

Answer Key

Past Perfect
(I had done)

English Grammar in Use — Unit 15

15 Exercises • Complete Solutions with Explanations

Includes Exam Practice: IELTS • Cambridge • TOEFL

January 29, 2026

Scoring Summary

Section	Total Points
EASY (Exercises 1-4)	41 points
MEDIUM (Exercises 5-8)	54 points
HARD (Exercises 9-12)	32 points
REAL-LIFE & EXAM (Exercises 13-15)	21 points
GRAND TOTAL	148 points

— EASY EXERCISES —

1 Exercise 1: Complete with Past Perfect (15 points)

Answers

1. When I arrived at the party, Tom **had already left**.
2. She didn't want to go to the cinema because she **had already seen** the film.
3. By the time I got to the station, the train **had already gone**.
4. I was very tired because I **hadn't slept / had not slept** well the night before.
5. They **had never met** before the conference.
6. When we arrived at the restaurant, they **had given** our table to someone else.
7. I didn't recognize her because she **had changed** so much.
8. He couldn't pay for the meal because he **had forgotten** his wallet at home.
9. By 10 PM, I **had finished** all my homework.
10. She told me she **had been** to Paris three times before.
11. The streets were wet because it **had rained / had been raining** all morning.
12. I **had just got / gotten** home when the phone rang.
13. They **had known** each other for years before they started dating.
14. When I checked my pocket, I realized I **had lost** my keys.
15. The movie **had already started** when we entered the cinema.

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 15 points.

2 Exercise 2: Past Simple or Past Perfect? (12 points)

Answers

1. When I **arrived**, everybody **had already started** eating.
2. She **was** very hungry because she **hadn't eaten** anything all day.
3. I **didn't recognize** him because he **had grown** a beard.
4. After he **had finished / finished** his work, he **went** home.
5. When we **got** to the airport, we realized we **had forgotten** our passports.
6. She **told** me she **had never tried** sushi before.
7. I **felt** sick because I **had eaten** too much at dinner.
8. By the time the ambulance **arrived**, the man **had already died**.
9. He **was** late for work because he **had missed** his bus.
10. When I **turned on** the TV, the game **had already finished**.
11. She **passed** her exam because she **had studied** very hard.
12. After they **had had / had** dinner, they **watched** a movie.

Note on “after” and “before”

When using **after** or **before**, both Past Simple and Past Perfect are acceptable because the time sequence is already clear from the conjunction itself.

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer (some have 2 blanks). Total: 12 points.

3 Exercise 3: Questions with Past Perfect (8 points)

Answers

1. **Had you ever visited** London before your trip last year?
2. **Had she finished** her homework before the teacher arrived?
3. **Had they already eaten** when you got to the restaurant?
4. **Had he met** her before the party?
5. Why **hadn't you told** me about the problem earlier?
6. How long **had they been** married before they had children?
7. What **had happened** before the police arrived?
8. Where **had she worked** before she joined our company?

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 8 points.

4 Exercise 4: Write Sentences Using Past Perfect (6 points)

Answers

1. **She moved to Paris after she had studied French for five years.**
(or: *By the time she moved to Paris, she had studied French for five years.*)
2. **We went for a walk after the rain had stopped.**
(or: *After the rain had stopped, we went for a walk.*)
3. **He bought a car after he had saved enough money.**
(or: *After he had saved enough money, he bought a car.*)
4. **More guests arrived after they had eaten all the food.**
(or: *By the time more guests arrived, they had eaten all the food.*)
5. **I watched the movie after I had read the book.**
(or: *After I had read the book, I watched the movie.*)
6. **We left the venue after the concert had ended.**
(or: *After the concert had ended, we left the venue.*)

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 6 points.

— MEDIUM EXERCISES —

5 Exercise 5: Complete the Story (18 points)

Answers

1. **decided** (Past Simple — main narrative)
2. **arrived** (Past Simple — main narrative)
3. **discovered** (Past Simple — main narrative)
4. **had moved** (Past Perfect — earlier action)
5. **told** (Past Simple — main narrative)
6. **had left** (Past Perfect — earlier action)
7. **was** (Past Simple — main narrative)
8. **hadn't seen / had not seen** (Past Perfect — earlier situation)
9. **had really wanted** (Past Perfect — earlier feeling)
10. **tried** (Past Simple — main narrative)
11. **had changed** (Past Perfect — earlier action)
12. **checked** (Past Simple — main narrative)
13. **found** (Past Simple — main narrative)
14. **had sent** (Past Perfect — earlier action)
15. **hadn't noticed / had not noticed** (Past Perfect — earlier oversight)
16. **explained** (Past Simple — main narrative)
17. **had got / had gotten** (Past Perfect — earlier event)
18. **had had** (Past Perfect — earlier necessity)

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 18 points.

6 Exercise 6: Mixed Practice - Dialogues (16 points)

Dialogue 1

B: I **missed** my alarm because I **had forgotten** to charge my phone the night before.

A: **Did you miss** anything important?

B: Yes, by the time I **arrived**, they **had already made** all the important decisions.

Dialogue 2

B: Amazing! I **had never been** there before, so everything **was** new to me.

A: **Did you visit** the Colosseum?

B: Of course! I **had seen** pictures before, but seeing it in person **was** incredible.

Dialogue 3

A: I **heard** you got a new job. Congratulations!

B: Thanks! I **had applied** for it months ago and **had almost given up** hope.

A: How long **had you worked** at your previous company?

B: I **had been** there for five years before I **decided** to look for something new.

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 16 points.

7 Exercise 7: Reported Speech with Past Perfect (10 points)

Answers

1. She said (that) she had never been to Japan.
2. They told me (that) they had already eaten dinner.
3. He admitted (that) he had lost his keys the day before / the previous day.
4. John complained (that) she hadn't called him back.
5. The manager mentioned (that) he had been working there for ten years.
6. They said (that) they had seen the movie the week before / the previous week.
7. She explained (that) she hadn't received my email.
8. The officer informed us (that) the train had just left.
9. He told the doctor (that) he had broken his leg skiing.
10. The host said (that) they hadn't arrived yet.

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 10 points.

8 Exercise 8: Past Perfect vs Past Perfect Continuous (10 points)

Answers

1. She was exhausted because she **had been working** for 12 hours straight.
(Continuous — emphasizes duration of activity)
2. By the time we arrived, they **had already eaten** all the pizza.
(Simple — completed action, result)
3. His eyes were red because he **had been crying**.
(Continuous — visible result of activity)
4. I **had read** the book three times before I finally understood it.
(Simple — completed quantity)
5. They were wet because they **had been swimming** in the rain.
(Continuous — visible result of activity)
6. She **had never tasted** sushi before that restaurant.
(Simple — never + completed experience)
7. He was out of breath because he **had been running**.
(Continuous — visible result of activity)
8. I knew the area well because I **had lived / had been living** there for many years.
(Both acceptable with “live”)
9. The ground was muddy because it **had been raining** all night.
(Continuous — duration + visible result)
10. By 2020, she **had visited** every country in Europe.
(Simple — completed achievement)

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 10 points.

— HARD EXERCISES —**9 Exercise 9: Correct the Mistakes (10 points)****Answers**

1. ~~I had forgot my keys~~
I had forgotten my keys
Forgot → Forgotten (past participle)
2. ~~she has never been to Japan~~
she had never been to Japan
Has → Had (backshift in reported speech)
3. ~~he had ate dinner~~
he had eaten dinner
Ate → Eaten (past participle)
4. ~~I didn't knew~~
I didn't know
Knew → Know (base form after did)
5. ~~They have finished~~
They had finished
Have → Had (past perfect, not present perfect)
6. ~~had already rose~~
had already risen
Rose → Risen (past participle)
7. ~~she didn't slept well~~
she hadn't slept well
Didn't sleep → Hadn't slept (past perfect for reason)
8. ~~had already escape~~
had already escaped
Escape → Escaped (past participle)
9. ~~I had went~~
I had gone
Went → Gone (past participle)
10. ~~he had see~~
he had seen
See → Seen (past participle)

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 10 points.

10 Exercise 10: Translation Practice (8 points)

Answers

1. When I arrived at the airport, the plane had already left/departed.
2. She was tired because she had worked / had been working all day.
3. I had never seen such a good film/movie before.
4. They had already had dinner when we arrived.
5. Had you already studied English before you took the course?
6. He didn't know (that) she had moved.
7. After she had finished the book, she watched the film/movie.
8. The party had already ended/finished when I arrived.

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 8 points.

11 Exercise 11: Complex Sentences (8 points)

Answers

1. By the time the rescue team **arrived**, the survivors **had been waiting** for three days and **had run out** of food.
2. She **didn't realize / hadn't realized** how much she **had missed** her home-town until she **went back** to visit.
3. The students **had studied / had been studying** all night, so they **felt** exhausted when the exam **started**.
4. After he **had worked / had been working** at the company for twenty years, he finally **got** the promotion he **had dreamed / had been dreaming** about.

Scoring: 1 point per correct clause (approx. 2-3 per sentence). Total: 8 points.

12 Exercise 12: Third Conditional with Past Perfect (6 points)

Answers

1. If I **had known** about the traffic, I would have left earlier.
2. She wouldn't have failed the exam if she **had studied** harder.
3. If they **had told** us the truth, we wouldn't have been so angry.
4. I would have called you if I **hadn't lost / had not lost** your number.
5. If the weather **had been** better, we would have gone to the beach.
6. He wouldn't have missed the flight if he **had left** home earlier.

Third Conditional Structure

If + Past Perfect, + would have + past participle

Used for **hypothetical past situations** — things that didn't actually happen.

Scoring: 1 point per correct answer. Total: 6 points.

— REAL-LIFE & EXAM PRACTICE —

13 Exercise 13: IELTS Writing Task 2 Practice (5 points)

Answers

1. By the end of the 20th century, technology **had transformed** the workplace in ways that previous generations **had never imagined**.
2. The study found that participants who **had received** the treatment **showed** significant improvement.
3. Before the new policy **was implemented**, the government **had consulted** with various stakeholders.
4. The researchers **discovered** that the phenomenon **had occurred** much earlier than previously thought.
5. By the time the environmental regulations **came** into effect, significant damage **had already been done**.

Scoring: 1 point per correct sentence. Total: 5 points.

14 Exercise 14: Cambridge Use of English (8 points)

Answers

1. I was surprised to meet John because I **hadn't seen him for** five years.
(*FOR — with duration "five years"; SINCE would need a point in time like "since 2019"*)
2. When we arrived at the cinema, the film **had already started**.
(*ALREADY — between had and past participle*)
3. She got the job because she **had worked** in the field before.
(*WORKED — past participle of work*)
4. When I arrived, Tom **had just left**.
(*JUST — between had and past participle*)
5. When I tried to pay, I realized I **had forgotten** my wallet.
(*FORGOTTEN — past participle of forget*)
6. I **had never eaten / tasted** Thai food before.
(*NEVER — between had and past participle*)
7. He went to the gym **after he had finished** work.
(*AFTER — with past perfect*)
8. When we got there, we realized the restaurant **had already closed**.
(*ALREADY — between had and past participle*)

Scoring: 1 point per correct transformation. Total: 8 points.

15 Exercise 15: TOEFL Integrated Skills (8 points)

Answers

1. What did scientists know before Fleming's discovery?

Before Fleming's discovery, scientists had known that certain molds could kill bacteria, but no one had successfully isolated the active compound.

2. What happened before Fleming noticed the contaminated culture?

Before Fleming noticed the contaminated culture, a mold had contaminated one of his bacterial cultures. / Earlier researchers had observed similar phenomena but had not investigated further.

3. What had earlier researchers failed to do?

Earlier researchers had failed to investigate the phenomena further. / They had observed similar things but had not isolated the active compound.

4. Rewrite using Past Perfect:

Before Fleming discovered penicillin, no one had isolated the compound.

or: When Fleming discovered penicillin, no one had ever isolated the compound before.

Scoring: 2 points per correct answer. Total: 8 points.

Total Score Summary

Exercise	Points	Your Score
EASY SECTION		
1. Complete with Past Perfect	15	
2. Past Simple or Past Perfect?	12	
3. Questions with Past Perfect	8	
4. Write Sentences Using Past Perfect	6	
<i>Easy Subtotal</i>	41	
MEDIUM SECTION		
5. Complete the Story	18	
6. Mixed Practice — Dialogues	16	
7. Reported Speech with Past Perfect	10	
8. Past Perfect vs Past Perfect Continuous	10	
<i>Medium Subtotal</i>	54	
HARD SECTION		
9. Correct the Mistakes	10	
10. Translation Practice	8	
11. Complex Sentences	8	
12. Third Conditional with Past Perfect	6	
<i>Hard Subtotal</i>	32	
REAL-LIFE & EXAM		
13. IELTS Writing Task 2 Practice	5	
14. Cambridge Use of English	8	
15. TOEFL Integrated Skills	8	
<i>Exam Subtotal</i>	21	
GRAND TOTAL	148	

Key Grammar Points Summary

Past Perfect Formation

Positive	had + past participle
Negative	had not (hadn't) + past participle
Question	Had + subject + past participle...?

Main Uses

- Action before another past action: *When I arrived, the film had started.*
- Explaining past situations: *I was tired because I hadn't slept well.*
- Reported speech: *She said she had finished.*
- Third conditional: *If I had known, I would have helped.*

Common Time Markers

already, just, never, before, by the time, after, when, until

*Great job completing these exercises!
Keep practicing to master the Past Perfect tense.*