

# Present Perfect Continuous



It is formed by means of the auxiliary verb *to be* in one of the perfect tenses and Participle I of the notional verb.

I've been working for two years.

In interrogative form the first auxiliary verb is placed before the subject

**Have I've been working for two years**

In the negative form the negative particle *not* is placed after the auxiliary verb

**I haven't been working for two years.**

The Perfect Continuous form denotes an action in progress, whose duration before a definite moment in the present, past or future is expressed.

### The Present Perfect Continuous Tense

#### Inclusive

*Denotes an action which began in the past, has been going on up to the present and is still going on.*

*It is usually used with:*

- **since,**
- **for.**

- I **have been learning** English for 10 years.
- I **have been learning** Spanish *since* we last met and have made some progress in it.

*It is rendered in Russian by the Present.*

#### Exclusive

*Denotes an action which was recently in progress but is no longer going on at the present moment.*

- There are puddles everywhere. It **has been raining** hard.

*It is rendered in Russian by the Past.*

AFFIRMATIVE	NEGATIVE	INTERROGATIVE
I had worked	I had not worked	Had I worked?
I'd worked	I hadn't worked	

The Past Perfect is formed by means of the Past indefinite of the auxiliary verb to have and Participial II of the notional verb.

In the **interrogative** form the auxiliary verb is placed before the subject.

In the **negative** form the negative participle not is placed after the auxiliary verb.

1 The Past Perfect denotes an action completed before a certain moment in the past. The moment may be indicated by another past action expressed by a verb in the Past Indefinite or by an adverbial phrase.

They **had walked** only a few steps when a second group of tanks drew up on the side road (*Heym*)

After she **had cried out**, she felt easier (*Heym*)

Fortunately, the rain **had stopped** before we started (*Bennett*)

By this time Cowperwood **has written** Aileen under no circumstances to try to see him (*Dreiser*)

The clock **had not struck** when he reached Gray's Inn. (*Dickens*)

The definite moment can be understood from the situation.

The Squire **had laid down** his knife and fork, and was staring at his son in amazement. (*Ellot*)

The definite moment need not necessarily be expressed in the same sentence as the action expressed by the Past Perfect.

Everybody noticed how sad she was the whole evening. She **had got** an unpleasant letter (*Collins*)

The Past Perfect is used with the conjunctions *hardly* *when*,  
*scarcely* *when*, *no sooner* *than*

They **had** no sooner **arrived** at this point than a most violent and startling knocking was heard. (*Jerome*)

Nell **had** scarcely **settled** herself on a little heap of straw in the corner when she fell asleep (*Dickens*)

For the sake of emphasis the word order may be inverted

No sooner **had** she **laid** herself down than she heard the prolonged trill of the front-door bell (*Bennett*)

The Past Perfect is frequently used with the adverbs *just, already, yet*.

Elsie, who **had not yet assumed** the white cap, was sweeping the stairs. (*Bennett*)

2. Sometimes the Past Perfect does not denote priority, but only the completion of the action.

He waited until she **had found** the latch-key and opened the door. (*Bennett*)

The Squire was purple with anger before his son **had done** speaking. (*Ellot*)

The Past Perfect is rendered in Russian by the past perfective.

By this time Cowperwood **had written** Aileen under no circumstances to try to see him. (*Dreiser*)

К этому времени Каупервуд **написал** Эйлин, чтобы она ни в коем случае не пыталась с ним встретиться.

3. The Past Perfect is used to denote an action which began before a definite moment in the past, continued up to that moment and was still going on at that moment. This use is called the Past Perfect Inclusive. The starting point or the whole period of duration of the action is indicated. To indicate the starting point the preposition *since* is used, to indicate the whole period of duration *for* is used.

The Past Perfect Inclusive is used:

(a) with verbs not admitting of the Continuous form.

Examination convinced him that the deacon was dead — **had been** dead for some time. (*Ellot*)

(b) in negative sentences. (In this case the Past Perfect Continuous is also possible; but not common. See § 32.)

Those two **had not spoken** to each other for three days and were in a state of rage. (*Bennett*)

(c) with non-terminative verbs such as *to work, to live, to study, to teach, to travel, to last*, etc. (In this case the Past Perfect Continuous is possible. See § 32.)

The ride **had lasted** about ten minutes, when the truck suddenly swerved to a halt. (*Heym*)

The Past Perfect Inclusive is generally rendered in Russian by the past perfective.

He **had not written** a line since he arrived.

Он не написал ни строчки с тех пор, как приехал.



## § 22. The Past Indefinite and the Past Perfect.

1. The Past Perfect is not used to denote a succession of actions. In this case the Past Indefinite is used.

The Past Indefinite is used with the conjunctions *after*, *before*, *when* if the relation between the actions approaches succession, i. e. when the idea of completion is of no importance.

He went on with his work after he **had** a short rest.

He had a short rest before he **went** on with his work.

When I **wrote** the letter, I posted it.

2. Verbs of motion and sense perception such as *to come*, *to arrive*, *to return*, *to see*, *to hear*, in adverbial clauses of time are generally used in the Past Indefinite and not in the Past Perfect. The actions are practically simultaneous.

When he (Val) **came** down, ... he found his mother scrupulous in a low evening dress... (*Galsworthy*)

When he **heard** the first line of the poem, he recognized it at once.

When the completion of the action is emphasized the Past Perfect is used.

He knew the poem by heart when he **had heard** it several times.

We often introduce **the Past Perfect Tense** with conjunctions *when, after, as soon as, by the time that*:

- ❑ **When/after** the guests **had left**, she closed the door and went upstairs.

**NB! The Past Simple** is used with the conjunctions *after, before, when*, if the succession of actions should be expressed.

- ❑ He **had** a short rest *before* he **went on** with his work.
- ❑ *When* I **wrote** the letter, I **posted** it.

**The Past Perfect** is not used to denote a succession of actions. In this case **the Past Simple** is used.

Past Simple

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Past Simple

,

Past Simple

- ❑ He **got up**, **went** to the bathroom, **had** breakfast and **left** for work.

**The Past Perfect** is used with the conjunctions:

*Hardly...*

*Scarcely...*

*Nearly...*

*Barely...*

+ **Past Perfect** ... *when* + **Past Simple**

*No sooner*

+ **Past Perfect** ... *than* + **Past Simple**

- ❑ He **had** *hardly done* it *when* they came.      ❑ *No sooner* they **had arrived** *than* it started to rain.  
(*Hardly had* he **done** it *when* they came.)      (No sooner **had** they **arrived** *than* it started to rain.)

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**(B) Choose the correct article or the word *some*.**

1. Shall we go to *a/the* cinema tonight? – I'd love to but I've seen *a/the* film. 2. What did you have for *a/(-)* lunch today? – I had *some/a* sandwich in *an/the* office canteen. 3. The ambulance took *(-)/the* injured people to *the/(-)* hospital. We must go to *(-)/the* hospital to visit them. 4. What *a/(-)* beautiful dress! Did you get it in *a/the* shop in *the/(-)* Broad street. 5. Who is going to open *an/the* exhibition? I heard *(-)/the* Queen is going to honour the event. 6. Danny plays *the/(-)* tennis very well, he plays *the/(-)* guitar well, too. 7. My favorite season is *the/(-)* spring. I'll never forget *a/the* spring of 2000, it was so warm. 8. Have you ever been to *(-)/the* Crimea? – Yes, I always go to *the/(-)* South in summer. 9. I like watching *(-)/the* television. Will you turn on *the/a* television set? 10. Sarah goes to *the/(-)* school. Her father had to go to *a/the* school to see her teacher. 11. Will you give me *some/the* water, please? I'm so thirsty. – Oh! It's warm! I hate *(-)/the* warm water. 12. To make pancakes, we need *the/some* flour and *(-)/some* milk.

**(A, B) Where is the definite or indefinite article missing?**

Jenny isn't Tom's sister, she is his friend. She lives in <sup>(1)</sup>..... Apple Street. <sup>(2)</sup>..... Apple Street is a small street in <sup>(3)</sup>..... North of <sup>(4)</sup>..... York. In <sup>(5)</sup>..... winter she goes to <sup>(6)</sup>..... school by <sup>(7)</sup>..... bus, in <sup>(8)</sup>..... summer she goes to <sup>(9)</sup>..... school by <sup>(10)</sup>..... bike.

Jenny goes to <sup>(11)</sup>..... same school as Tom. Sometimes Tom's father takes them to <sup>(12)</sup>..... school in <sup>(13)</sup>..... morning. <sup>(14)</sup>..... school they go to is <sup>(15)</sup>..... big school. There are a lot of <sup>(16)</sup>..... pupils at Jenny's school and not all of them like <sup>(17)</sup>..... school. But Jenny does; she likes <sup>(18)</sup>..... school because most of <sup>(19)</sup>..... teachers she has got are really good. Today she can't go to <sup>(20)</sup>..... school; she must stay in <sup>(21)</sup>..... bed but she hasn't got temperature. She has got <sup>(22)</sup>..... cold and <sup>(23)</sup>..... bad headache. She feels terrible and she doesn't want to eat anything. She just wants to see <sup>(24)</sup>..... doctor and stay in <sup>(25)</sup>..... bed.