

PAST PERFECT: SIMPLE & CONTINUOUS

B2 | Teens / Adults | Grammar Practice | 35-45 minutes

Learn and practise | Explain earlier results and earlier activity at a past reference point.

1. READ: Waiting for a delayed coach

Read the conversation. Notice the bold grammar and how the speakers use it.

Pat: Why did you give up on the coach yesterday?

Noor: I'd **been waiting** for an hour when they finally announced a delay.

Pat: **Hadn't** they **said** anything before that?

Noor: No. They **had changed** the departure time online, but I **hadn't checked**.

Pat: So how did you get home?

Noor: My brother picked me up. He'd **just finished** work, so the timing was perfect.

2. GRAMMAR: Earlier completion and earlier duration

Use had + participle for earlier results; had been + -ing for activity up to a past point.

Use / form	Pattern	Example
Earlier result	had + past participle	They had changed the time.
Earlier activity	had been + verb-ing	I'd been waiting for an hour.
State before then	usually had + participle	I'd known him for years.

Quantity: By noon, I'd answered ten emails. **Duration:** I'd been answering emails all morning.

The earlier activity may have stopped: His clothes were wet because he'd been walking in the rain.

Continuous is not usually used with know, own or believe.

A. CHOOSE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. I'd read / been reading all three books by then.

2. He had known / been knowing her for years.

3. She was tired: she'd worked / been working all night.

4. They'd repaired / been repairing it; it worked again.

5. How long had you wait / been waiting?

6. He'd owned / been owning it since childhood.

7. By six, we'd sent / been sending all the invitations.

8. Her hands were dirty: she'd been plant / planting bulbs.

Read each answer aloud. Explain which meaning or time clue helped you.

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Use it | Complete a context, write sentences and speak with a partner.

B. COMPLETE: A delayed journey

Use the past perfect simple or continuous to show what happened before the later past events.

1. By the time the delay was announced, I _____ (wait) for an hour.
2. The company _____ (change) the departure time earlier that day.
3. I _____ (not / check) the website before I left home.
4. My brother _____ (finish) work just before I called.
5. He knew the route because he _____ (live) nearby as a child.
6. I felt cold because I _____ (stand) outside for so long.

C. CHANGE THE SENTENCES

1-2: Rewrite to show the earlier duration or result.

Example: I worked from nine until noon. (by noon / three hours) **By noon, I'd been working for three hours.**

1. I waited from two to three. (by three / an hour)
2. I finished five reports before lunch. (by lunch)

3-4: Correct the form to match the meaning. Example: She'd been owning it for years. **She'd owned it for years.**

3. He'd been knowing her for years.
4. She'd been writing letters. (all five finished)

D. WRITE ABOUT YOU

Write three sentences explaining a past situation: an earlier activity, an earlier result and a state.

Example: **I was tired: I'd been packing all day. I'd filled six boxes. I'd owned the flat for years.**

E. SPEAK WITH A PARTNER

Describe a time you were tired, relieved or frustrated.

Your partner asks **What had happened?** and **How long had you been...?**

Explain what was completed and what had been in progress.

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Answer key | Keep this page separate during student practice.

1. READ: Waiting for a delayed coach

Sample target language from the conversation:

Noor: I'd **been waiting** for an hour when they finally announced a delay.

Pat: Hadn't they **said** anything before that?

Noor: No. They **had changed** the departure time online, but I **hadn't checked**.

Noor: My brother picked me up. He'd **just finished** work, so the timing was perfect.

A. CHOOSE

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. read | 2. known |
| 3. been working (activity focus; worked is possible) | 4. repaired |
| 5. been waiting | 6. owned |
| 7. sent | 8. planting |

B. COMPLETE: A delayed journey

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. had been waiting / had waited | 2. had changed |
| 3. hadn't checked / had not checked | 4. had finished |
| 5. had lived / had been living | 6. had been standing / had stood |

C. CHANGE THE SENTENCES

1. By three, I'd been waiting for an hour.
2. By lunch, I'd finished five reports.
3. He'd known her for years.
4. She'd written all five letters.

D. WRITE ABOUT YOU / E. SPEAK

Personal answers will vary. Check the target grammar.

Sample: I was relieved because I'd finished the exam. I'd been revising for weeks. I'd known about it since January.

Teacher note: A3 and B1/B5/B6 allow both perfect aspects. Continuous highlights duration; simple views the earlier activity as a whole. Check the past reference point.