

# Past perfect

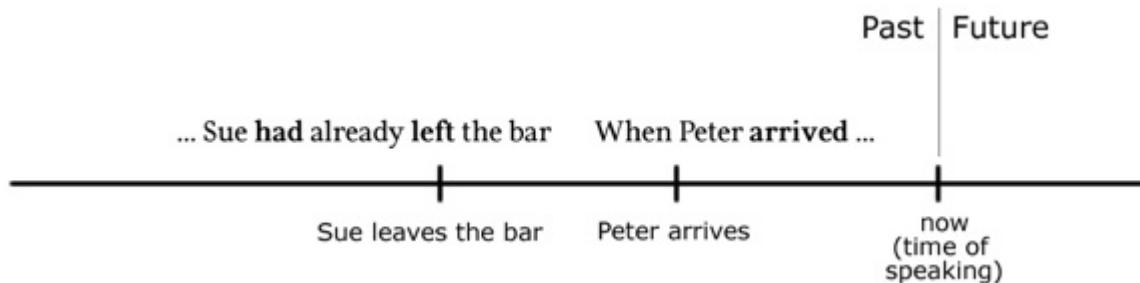
## Simple form

### Event in the past perfect before another past event

The past perfect shows that an event in the past happened **before** another event in the past.

(1) Lisa **couldn't** pay. She **had forgotten** her purse.

(2) When Peter **arrived**, Sue **had already left** the bar.

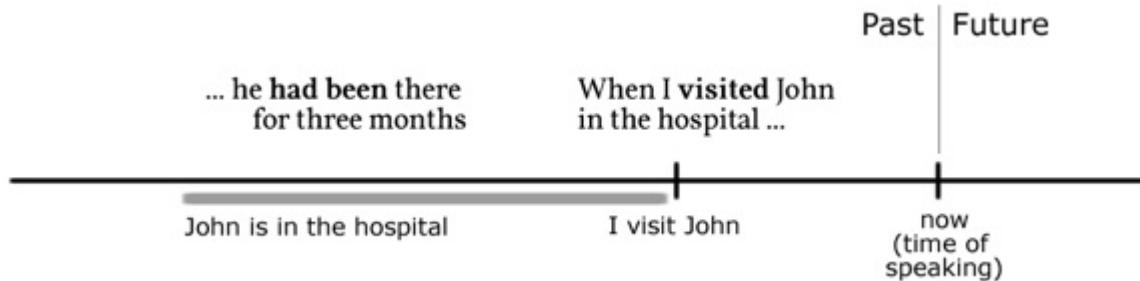


The past perfect is used to say that one past action followed another. The action in the past perfect happened earlier.

### Past state [Zustand] before a past event

(3) She **had known** him for years when he **told** her that he was gay.

(4) When I **visited** John in the hospital, he **had been there** for three months.



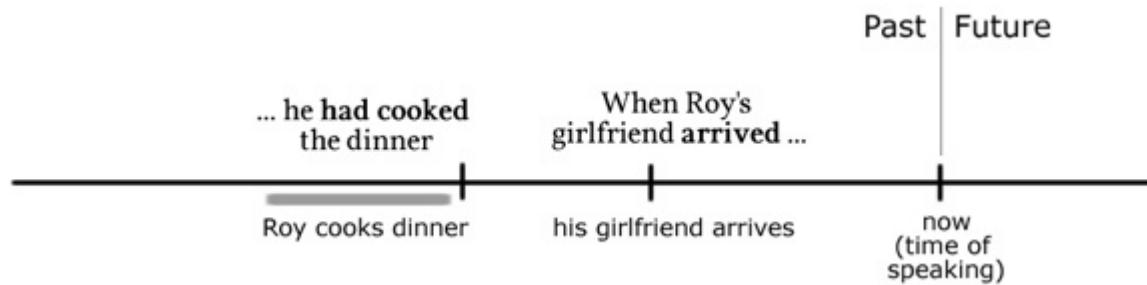


We can also use the past perfect to speak about a state (Zustand) that began before a point of time in the past and lasted up to that point of time.

## Comparison: past perfect ↔ past tense

### Past perfect

(5) When Roy's girlfriend **arrived** he **had cooked** the dinner.



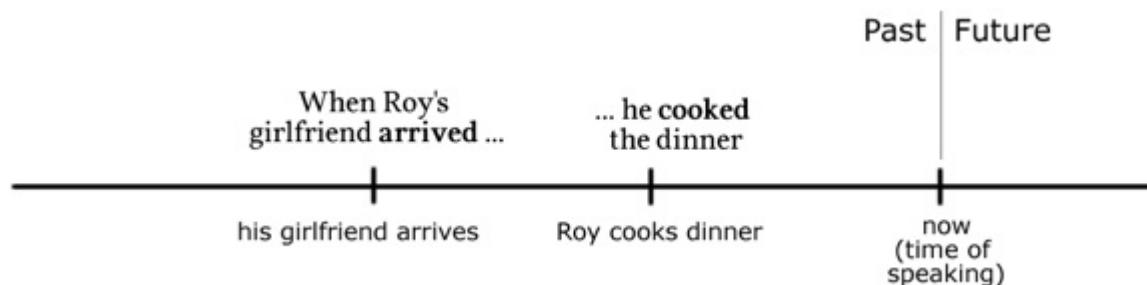
The dinner is ready when she arrives.



An event in the past perfect happened earlier than the event in the past tense.

### Past tense

(6) When Roy's girlfriend **arrived** he **cooked** the dinner.



He starts cooking the dinner *after* she arrives.



Several (mehrere) events in the past tense are seen as a sequence of events (Abfolge von Ereignissen) in the past (and happened in the order in which they are named in the text). This is especially common in stories etc.

# Progressive form

The past perfect progressive is used much like the simple form but you use it if you want to stress [betonen] the duration [Dauer] of the event in the past perfect or if it's important to say how long it had been going on when the other past event happened.

(7) When Roy's girlfriend **arrived** he **had been cooking** dinner **for three hours**.

(8) Tom **had been dreaming** about doing a bungee jump **for years** when he finally **decided** to do it.



In sentence (7) the speaker [Sprecher] wants to stress [betonen] that Roy had been cooking *for three hours*. In sentence (8) it is stressed that Tom had been dreaming *for years*. That's why the past perfect progressive is used.

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