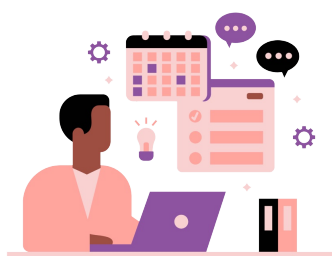# Past perfect

The past perfect, also called the pluperfect, is a verb tense used to talk about something that happened before something else that is also in the past. Imagine waking up one morning and stepping outside to grab the newspaper. On your way back in, you notice a mysterious message scrawled across your front door: "Tootles was here." When you're telling this story to your friends later, how will you describe this moment? You might say something like:

*"By the time I joined the new company, I **had** already **completed** several projects at my previous job"*

In addition to feeling indignant on your behalf, your friends will also be able to understand that Tootles graffitied the door at some point in the past before the moment this morning when you saw their handiwork, because you used the past perfect tense to describe the misdeed.

When to use the past perfect

When you're talking about some point in the past and want to reference an event that happened even earlier, using the past perfect allows you to convey the sequence of the events. It's also clearer and more specific.

*"After the project failed, we realized that we **had underestimated** the complexity of the task."*