

**LEVEL**  
**Intermediate**

**NUMBER**  
**B2\_2062G\_EN**

**LANGUAGE**  
English





## Goals

- Review the present perfect continuous
- Learn how to form the past perfect continuous
- Practise using the past perfect continuous







## Preview and warm-up

- In this lesson, we will cover the **past perfect continuous**.



I **had been partying** all weekend, so I was too tired to start work on Monday.



## Review of the present perfect continuous

- The **present perfect continuous** is used to describe actions that **recently** happened or actions that are **not yet completed**.
- He **has been working** very hard recently and that's why he's so tired.
- He **has been living** in Thailand for six years (and is still living there).

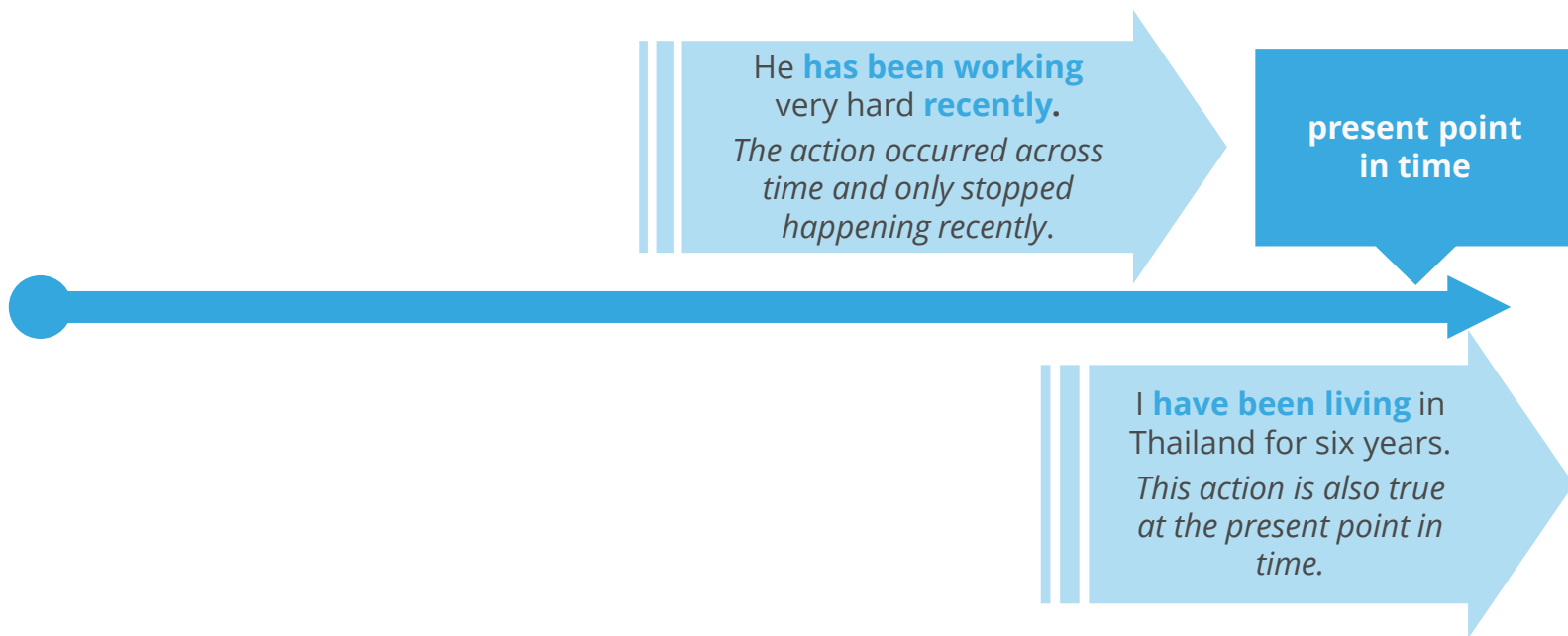


To form the present perfect continuous, we use:  
**have + been + - ing** form of the verb.



## Present perfect continuous on a timeline

- The **present perfect continuous** is used to demonstrate that an action **either stopped** happening very **recently** or that it is **unfinished but has been happening for awhile**.
- The **present perfect continuous** is used with actions that occurred **across time** rather than at a specific point in time.





## The past perfect continuous

- The difference between the **present perfect continuous** and the **past perfect continuous** is that the **past perfect continuous** describes an action that is **definitely finished**.
- The structure of the **past perfect continuous** is:
  - **had + been + - ing** form of the verb

### Examples of the past perfect continuous

I **had been living** in Spain for two years when I got another job.

I **had been waiting** for the train for 20 minutes before it arrived.

I **had been living** in Berlin for six months before I met Michael.

After I **had been jogging** for an hour, I was exhausted.

I **had been eating** my lunch when the ambulance siren rang.





## Contrast between the present perfect continuous and the past perfect continuous

- Here are two further examples showing the difference between the **present perfect continuous** and the **past perfect continuous**.



Simon **has been living** in Munich for seven years. (And he still lives there)

Simon **had been living** in Munich for seven years when he **had** a midlife crisis and **decided** to move to Berlin!







## The past perfect continuous

- The **past perfect continuous** is used to show that something **was happening before something else happened** in the past. For this reason, it is often used in the same sentence as the **past simple**.
- It is also used to show that something was happening **over a period of time** before the **other thing happened**.

- I **had been working** in London for six years before I **fell** pregnant.
- Andrew **had been studying** hard before he **met** Mark.
- Andreas **had been calling** himself Andrew up until he **met** his German girlfriend, Anna.





## Past perfect continuous on a timeline

- The **past perfect continuous** is usually **interrupted** by another event. This is why it is often used in the same sentence as the **past simple**.
- In the example below, Andreas calls himself Andrew up until he meets his German girlfriend, Anna. Anna starts calling Andrew Andreas and **so changes the course of history**.

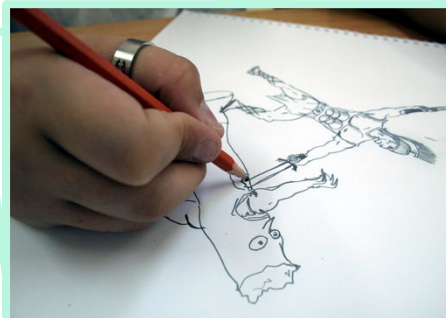




## Describing actions with the present perfect continuous and the past perfect continuous

Using the present perfect continuous describe the actions in these photos. Afterwards, describe each with the past perfect continuous.

Example: *They have been fighting...* / *They had been fighting...*





## Using the past perfect continuous

The past perfect continuous is often used together with the past simple. Combine the actions on the previous slide with any of actions on this side to create six sentences that use the past perfect continuous and the past simple.

Example: *They had been fighting before I arrived.*





## Complete the text with the correct verb form

**You may need to use the present perfect continuous, the past perfect continuous, or the simple past.**

Mango \_\_\_\_\_ (sit) inside all day and was ready for a walk. He was an energetic dog and loved going to the park each day. Mango and his owner \_\_\_\_\_ (run) around in the park for two hours when Mango \_\_\_\_\_ (see) a bird far off in the distance. Mango couldn't resist. When his owner wasn't looking, he sprinted off into the distance. He \_\_\_\_\_ (run) for a couple of minutes when he \_\_\_\_\_ (smell) something delicious, so he changed his mind and instead of heading for the fence took a left hand turn down a nearby street. Just as Mango disappeared behind the fence, his owner turned around. She \_\_\_\_\_ (thinking) about heading home, but to her surprise Mango had already disappeared. She called out his name, but Mango was far gone and could not hear a thing. After an hour of running around the park looking for Mango, his owner \_\_\_\_\_ (go) home. *Where's Mango?* asked her husband as she walked in the door. He ran away and I \_\_\_\_\_ (look) for him for two hours. What should we do? I \_\_\_\_\_ (call) out for him for hours and I am now exhausted.

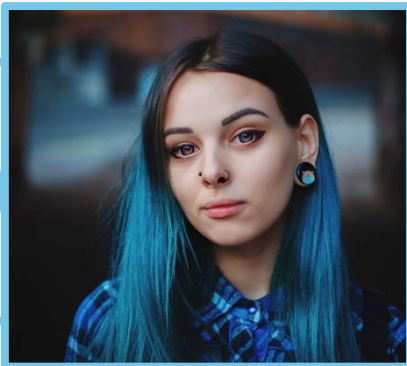




## Using the present and past perfect continuous in conversation

**These four people are introducing themselves to one another. Using the past perfect continuous and the present perfect continuous role-play your introductions. Use the examples as a guide.**

Alex: I had been working in advertising when I was offered a scholarship to study and decided to do my Master's. I have been studying for 2 years.



Sandra: had been living in Mexico before I met Sam and moved to Berlin. I have been living in Berlin for 10 years.



Andrew: I had been working in manufacturing for a couple of years before I decided to move to Europe and explore the world.



Stefan: I had been living in Spain for three years before I came to Sweden. I've been living in Sweden for 6 years.





## When to use the past perfect continuous

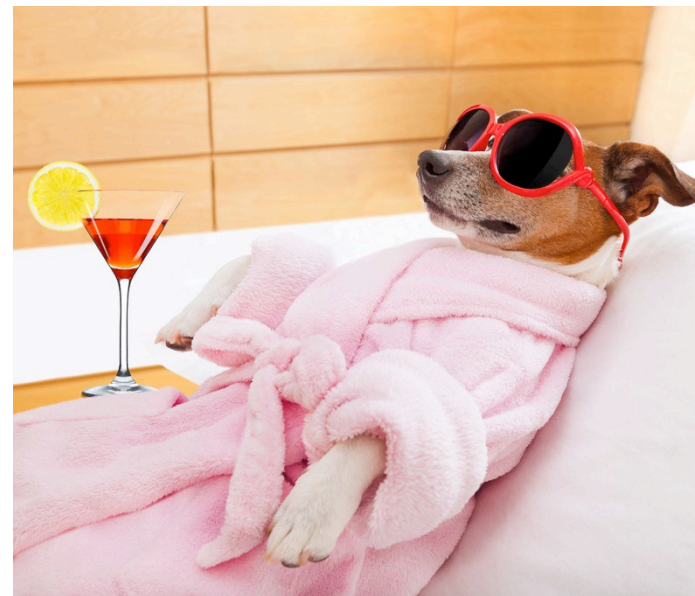
- The **past perfect continuous** is sometimes used to **give background information** that explains why something is the case.
- For example: *She looked really tired because she **had been working** all night.*

### More examples

He wasn't looking very well because he had been talking on the phone all night and had received some bad news.

The dog was really groggy because he had been sleeping and was still recovering from the medicine the vet gave him.

He had been working all day and that's why he was a little short with you.





## The past perfect continuous with time conjunctions

- The **past perfect continuous** is also often used with **time conjunctions** such as **after** and **before**.



**After** I **had been cycling** for four hours, I hit a rock and fell off my bike.

Ben **had been living** in a boarding house **before** he met Susan.







## Forming negatives with the past perfect continuous

- The **past perfect continuous** is made into a **negative** in the following way:
  - **had + not + been + - ing** form of the verb.
  - Remember that **had** and **not** can be contracted to **hadn't**.



I **hadn't been married** long when I had my first child.



## Further examples of the past perfect continuous with negatives

- Here are some further examples of the **past perfect continuous** with negatives.



It **hadn't been snowing** very long when we arrived.

We **hadn't been shopping** that long when I ran out of money.





## Use the past perfect continuous to give background information

Example: Paul was really stressed yesterday because he **had been arguing** with a colleague about the financing of an important project.

Peter was unbelievably happy on the weekend...

Julianne was unusually unhappy on Friday night...

Genevieve was a bit reserved during the meeting...

Daniel was looking really down at the party...

Gertrude was very excited after the concert...

Sophie's eyes were all swollen...

Her hair was all messy because...

He was dressed in casual clothes because...



## Using the past perfect continuous with time conjunctions

Using the time conjunctions *after* or *before*, describe your past to a classmate or your teacher. You might like to focus on the areas listed below. Remember that the past perfect continuous is often used together with the past simple, which interrupts the action that the past perfect continuous describes.

After I had been studying, I

Before I met my partner, I had been...

Before I moved to where I now live, I had been...

After I had been working for awhile, I



## I hadn't been living there long when...

**Using the negative form of the past perfect continuous take turns completing these sentences with a classmate or your teacher. After you've completed these sentences, practise making your own.**





## The past perfect continuous and questions

- The **past perfect continuous** can also be used to **ask questions**.
- **Had** + the subject + **been** + **verb in the – ing form** + rest of the question



**Had** you **been drinking** before the accident?



## Further examples of the past perfect continuous and questions

- Here are some more examples of the **past perfect continuous** in question form.



**Had** the girl **been cheating** on her test?

**Had** the boy **been experimenting** with the class chemistry set?





## The past perfect continuous and adverbs

- The **past perfect continuous** is often used with **adverbs** such as **only** and prepositions such as **for**.
- He had **only** been living in Melbourne **for** two weeks when he was offered a job.
- He had been living in Berlin **for** a long time before he met the man of his dreams.

### Further examples

She had **only** been dancing **for** a year when she broke her ankle.

He had **been** living in Paris **for** two months before he found a job.

She had **only** been playing the guitar **for** nine months when she formed a band.







## Had you been...?

Juliette is trying to understand why Josie crashed her car.  
Practise asking Josie questions using the past perfect continuous.  
Josie has to give answers using the past perfect continuous.  
Example: *Had you been drinking before you crashed the car? No, I hadn't been drinking at all. I was completely sober.*

- Josie crashed her car even though she is a very cautious driver.
- Juliette is trying to understand how this could've happened. Had she been sleeping at the wheel?



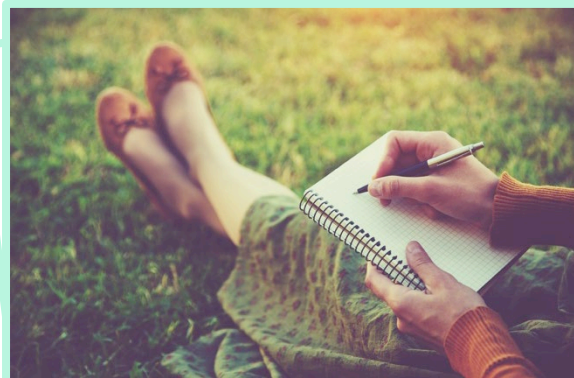


## Practise writing with the past perfect continuous

**Write two paragraphs that describe a time in your life when a change occurred. Use the past perfect continuous with the simple past to show what was happening when the change took place.**

I had been studying for long time when my aunty won the lottery. She shared it with me and it changed my life.

I had been floating along in life before I met Susan, who really helped me turn things around.



Blank lined paper for writing practice.



## Talking about your experiences of schooling

**There are many ways to talk about the the past in English. With your classmates or teacher experiment with different tenses to describe your experiences of attending school. Use the past perfect continuous where it helps give background information to a later action.**



When I was a child, schooling was very structured and boring.

I have been studying all my life so I've never stopped going to school.

I didn't study at all. I was a terrible student.

I had a wonderful teacher in primary school who inspired my interest in languages.

I was watching TV last night when I saw a documentary about my primary school music teacher who became a famous conductor!

I had been living in France for a month when I adopted a lost dog.

I have been thinking about schooling a lot recently. It wasn't very inspiring and I want something better for my own children.

I had a wonderfully, crazy science teacher at school.

I had been failing all my subjects before I had Miss Jones, who turned everything around.



## Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no

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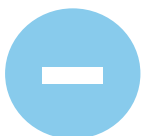
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## Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.  
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?

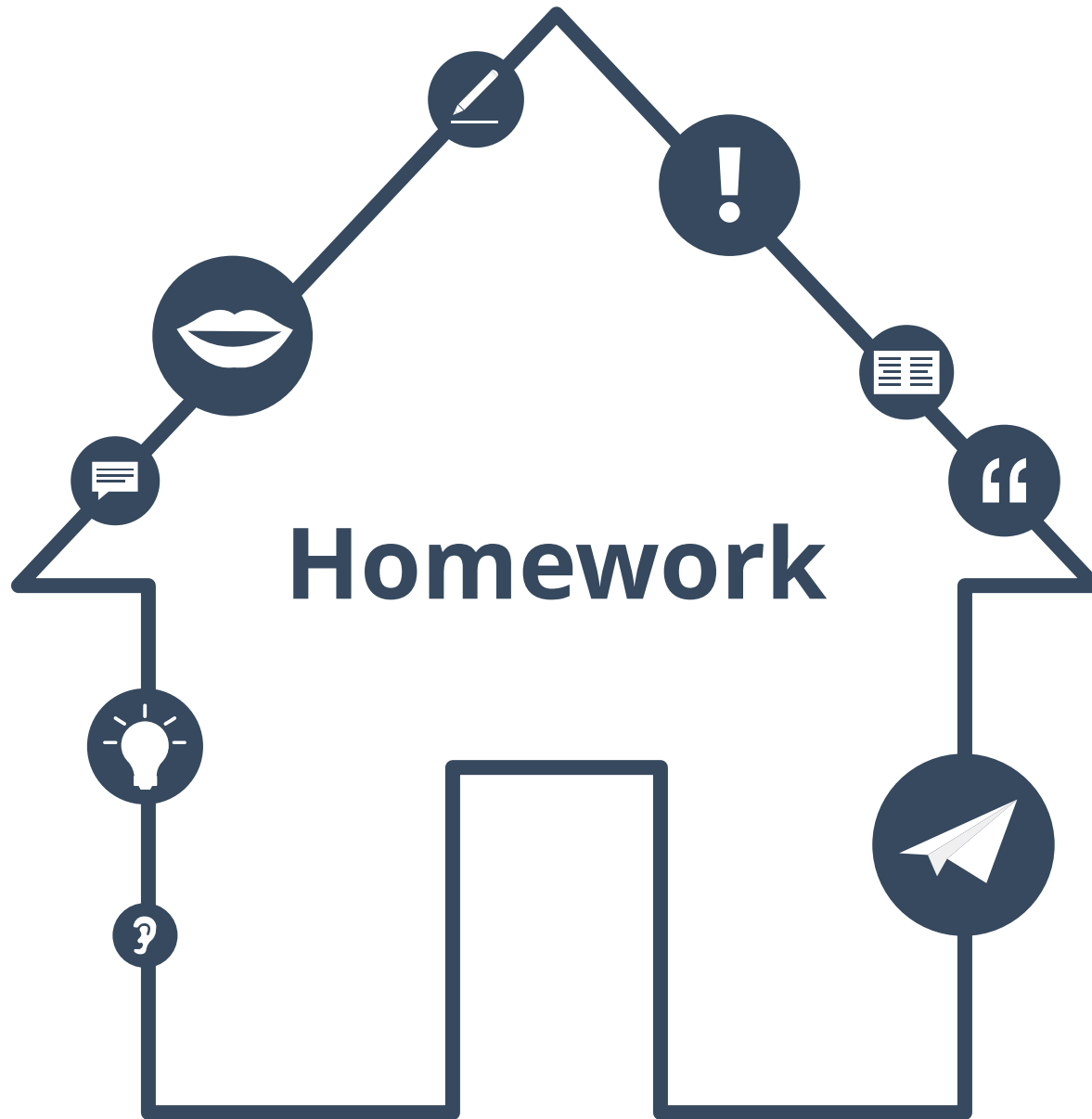


If you have time, go over  
the most difficult slides again



## Answer key

**Activity p. 13:**  
had been sitting; had been running; saw; had been running; smelt; had been thinking; went; have been looking; have been calling





## Make sentences that use the past perfect continuous and the simple past

A

had been

studying

for 3 years

when I received...

B

had been

living

in Berlin

when I met...

C

After

I had been

cycling for 6  
hours,

I became...

D

had been

living alone

before

I met...





## Homework writing activity

**Describe a time in your life when a big change occurred. Use the past perfect continuous to describe what was happening before this change happened. Use a casual voice, but structure your paragraph so it has a beginning, middle, and end.**

<input type="radio"/>	<u>The biggest change in my life happened when I was 16 years old.</u>
<input type="radio"/>	<u>I had been living with my foster parents in a remote town in</u>
<input type="radio"/>	<u>Western Australia when my foster mother died of a cold. I</u>
<input type="radio"/>	<u>suddenly had to do everything for myself, which meant growing</u>
<input type="radio"/>	<u>up really quickly.</u>
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## Homework answer key

### Activity p. 32:

I had been studying for three years when I received some bad news; I had been living in Berlin for two years when I met my current partner; After I had been cycling for 6 hours, I became really tired and had an accident; I had been living alone for a long time before I met my Susie.



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