



**Paco had had a dreamt about  
this before:  
*New York's bay had frozen  
for a couple of weeks***



**New York's bay had frozen for a couple of weeks**



# Form of the Past Perfect Tense

This tense is formed by using two components: the auxiliary verb *have* (in the past tense: *had*), and the *past participle* form of a verb.

*I **had finished** my exercises when my friends called me.*

*My father **had bought** some bread before we met him.*

With a regular verb the past participle ends with *-ed* (just like the simple past). Irregular verbs have a special past participle form that you have to learn by heart.

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# Uses of the Past Perfect Tense

- **1. Completed action before something in the past.**

The Past Perfect expresses the idea that something occurred before another action in the past. It can also show that something happened before a specific time in the past.

*Your father **had** never **seen** such a beautiful film before he got married.*

- **2. Duration before something in the past (non continuous verbs).**

With Non-Continuous Verbs and some non-continuous uses of Mixed Verbs, we use the Past Perfect to show that something started in the past and continued up until another action in the past.

*We **had had** that house for twenty years before we sold it.*

*He **had read** the whole book by the time the teacher explained the lesson.*

- **3. Conditional sentences type III.**

*If you **had studied** harder, you would have passed the examination.*

- **4. Reported speech.**

We often use the past perfect tense in reported speech after verbs like **said, told, asked, thought, wondered**:

*He told us that he **had missed** the bus.*

*The teacher asked the students why they **hadn't finished** the task.*

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# The Past Perfect Tense: negative

The auxiliary verb to have (in the past tense) is usually contracted in the negative form of the Past Perfect Tense. For negative sentences in the past perfect tense, we insert **not** between the auxiliary verb and main verb.

*Paco **hadn't written** a letter to his family for a long time.*

*(had + not = hadn't)*

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## Past perfect continuous

*It's formed with had + been + verb + ING*

*It **had been raining** for days now and everywhere was soaked  
Paco **hadn't been expecting** such bad weather on his visit  
He **had been trying** and trying*

*We use past perfect continuous to:*

- i) talk about a continuous activity occurring up to a point in the past.*
- ii) to emphasise an activity that has a result in the past*
- ii) in reported speech to report past continuous and present perfect continuous*

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# American vs British English: vocabulary

- While there are certainly many more varieties of English, American and British English are the two varieties that are taught in most English as a Secondary Language programs.
- The most important rule is to try to be consistent in your usage. If you decide that you want to use American English spellings then be consistent in your spelling and the vocabulary you are going to use.
- Probably the major difference between British and American English lies in the choice of vocabulary. Some words mean different things in the two varieties:

*American English: freeway*

*British English: motorway*

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# American vs British English: spelling

*There are some well-known spelling differences between British English and American English.*

*Many of these spelling differences derive from French influence on the English language.*

*British English has a tendency to keep the spelling of many words of French origin.*

*Americans try to spell words more closely to the way they sound phonetically and they tend to miss some letters*

*(Br E) harbour / harbor (Am E)*

*(Br E) colour / color (Am E)*