



## Past Perfect: Past Simple vs Past Perfect

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- When I \_\_\_ (arrive), the meeting \_\_\_ (already/start).  
a) had arrived ... already started  
b) arrived ... already started  
c) had arrived ... had already started  
d) arrived ... had already started
- She \_\_\_ (be) tired because she \_\_\_ (not/sleep) well.  
a) was ... didn't sleep  
b) had been ... hadn't slept  
c) was ... hadn't slept  
d) had been ... didn't sleep
- I \_\_\_ (not/recognise) him because he \_\_\_ (grow) a beard.  
a) didn't recognise ... had grown  
b) didn't recognise ... grew  
c) hadn't recognised ... grew  
d) hadn't recognised ... had grown
- They \_\_\_ (watch) a film that evening. Earlier, they \_\_\_ (finish) dinner at a restaurant.  
a) were watching ... had finished  
b) had watched ... finished  
c) watched ... finished  
d) watched ... had finished
- The children \_\_\_ (go) to bed. They \_\_\_ (already/do) their homework earlier that evening.  
a) went ... had already done  
b) went ... already did  
c) had gone ... already did  
d) were going ... had already done
- I \_\_\_ (tell) her the news, but she \_\_\_ (already/hear) it.  
a) had told ... already heard  
b) told ... had already heard  
c) told ... already heard  
d) had told ... had already heard
- By the time I \_\_\_ (get) to the stop, the bus \_\_\_ (already/leave).  
a) had got ... already left  
b) got ... already left  
c) got ... had already left  
d) was getting ... had already left
- He \_\_\_ (pass) the exam easily. He \_\_\_ (study) the material thoroughly in the weeks before.  
a) passed ... studied  
b) passed ... had studied  
c) had passed ... studied  
d) passed ... was studying
- When we \_\_\_ (check) our bags, we \_\_\_ (realise) we \_\_\_ (forget) the camera.  
a) had checked ... realised ... forgot  
b) checked ... realised ... had forgotten  
c) checked ... realised ... forgot  
d) checked ... had realised ... forgot
- I \_\_\_ (never/hear) of that band before my friend \_\_\_ (mention) them.  
a) had never heard ... had mentioned  
b) had never heard ... mentioned  
c) never heard ... had mentioned  
d) never heard ... mentioned
- She was devastated. She \_\_\_ (lose) the ring that her grandmother \_\_\_ (give) her years before she passed away.  
a) lost ... had given  
b) had lost ... gave  
c) had lost ... had given  
d) lost ... gave





## Answers

1. d) arrived ... had already started
2. c) was ... hadn't slept
3. a) didn't recognise ... had grown
4. d) watched ... had finished
5. a) went ... had already done
6. b) told ... had already heard
7. c) got ... had already left
8. b) passed ... had studied
9. b) checked ... realised ... had forgotten
10. b) had never heard ... mentioned
11. a) lost ... had given
12. c) arrived ... had died
13. a) was ... hadn't eaten
14. c) decided ... had been
15. c) asked ... hadn't studied
16. d) couldn't ... had put
17. d) knew ... had eaten
18. d) thanked ... had sent
19. b) had started ... found
20. a) didn't want ... had already read



## Explanations

**1. “arrived ... had already started” (d)**

Use Past Simple for the main event (arrive). Use Past Perfect for the earlier action (start). The meeting started before I arrived.

**2. “was ... hadn't slept” (c)**

Past Simple 'was' describes her state. Past Perfect 'hadn't slept' explains the earlier cause.

**3. “didn't recognise ... had grown” (a)**

Growing the beard happened before I saw him, so use Past Perfect. Not recognising is the main past event.

**4. “watched ... had finished” (d)**

Watching the film is the main past event (Past Simple). 'Earlier' signals that finishing dinner happened before — use Past Perfect 'had finished' for the earlier action.

**5. “went ... had already done” (a)**

Going to bed is the main past event (Past Simple). 'Earlier that evening' plus 'already' forces Past Perfect — the homework was completed before bedtime.

**6. “told ... had already heard” (b)**

I told her (Past Simple main event). She heard before I told her (Past Perfect earlier event).

**7. “got ... had already left” (c)**

'By the time' + Past Simple requires Past Perfect for the earlier action. The bus had already left before I arrived at the stop.

**8. “passed ... had studied” (b)**

Passing the exam is the main past event (Past Simple). 'In the weeks before' explicitly places studying earlier, requiring Past Perfect 'had studied'.

**9. “checked ... realised ... had forgotten” (b)**

Checking and realising are the main past sequence. Forgetting happened earlier (before we checked).

**10. “had never heard ... mentioned” (b)**

No experience of the band (Past Perfect) until the mention (Past Simple).

**11. “lost ... had given” (a)**

Losing is the main past event (Past Simple). 'Years before she passed away' anchors the giving firmly in an earlier time, requiring Past Perfect 'had given'. The giving happened long before both the losing and the passing away.

**12. “arrived ... had died” (c)**

'By the time' + Past Simple, Past Perfect. The death happened before the doctor arrived.

**13. “was ... hadn't eaten” (a)**

Being hungry (Past Simple) resulted from not eating earlier (Past Perfect).

**14. “decided ... had been” (c)**

Deciding is the main past event (Past Simple). The twenty years of marriage happened over a period before the decision, requiring Past Perfect 'had been'. 'Had grown apart' in the same sentence confirms the Past Perfect pattern.

**15. “asked ... hadn't studied” (c)**

We hadn't studied the topic before the teacher asked (Past Simple main event).

**16. “couldn't ... had put” (d)**

Putting them in the wrong pocket happened earlier (Past Perfect). Not finding is the main past event.

**17. “knew ... had eaten” (d)**

Knowing what to order is the main past state (Past Simple 'knew'). Eating there many times before is the earlier experience that explains the knowledge, requiring Past Perfect 'had eaten'.

**18. “thanked ... had sent” (d)**

Thanking is the main past event (Past Simple). 'Weeks earlier' explicitly anchors the sending in the past before the thanking, requiring Past Perfect 'had sent'.

**19. “had started ... found” (b)**

The film starting (Past Perfect) happened before finding seats (Past Simple).

**20. “didn't want ... had already read” (a)**

Not wanting is the main past state (Past Simple). 'Already' with Past Perfect 'had already read' emphasises that reading the book was completed before and caused the reluctance.