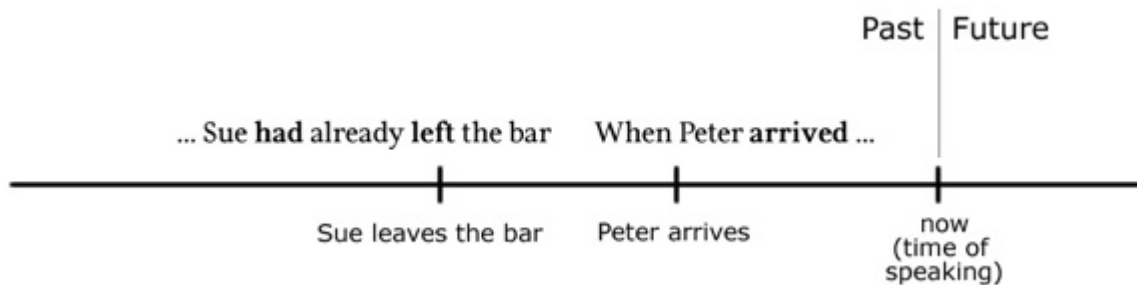


# Past perfect explanation

## 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.

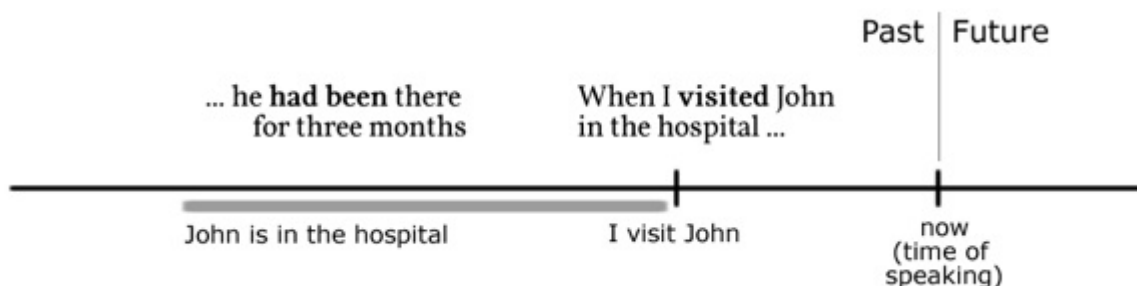
- (1) Lisa **couldn't** pay. She **had forgotten** her purse.
- (2) When Peter **arrived**, Sue **had already left** the bar.



► 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.

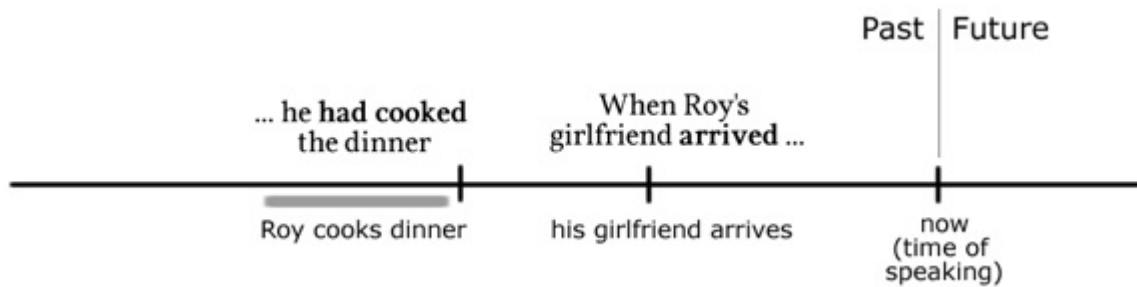


► We can also use the past perfect to speak about a state (Zustand) that began before a point of time in the past and lasted up to that point of time.

# Comparison: past perfect ↔ past tense

## Past perfect

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

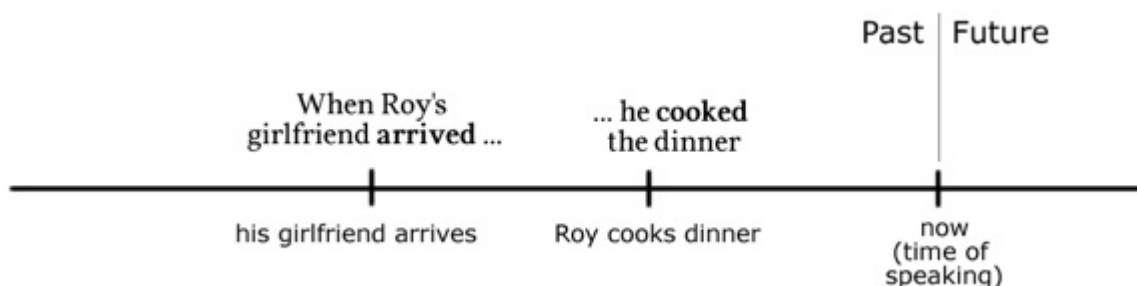


► The dinner is ready when she arrives.

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.

[english](#), [examples](#), [grammar](#)