

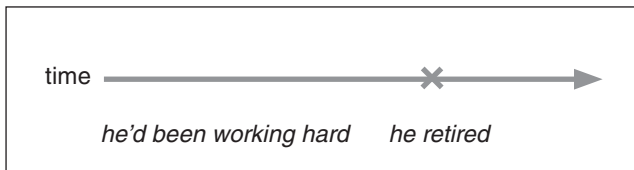
He'd been working hard all his life. He'd had a lot of different jobs. He'd worked as a truck driver, a construction worker, and a car mechanic, but now it was time to retire. He'd always wanted to travel, so he'd bought himself a motorcycle and now he and his dog were going to travel around the world!

Presentation

Past perfect continuous

Use the past perfect continuous to talk about an action that was in progress before a given time in the past:

He had been working hard all his life, but now it was time to retire.



It is possible that the action (working hard) finished before he retired, or at that point in time. It is also possible that it continued: he had been working hard all his life, and he had no intention of stopping, even after he'd retired.

To form the past perfect continuous use:
had + been + verb + -ing

Affirmative and negative

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------|------------------|
| I/You/He/She/It/ We/They | 'd/had/ hadn't | been | working hard. |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------|------------------|

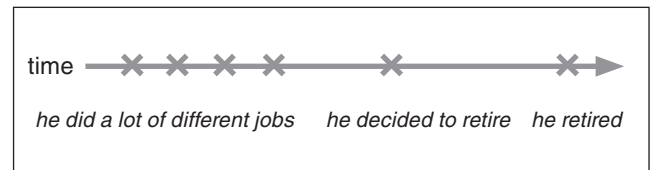
Questions and answers

| | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|------|------------------|
| Had | I/you/he/she/it/ we/they | been | working hard? |
| Yes, | I/you/he/she/it/we/they | | had. |
| No, | | | hadn't. |

Past perfect continuous or past perfect simple?

Use the past perfect simple to talk about:

- single, complete events: *He'd worked as a truck driver. He'd bought a motorcycle.*
- repeated actions when we give the number of times the action is repeated: *He'd done a lot of different jobs in his lifetime.*



Use the past perfect continuous to talk about how long an action, or series of actions, was in progress:

He had been working hard all his life.

He'd been riding his bike for five hours without stopping.

You don't usually use stative verbs in the past perfect continuous.

Say *I had known him for years.* (don't say *I had been knowing him for years.*)

1 Look at the pictures and complete the sentences using the past perfect continuous of the verbs in the box.

cry not listen not live work



- 1 She was exhausted. She had been working all night.



- 3 The baby _____ all night. It was six o'clock and he hadn't had any sleep.



- 2 He had no idea what the answer was. He _____ to the teacher.



- 4 She _____ there very long, but she already felt totally at home.

2 Look at the pictures in exercise 1 and complete the questions using the past perfect continuous.

- 1 How long _____? All night.
2 _____ to the teacher? No, he hadn't.
3 What _____ all night? Crying!
4 How long _____ there? Not very long.

3 Choose the correct form of the verbs to complete the story.

- 1 He'd never fallen / *been falling* in love before. She was his first love.
2 They'd *gone* / *been going* out together for a couple of months.
3 Then she'd *started* / *been starting* making excuses so as not to see him.
4 She'd *met* / *been meeting* another man at a party a few weeks earlier.
5 She'd *seen* / *been seeing* him for a few weeks.
6 He hadn't *realized* / *been realizing* what was happening.
7 Then one day, he'd *seen* / *been seeing* the two of them walking down the street together.
8 And he understood that she'd *found* / *been finding* a new boyfriend.

4 Complete the text using the past perfect simple or past perfect continuous form of the verbs in parentheses.

We ¹ _____ (work) for the same company for a couple of months. I ² _____ (see) her in the distance and I ³ _____ (notice) how attractive she was, but we ⁴ _____ (never/speak). Then, while we ⁵ _____ (do) a training course together, we finally got to know each other. We ⁶ _____ (have) a drink with the other people in the course at the end of the first day, and we ⁷ _____ (all/talk) about how difficult the training was. I ⁸ _____ (not notice) that she was standing just behind me. I laughed at one of the jokes, stepped back, and spilled her drink down her dress! I ⁹ _____ (never/feel) so embarrassed in my life. But she was really nice about it. I bought her another drink and we got talking. She told me she ¹⁰ _____ (just/buy) a house on my street and that she ¹¹ _____ (spend) her weekends painting and decorating. I offered to help her. That's how it all started!