday. **Past Perfect:** I had gone to the post office before. **Simple Past:** I ate. **Past Perfect:** I had eaten already. In the first example, we understand that I went to the post office before the store. This occurred before the event I'm talking about in the simple past. In the second example, the present past implies that some event happened after I ate. **Constructing the Past Perfect** In declarative statements, the formula for writing the past perfect is had + past participle. The rain had started before I left. In questions, the structure is had + subject + past participle. Had the rain started before you left? **What Is the Past Participle?** The past participle is the form of the verb that is used with perfect tenses, whether it's past or present. Sometimes, the past participle is easy to know. It is often the same as the simple past tense form of the verb. Other times, the past participle is different. Past participles might end in -ed, -d, -en, -n, or -t. To make things more confusing, sometimes British and American English use different past participles! Some verbs have a completely different word for the past participle. For example, the simple past tense form of go is went, but the past participle is gone. If you're ever unsure what the past participle of a word is, you can find this in any dictionary under the present (standard) form of the verb. To make the past participle negative, put not before the past participle. Here are some more examples. I had heard this before. She had not done her homework yet. Had you already woken up? **When to Use the Past Perfect** Past perfect is used to clarify timing. When you don't use the past perfect tense, it can leave your readers unclear as to when events in your story are happening. Take a look at the two examples below. We knew he went to Paris. We knew he had gone to Paris. The first example sounds like he went to Paris at that moment or sometime very recently. By using the past perfect, the second example clarifies that he went sometime further in the past. You can also use the past perfect when talking about conditional events. In this instance, past perfect describes the condition. You use conditional perfect to describe what the outcome would have been. If I had gone to sleep earlier last night, I would feel more rested today. The past continuous tense, also called the past progressive tense, refers to things that were ongoing in the past. It's used to describe conditions that were repeated and actions that didn't happen in one instant. It's also used to explain what was happening when something else happened. The past continuous is important for setting the scene. It makes the events that occurred clearer. **Constructing the Past Continuous** The present continuous tense is easier to construct than the past perfect because it doesn't require a past participle. Instead, the structure is was/were + present participle. The present participle is the -ing form of the verb. All you really need to know is whether to use was or were. If your subject is first-person singular (I) or third-person singular (he, she, it, single noun), you will use was. For second-person singular and all plural subjects, use were. I was running fast from the monster. You were glowing at your wedding. The flowers were blooming. For questions, the structure is similar to the past perfect tense. The format is was/were + subject + present participle. Were you eating dinner? Was the dog playing fetch? **When to Use the Past Continuous** When writing in the past tense, past perfect should be used frequently. It's especially useful for describing a scene. Sensory description often uses the past continuous tense. The sun was shining on the day he died. The light bulb was buzzing. The past continuous tense also explains what was happening at a particular moment. I was showering when you called. At eight o'clock, he was driving to work. Finally, the past continuous is used to describe repeated or habitual actions. Adverbs of frequency often accompany these situations, and they are sometimes placed between was/were and the past participle. My mother was always smiling whenever I came home from school. They were working at the plant back then. When choosing to use the past tense in your writing, you need a combination of past tenses. Otherwise, your writing will feel dull and repetitive. It can also be unclear as to when events occurred. Here's a paragraph that only uses the simple past: The sun shone brightly. I walked home from work. I walked this route before, but I still enjoyed the view. I ran into my neighbor. He jogged with his dog. I never met his dog. Now, let's take a look at the same paragraph using the simple past, the past perfect, and the past continuous. The sun was shining brightly. I walked home from work. I had walked this route before, but I still enjoyed the view. I ran into my neighbor while he was jogging with his dog. I had never met his dog. Make your writing clearer and more readable by using the past perfect and past continuous tenses. Once you understand the basic structure and function, these tenses become far less confusing. Which verb tenses are the most difficult for you to understand? Which ones are the simplest? Let me know by commenting below. Take your writing to the next level:

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