**Past Perfect Continuous Tense with Examples**

Past Perfect Continuous Tense shows that an action started in the past and continued up to another point in the past. For example, if a sentence begins with: “I had been waiting for two hours,” it means that the speaker waited for two hours before something happened. It can also be used to show that action stopped in the past before something else happened. For example, if a sentence begins with: “I had been waiting for him,” it means that I waited for him, but he did not arrive.

Past perfect continuous tense is also one of the forms of [verb tenses](https://englishgrammarsoft.com/verb-tenses-in-english-grammar-examples-formula/). Today, we are going to discuss past perfect continuous with examples, formula, and exercises at the end.

## Definition

The past perfect continuous tense is used to describe the action that was not completed by a certain date or time in the past. We can say that we add the idea of the [**past continuous tense**](https://englishgrammarsoft.com/past-continuous-tense-examples-formula-and-rules/) to the idea of the [**past perfect tense.**](https://englishgrammarsoft.com/past-perfect-tense-with-examples-30-sentences-formula-rules/)

## Structure / Formula

Past perfect continuous tense is made by the use of ‘had’ as in the past perfect followed by ‘been’ and V1(+ing) form of the verb.

### Affirmative Sentences

Formula for affirmative sentences.

Subject + had + been + present participle + time reference.

**He/She/It/You/I/We/They + had** **+ been + present participle**

**Examples**

* They **had been living** in Glasgow **since** 1990.
* I **had been attending** the office **for** one week.

### Negative Sentences

Subject + had + not + been + present participle + time reference.

**Examples**

* They **had not been living** in Glasgow **since** 1990.
* I **had not been attending** the office **for** one week.

### Interrogative Sentences

Had + subject + been + present participle + time reference + ?

**Examples**

* **Had**they **been** **living**in Glasgow **since 1990**?
* **Had**I**been attending**the office **for** one week?

## Rules / Usage

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| **Rules/Usage** | **Example** |
| To emphasize the action duration that completed before another action. | She **had been studying** for two years **before** she got the degree. |
| The past action that continued for some time and result of which was visible. | She was tired. Why? She **had been working** since morning. |
| Time expression | He had been sleeping **since 10 p.m.** |

## Examples

1. She **had been practicing** verbs **for** two weeks.
2. I **had been drinking** coffee **for** five years.
3. I **had been visiting** Paris for two years.
4. Tom **had been waiting** for Julia for two hours.
5. The gardener **had been planting** flowers for twenty years.
6. Cool breeze **had been blowing** **since** morning.
7. **Had** he **been jogging**for one hour?
8. It **had been raining** **since** midnight.
9. He **had been suffering** from fever **for** many days.
10. Sara **had been learning** French **for** three months.
11. I **had been studying** at this college **for** many years.
12. His business **had been making** progress by leaps and bounds.
13. Rita **had been teaching** English Grammar.
14. What **had** you **been doing** for five hours?  
    Haris **had been sleeping for** 8 hours when the mother woke him up.

## Exercises

1. The laborers \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in this mine for several years. (work)
2. I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ this novel for one week. (read)
3. The salesman \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the target of sales for many years. (achieve)
4. The mechanic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the car for two days. (repair)
5. Jimmy \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ online for many years. (earn)
6. He \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ this shirt for many days. (wear)
7. George \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ around the world since 2006. (travel)
8. The kids \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cartoons since the evening. (watch)
9. The horse \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (neigh)
10. I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to work. (drive)
11. She \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Sacred Games for five hours. (watch)
12. They \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rugby since morning. (play)

**Answers**

1. The laborers **had been working** in this mine for several years.
2. I **had been reading** this novel for one week.
3. The salesman **had been achieving** the target of sales for many years.
4. The mechanic **had been repairing** the car for two days.
5. Jimmy **had been earning** online for many years.
6. He **had been wearing** this shirt for many days.
7. George **had been traveling** around the world since 2006.
8. The kids **had been watching** cartoons since the evening.
9. The horse **had been neighing.**
10. I **had been driving** to work.
11. She **had been watching** Sacred Games for five hours.
12. They **had been playing** rugby since morning.