

Pluperfect Tense

The pluperfect tense in Italian (trapassato prossimo) is used to describe an action completed before another past action.

The Italian pluperfect tense is formed by combining the imperfect tense of the auxiliary verbs *avere* (to have) or *essere* (to be) with the past participle of the main verb. The choice between *avere* and *essere* follows the same rules as the *passato prossimo*.

Here's the general format:

- **Subject + imperfect form of *avere* or *essere* + past participle of the main verb**

Example using *avere*:

- **Avevo mangiato:** (I had eaten)
- **Avevi dormito:** (You had slept)
- **Aveva studiato:** (He/She had studied)
- **Avevo finito i compiti quando mi hai chiamato.** (I had finished my homework when you called me.)
- **Avevano già mangiato quando siamo arrivati.** (They had already eaten when we arrived.)
- **Avevi letto il libro prima di vederne il film?** (Had you read the book before seeing the movie?)

Example using *essere*:

- **Ero andato/a:** (I had gone)
- **Eri partito/a:** (You had left)
- **Era arrivato/a:** (He/She had arrived)
- **Quando siamo arrivati, loro erano già partiti.** (When we arrived, they had already left.)
- **Non ero mai stato a Roma prima di allora.** (I had never been to Rome before then.)
- **Si era ammalato e non era potuto venire alla festa.** (He had gotten sick and couldn't come to the party.)

Key points:

- The pluperfect tense is used to indicate a sequence of past events, where one action precedes another.

- It's formed with the imperfect of avere or essere (e.g., avevo, avevi, aveva, avevamo, avevate, avevano; ero, eri, era, eravamo, eravate, erano) followed by the past participle.
- Verbs that use essere in the passato prossimo (perfect tense) also use essere in the pluperfect tense.