

Past Perfect tense (pluperfect)

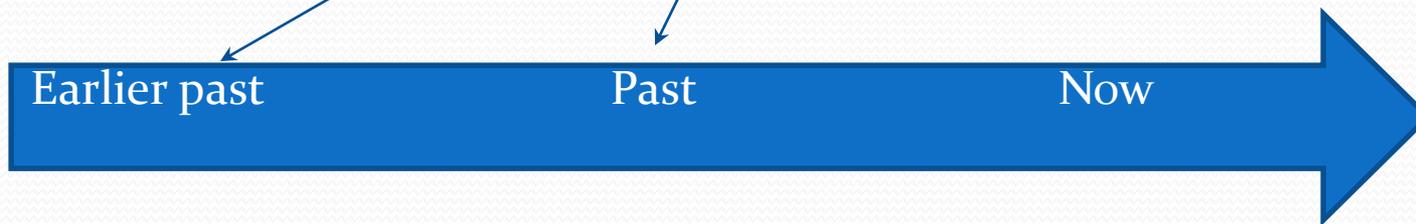
I, we, you, they, He, she, it	Had helped	the old people.		
This boy/these boys	Had respected	People.		
This boy/these boys	had not/hadn't	respected	People.	
Had/hadn't	This boy/these boys	respected	People?	
Had	This boy/these boys	Not respected	People?	
Where	had	This boy/these boys	respected	People?
Who	Had respected	People?		
The young boy (s)	Had come	Home late.		
The young boy (s)	had not/hadn't	come	Home late.	
Had not/hadn't	The young boy(s)	come	Home late	

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Uses of pluperfect

- ✓ To express an action completed before another past action
- 1. A search party set out to look for the two climbers, who had left their hotel early that morning and who still had not returned.
- 2. He went to the police station with a purse that he had found on the pavement.

3. The newspaper finally ceased publication because its circulation had dropped steadily over a period of years.



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- ✓ To express an action happening before a past time
 - 1. Firemen had extinguished the blazing house fire before daybreak early yesterday morning.
 - 2. Houses prices had soared by the end of last year.
 - 3. By the time he was 25 years old, he had opened and run three big grocery stores.

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- ✓ To describe the cause of a past action
 - 1. She was prevented from sitting the final exam, as she had arrived half an hour late.
 - 2. We had to unload all our luggage because we had run out of petrol.
 - 3. The house had not been secured. The thieves managed to break in.
 - 4. Many flies flew in. The windows had been left open.

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- ✓ To describe unfulfilled past intentions (simple past is possible too)
 - 1. I had meant to wake you up. Unfortunately, I overslept.
 - 2. Father had hoped to pick me up after school. He was caught in the rush hour and I had to make my way home.
 - 3. Mountain climbers had expected to reach the snow-capped mountain peak in two days. Heavy snowfall delayed them.

✓ After the “it /this was + ordinal numbers, superlatives, and the only etc” construction

1. It was the first time that she had boarded an airplane.
2. “Catcher in the Rye” was the first thought-provoking novel I had ever enjoyed reading.
3. “Hours” was the most exciting movie that I had watched when I was still very young.
4. John Lock was the only actor that I had admired in Lost.

✓ To be used in indirect speech and conditional type three

1. He said, “I have already secured the door.”



1. He said that he had already secured the door.

2. He said, “We left home early to catch the first train to Tokyo .”



2. He said that they had left home early to catch the first train to Tokyo.

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3. She would have missed the train if the bus had been late.
 4. If you had provoked the dog, it would have attacked you.
 5. If we had kept arguing with each other, we would have regretted it later.

Some notes

- ✓ The following adverbs are usually used with past perfect tense

Before, after, till/until, when, as soon as, just/already ...when, scarcely/hardly ... when, by the time/no sooner ... than/the moment/immediately + an independent clause, by + a time expression

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- ✓ when, as soon as, the moment/immediately + an independent clause
 - 1. When he had closed the door behind him, he heard someone knocking on the door.
 - 2. His eyes lit up with excitement as soon as he had seen the last book.
 - 3. Immediately/the moment the guest of honour had finished lecturing on youth employment, he was greeted by deafening, festive cheers from the audience.

✓ Before, after, till/until

1. Before he had taken off his clothes, he was stung by a wasp. (biting before taking off)
2. He had been stung by a wasp before he took off his clothes.
3. Armed police lay in ambush in the deserted house till/until the thieves had come out of hiding.
4. We had kept driving until we had run out of petrol.
5. After her wife had betrayed him, he asked for a divorce.

✓ Just/already ...when, scarcely/hardly ... when,
by the time/no sooner ... than

1. He had just/already drawn the curtains when he heard a loud cry of “Help! Help!”
2. He had scarcely/hardly cracked a joke about my appearance when I frowned at him.
3. No sooner had the crowd begun to move off than the old man let out a loud cry.