Grammar : Past Perfect

I. Past Perfect Simple

FORM OF THE PAST PERFECT SIMPLE:

Had	Past Participle Form

Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative
I had worked.	I had not worked.	had I worked?
You had worked.	You had not worked.	had you worked?

NOTE:

I had not worked = I hadn't worked
I had worked = I'd worked

USE OF THE PAST PERFECT SIMPLE:

Use the past perfect tense to show an action that was completed prior to another action that took place in the past.
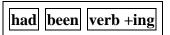
Examples:

- "President Lincoln **had attended** the theater regularly before his assassination."
- "They **had had** lunch when I arrived."

2. Past Perfect Continuous

FORM OF THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS:

| had | been | verb +ing |

Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative
I had been working.	I had not been working.	Had I been working?
You had been working.	You had not been working.	Had you been working?

Examples:

- You **had been waiting** there for more than two hours when she finally arrived.
- **Had** you **been waiting** there for more than two hours when she finally arrived?
- You **had not been waiting** there for more than two hours when she finally arrive.

USE OF THE PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS:

1. We use the past perfect continuous to show that something started in the past and continued up until another action stopped it.

Example:

- We **had been playing** soccer when the accident occurred

2. We use the past perfect continuous to show that something started in the past and continued up until another time in the past. "For five minutes" and "for two weeks" are both durations which can be used with the Past Perfect Continuous.

Example:

- I **had been living** in that small town for three years before I moved to New York.

3. We use the Past Perfect Continuous before another action in the past to show cause and effect.

Example:

- I was so tired. I **had been revising my lessons** for hours.

More on the past perfect here :

Past Perfect simple
Past perfect continuous.
Exercises on the past perfect and past perfect continuous.