

Past indefinite tense Handbook

Past Indefinite Tense is a fundamental aspect of English grammar that describes actions or events that occurred at a specific point in the past. It is one of the most commonly used tenses, especially when narrating past experiences, telling stories, or discussing completed actions. Understanding the structure, usage, and rules of the past indefinite tense is essential for anyone looking to improve their English language skills, whether for academic purposes, professional communication, or everyday conversation.

Understanding the Past Indefinite Tense

The past indefinite tense, also known as the simple past tense, is used to describe actions that started and ended at a specific time in the past. This tense is straightforward but requires attention to detail, especially regarding verb forms and usage.

Definition of Past Indefinite Tense

The past indefinite tense indicates that an action or event was completed at a definite time in the past. It does not specify the duration of the action or whether it was repeated; it simply states that the action happened.

Key Features of Past Indefinite Tense

- Describes completed actions in the past
- Usually accompanied by specific past time references (yesterday, last year, in 2010, etc.)
- Uses the second form of the verb (past tense form)
- Does not require auxiliary verbs (except in negative and interrogative sentences)

Formation of the Past Indefinite Tense

The formation of the past indefinite tense depends on the type of verb: regular or irregular.

For Regular Verbs

Regular verbs form the past tense by adding -ed to the base verb.

| Base Verb | Past Tense Form | Example |

|-----|-----|-----|

| walk | walked | I walked to school yesterday. |

| play | played | She played tennis last weekend. |

| work | worked | They worked late last night. |

Note: Be mindful of spelling rules when adding -ed:

- If the verb ends with -e, simply add -d (like love ? loved).
- If the verb ends with a consonant + y, change y to i and add -ed (study ? studied).
- For one-syllable verbs ending with a single vowel followed by a consonant, double the consonant before adding -ed (stop ? stopped).

For Irregular Verbs

Irregular verbs do not follow a fixed pattern. Their past tense forms must be memorized.

| Base Verb | Past Tense Form | Example |

|-----|-----|-----|

| go | went | I went to the market yesterday. |

| see | saw | She saw a movie last night. |

| eat | ate | They ate dinner at 7 pm. |

Usage of Past Indefinite Tense

Understanding when and how to use the past indefinite tense is crucial for effective communication.

1. Actions Completed in the Past

Use the past indefinite tense to describe actions that started and finished at a specific time in the past.

- I visited France last year.

- She finished her homework yesterday.

2. Habits and Repeated Actions in the Past

It can also describe habitual actions or repeated activities that are no longer true.

- When I was a child, I played football every evening.
- He always carried a book in his bag.

3. Sequential Actions in the Past

To narrate a series of completed actions.

- I woke up, brushed my teeth, and left for work.

4. Past States

Describe states or conditions that existed in the past.

- She was very happy during her vacation.
- The building was old but charming.

Negative and Interrogative Forms

The past indefinite tense can be transformed into negative and interrogative sentences using auxiliary verbs.

Negative Form

Use did not (or didn't) + base form of the verb.

- I did not go to the party.
- They did not understand the instructions.

Interrogative Form

Start with Did + subject + base form of the verb.

- Did you see the movie?
- Did she call you yesterday?

Short Answers

- Yes, I did. / No, I did not.
- Yes, she did. / No, she did not.

Examples of Sentences in Past Indefinite Tense

To clarify, here are various sentences illustrating the use of past indefinite tense:

- I played football with my friends last Saturday.
- He studied hard for the exam.
- They visited their grandparents last month.
- She didn't watch television yesterday.
- Did you attend the meeting?
- We went to the beach during summer vacation.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

While using the past indefinite tense, learners often make errors. Here are some pitfalls to watch out for:

- **Using the base form of the verb instead of the past tense:** Incorrect: I go to the market yesterday. Correct: I went to the market yesterday.
- **Forgetting auxiliary verbs in negative and interrogative sentences:** Incorrect: She didn't went to school. Correct: She didn't go to school.
- **Confusing regular and irregular verb forms:** Remember that irregular verbs have unique past tense forms which must be memorized.

Tips for Learning and Using Past Indefinite Tense

- **Practice with Regular and Irregular Verbs:** Create lists of common verbs and memorize their past forms.
- **Read Past Tense Sentences:** Reading stories, articles, or books written in the past tense helps internalize the structure.

- Write Daily Sentences: Practice writing about your past activities or experiences.
- Use Time Expressions: Words like yesterday, last week, ago, in 2010, etc., help specify the time frame.
- Engage in Conversations: Practice speaking about past events with friends or language partners.

Summary

The past indefinite tense is an essential component of English grammar, used to describe completed actions or states in the past. Its formation involves the use of the second form of the verb, with regular verbs adding -ed, and irregular verbs having unique forms. Proper understanding and application of this tense enable clear and accurate narration of past events.

By mastering the rules, practicing regularly, and paying attention to verb forms, learners can confidently use the past indefinite tense in both written and spoken English. Whether recounting a story, describing past habits, or asking questions about previous events, the past indefinite tense provides the foundation for effective communication about the past.

Remember: Consistent practice and exposure are key to mastering the past indefinite tense. Use it often, listen to native speakers, and review irregular verb lists to improve your command of this vital aspect of English grammar.

Understanding the Past Indefinite Tense: A Comprehensive Guide

The past indefinite tense ? often called the simple past tense ? is one of the foundational grammatical structures in English. It allows speakers and writers to describe actions that were completed at a specific point in the past, providing clarity and temporal context to narratives, reports, and everyday conversations. Mastering the past indefinite tense is essential for effective communication, as it enables us to recount experiences, tell stories, and discuss historical events with precision and confidence.

In this detailed guide, we will explore the nuances of the past indefinite tense, including its formation, usage, common patterns, exceptions, and practical examples. Whether you're a beginner learning English or someone aiming to refine your grammatical skills, this comprehensive overview aims to deepen your understanding of this vital tense.

What is the Past Indefinite Tense?

The past indefinite tense refers to actions that happened at a specific time in the past and are now complete. It is called "indefinite" because the exact timing of the action is either known or implied but not necessarily emphasized. The tense is straightforward, often used in storytelling or recounting

past experiences.

Key features of the past indefinite tense:

- Describes completed actions in the past.
- Usually used with time expressions like yesterday, last year, in 2010, ago, etc.
- Has a simple, unchanging form for regular and irregular verbs.

Formation of the Past Indefinite Tense

Regular Verbs

The formation of the past indefinite tense for regular verbs involves adding -ed to the base form of the verb.

Examples:

| Base Verb | Past Tense |

|-----|-----|

| walk | walked |

| play | played |

| visit | visited |

| clean | cleaned |

Rules for adding -ed:

- Most regular verbs: Add -ed directly (e.g., talk ? talked).
- Verbs ending with 'e': Add only -d (e.g., love ? loved).
- Verbs ending with a consonant + 'y': Change 'y' to 'i' and add -ed (e.g., study ? studied).
- Verbs ending with a single vowel + consonant: Double the final consonant before adding -ed (e.g., stop ? stopped).

Irregular Verbs

Irregular verbs do not follow a fixed pattern; their past tense forms must be memorized.

Examples of common irregular verbs:

| Base Verb | Past Tense |

|-----|-----|

| go | went |

| come | came |

| see | saw |

| eat | ate |

| write | wrote |

Usage of the Past Indefinite Tense

- Actions Completed at a Specific Time in the Past

The primary use of the past indefinite tense is to describe actions that happened and finished in the past.

Examples:

- I visited Paris last summer.
- She cooked dinner yesterday.
- They played football in the park.

- Series of Actions in the Past

It narrates a sequence of completed actions.

Examples:

- I woke up, brushed my teeth, and left for work.
- He entered the room, sat down, and started reading.

- Habits or Repeated Actions in the Past

It can describe habitual actions that no longer happen.

Examples:

- When I was a child, I played outside every day.
- She often traveled to New York during her college years.

- Past Facts or General Truths

Express facts or truths that are no longer valid.

Examples:

- The Titanic sank in 1912.
- Dinosaurs lived millions of years ago.

Time Expressions Commonly Used with the Past Indefinite Tense

Using specific time markers helps clarify that the action occurred in the past.

- Yesterday
- Last night/week/month/year
- In 1990
- A few days ago
- When I was a child
- Once upon a time
- Ago (e.g., two days ago)

Special Patterns and Common Mistakes

Affirmative Sentences

- Regular verbs: Subject + past tense form of verb + object.

Example: She played tennis yesterday.

- Irregular verbs: Subject + past tense form of irregular verb + object.

Example: They went to the museum.

Negative Sentences

Formed by adding did not (didn't) + base form of the verb.

Example:

- I did not see him yesterday.
- She didn't attend the party.

Note: When using 'did not,' the main verb remains in its base form, regardless of tense.

Interrogative Sentences

Formed by placing did at the beginning, followed by the subject and the base form of the verb.

Examples:

- Did you visit the new mall?
- Did she call you last night?

Common Irregular Verbs and Their Past Forms

Memorizing irregular verb forms is crucial for fluency. Here is a list of frequently used irregular verbs:

Base Form	Past Tense	Example Sentence
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be	was/were	He was happy.
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| become | became | She became a teacher. |

| begin | began | The show began at 7 pm. |

| break | broke | He broke his leg. |

| choose | chose | They chose the best option. |

Practical Tips for Mastering the Past Indefinite Tense

- Practice with Timelines: Create a personal timeline of past events and describe each with the past tense.
- Memorize Common Irregular Verbs: Use flashcards or apps to reinforce irregular verb forms.
- Focus on Context: Always use appropriate time expressions to clarify when the action took place.
- Write Short Paragraphs: Practice writing stories or reports about past experiences.
- Listen and Read: Engage with past tense narratives in books, movies, or podcasts to internalize correct usage.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Using the base form of regular verbs instead of the past form.
- Forgetting to change irregular verbs into their correct past tense.
- Using 'did' + base verb in affirmative sentences (e.g., I did go instead of I went).
- Confusing the past indefinite with present perfect tense.

Summary: Key Takeaways

- The past indefinite tense describes actions completed at a specific time in the past.
- Regular verbs form the past by adding -ed, with some spelling rules.
- Irregular verbs have unique past tense forms that must be memorized.
- Use time expressions like yesterday, last year, ago, etc., to specify the past.
- Affirmative, negative, and interrogative sentences have distinct structures involving 'did' and the base verb.
- Practice and exposure are essential for mastering the tense.

Final Thoughts

The past indefinite tense forms the backbone of storytelling and recounting past events in English. Its simplicity and widespread use make it an essential component of grammatical competence. Whether you're describing your childhood, narrating historical events, or simply recounting what you did yesterday, a solid grasp of the past indefinite tense will elevate your communication skills.

By understanding its formation rules, usage patterns, and common pitfalls, learners can confidently navigate conversations and writings about the past. Remember, consistent practice and contextual exposure are the keys to fluency. Embrace the nuances of this tense, and you'll find it becomes an intuitive part of your language toolkit, enabling you to share your past experiences with clarity and precision.

Question What is the past indefinite tense? The past indefinite tense is used to describe actions that happened at a specific point in the past and are no longer ongoing. It is formed using the past tense of the verb. **Answer** How do you form the past indefinite tense? For regular verbs, add '-ed' to the base form (e.g., 'walked'). Irregular verbs have unique past forms (e.g., 'went', 'had'). When do we use the past indefinite tense? We use the past indefinite tense to talk about completed actions in the past, past habits, or general truths that happened at a specific time. Can you give an example sentence in the past indefinite tense? Sure! Example: 'She visited her grandmother yesterday.' What are common time expressions used with the past indefinite tense? Common time expressions include 'yesterday', 'last year', 'ago', 'in 2010', and 'once'. How does the past indefinite tense differ from the past continuous tense? The past indefinite tense describes completed actions, while the past continuous tense describes actions that were ongoing at a specific time in the past.

Related keywords: past indefinite tense, simple past, past tense verbs, regular verbs, irregular verbs, past time expressions, past actions, storytelling, narrative tense, verb conjugation

Paragraph Using Past Perfect Tense

Introduction: Understanding the Paragraph Using Past Perfect Tense

Paragraph using past perfect tense is an essential element of English grammar that helps writers and speakers convey actions or states that were completed before another point in the past. Mastering how to craft such paragraphs enhances clarity, coherence, and the overall quality of your writing. Whether you're composing academic essays, storytelling, or professional reports, understanding the proper use of past perfect tense within paragraphs enables you to narrate events in a chronological and logical manner.

The past perfect tense is often overlooked by learners but is crucial for expressing sequences of

past events, emphasizing the earlier action, and establishing clear timelines. This article provides an in-depth exploration of how to construct effective paragraphs using past perfect tense, including grammatical rules, examples, common mistakes, and practical tips for writing with precision and clarity.

What Is the Past Perfect Tense?

Definition and Usage

The past perfect tense describes an action that was completed before another action or time in the past. It is formed with the auxiliary verb "had" followed by the past participle of the main verb.

Structure:

- Affirmative: Subject + had + past participle (e.g., She had finished her homework.)
- Negative: Subject + had not (hadn't) + past participle (e.g., They hadn't arrived yet.)
- Interrogative: Had + subject + past participle? (e.g., Had you seen that movie?)

Primary uses include:

- Indicating an action completed before a specific point in the past.
- Showing cause-and-effect relationships between different past events.
- Narrating stories or histories with a clear sequence.

Examples of Past Perfect Tense

- She had already left when I arrived.
- They had completed the project before the deadline.
- By the time the meeting started, he had prepared all the documents.
- We had lived in that city for ten years before moving abroad.

Constructing a Paragraph Using Past Perfect Tense

1. Planning Your Narrative or Explanation

Before writing a paragraph in past perfect tense, it is vital to plan the sequence of events. Identify which actions occurred first and which followed. This planning ensures logical flow and clarity.

Steps to plan:

- List the key past events you want to include.
- Arrange them chronologically, noting which happened first.
- Decide where to use past perfect tense to emphasize the earlier actions.

2. Using Past Perfect to Clarify Time Relationships

The past perfect sets the background for a story or explanation, establishing what had happened before another past event. It helps avoid confusion about the sequence.

Example:

After she had finished her work, she went out for a walk.

In this sentence, "had finished" clearly indicates that her work was completed before she went out.

3. Combining Past Perfect with Simple Past

Typically, a paragraph using past perfect tense includes a mixture of past perfect and simple past to depict the sequence of events.

Example:

They had already eaten dinner when we arrived. We decided to wait until they finished.

Here, "had already eaten" is past perfect, happening before "we arrived," which is simple past.

4. Structuring the Paragraph Effectively

To craft a well-organized paragraph using past perfect tense, follow this structure:

- Topic Sentence: Introduce the main idea or event.
- Supporting Sentences: Use past perfect to describe actions completed before the main event.
- Additional Details: Include context or consequences, often using simple past or other tenses.
- Concluding Sentence: Summarize or reflect on the sequence.

Example Paragraph:

Before the company launched its new product, the marketing team had conducted extensive research. They had analyzed customer feedback, studied competitors, and tested various advertisement strategies. By the time the campaign started, they had already identified the target audience and tailored their messaging accordingly. This preparation contributed significantly to the campaign's success.

Common Mistakes in Using Past Perfect in Paragraphs

Understanding common errors can help you avoid pitfalls and improve your writing.

1. Overusing Past Perfect

Using past perfect unnecessarily can clutter your writing. Reserve its use for actions that clearly occurred before other past actions.

Incorrect:

- She had went to the store and bought groceries. (Incorrect form: "had went" should be "had gone.")

Correct:

- She went to the store and bought groceries.

2. Confusing Past Perfect with Past Simple

Mixing these tenses without clarity can confuse the reader about the sequence of events.

Incorrect:

- I had breakfast, then I went to school.

Better:

- I had had breakfast before I went to school. (Use past perfect for the first action.)

3. Omitting the Past Perfect When Needed

Failing to use past perfect when necessary can distort the timeline.

Example:

- She arrived after he had left. (Correct)
- She arrived after he left. (Possible but less clear about the sequence)

Practical Tips for Writing Effective Paragraphs Using Past Perfect Tense

- Identify the timeline: Clearly determine which actions occurred first.
- Use past perfect for earlier actions: Employ it to set the background or sequence.
- Combine with simple past: Use simple past for subsequent actions.
- Maintain consistency: Keep verb tenses consistent to avoid confusion.
- Use time markers: Words like "already," "before," "by the time," "when," help clarify the sequence.

Examples of Effective Paragraphs

Example 1: Narrative of an Event

By the time the guests arrived, she had already prepared all the decorations. She had decorated the entire house, set up the tables, and arranged the flowers. When her friends knocked on the door, everything was ready, and she welcomed them with a smile. Her meticulous planning had paid off, making the celebration memorable.

Example 2: Historical Explanation

The explorers had discovered the island months before the scientific team arrived. They had documented the flora and fauna, set up temporary camps, and collected samples. When the researchers finally reached the site, they had a wealth of data to analyze, which contributed to groundbreaking ecological studies.

SEO Optimization Tips for Writing About Paragraphs Using Past Perfect Tense

To ensure your article reaches a wider audience, incorporate relevant SEO strategies:

- Use keywords naturally throughout the article, such as "past perfect tense," "how to write a paragraph using past perfect," "grammar tips for past perfect," and "examples of past perfect tense."
- Include descriptive headings with keywords.
- Maintain a clear and logical structure, making it easy for search engines to index your content.
- Use relevant internal and external links to authoritative grammar resources.
- Optimize meta descriptions and image alt texts if applicable.

Conclusion: Mastering Paragraphs Using Past Perfect Tense

Crafting well-structured paragraphs using past perfect tense is a vital skill for effective storytelling, academic writing, and professional communication. By understanding the grammatical rules, recognizing how to sequence events logically, and avoiding common mistakes, writers can produce clear, coherent, and engaging narratives. Remember to plan your narrative carefully, use past perfect to set the background, and combine it seamlessly with other tenses for smooth flow.

Practicing these techniques will enhance your command of English grammar and elevate your writing to a more professional level. Whether you're recounting past experiences, explaining historical events, or narrating stories, mastering the paragraph using past perfect tense will enable you to communicate with precision and clarity.

Start implementing these tips today and see your writing transform into compelling, well-structured narratives that captivate your audience!

Paragraph Using Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense, a fundamental aspect of English grammar, has long been an essential tool for writers and speakers aiming to express actions that had been completed before another past event. Its nuanced function allows for clarity and precision in storytelling, historical recounting, and detailed descriptions. This tense provides a way to establish a clear sequence of events, making narratives more coherent and engaging. Over the years, the use of the past perfect tense has evolved, influencing literature, journalism, academic writing, and everyday communication. In this article, we will explore the intricacies of the past perfect tense, its formation, usage, common pitfalls, and effective strategies for mastering it.

Understanding the Past Perfect Tense

Definition and Basic Structure

The past perfect tense is used to describe an action that had occurred before another action or point in the past. It is formed by combining the auxiliary verb *had* with the past participle of the main verb.

Structure:

- Affirmative: Subject + had + past participle (e.g., She had finished her homework.)
- Negative: Subject + had not (hadn't) + past participle (e.g., They hadn't arrived yet.)
- Interrogative: Had + subject + past participle? (e.g., Had you seen that movie?)

Formation Rules and Examples

The formation of the past perfect is straightforward but requires attention to verb forms. Regular verbs form the past participle by adding -ed, whereas irregular verbs have unique past participle forms.

Verb Type	Example Sentence	Past Participle
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Regular	I had walked to the park before it rained.	walked
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Irregular	She had written several letters before noon.	written
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Examples:

- They had left the house when I arrived.
- She had already eaten when the guests came.
- We had never seen such a beautiful sunset before that day.

Common Uses of the Past Perfect Tense

Expressing Completed Actions Before a Past Point

The primary use of the past perfect is to specify that an action was completed before another past event.

Example:

- By the time the movie started, we had already bought the tickets.

In Reported Speech and Indirect Statements

The past perfect is often used when reporting speech, especially when the original statement involved a past perfect tense.

Example:

- She said she had finished her project before the deadline.

In Conditional Sentences

Past perfect is common in third conditional sentences, indicating hypothetical situations in the past.

Example:

- If I had known about the traffic, I would have left earlier.

To Show Cause and Effect in Past Narratives

It helps to clarify cause-and-effect relationships in stories.

Example:

- He had forgotten his umbrella, so he got soaked.

Advantages of Using the Past Perfect Tense

Using the past perfect tense effectively enhances communication by adding clarity and depth. Here are some notable advantages:

- Clarifies sequence: It helps differentiate between two past actions, establishing which occurred first.
- Adds depth to storytelling: Creates a layered narrative, giving context to events.
- Improves coherence: Assists in maintaining logical flow in complex sentences and narratives.
- Enables precise reporting: Vital in academic and journalistic contexts for accurate recounting of events.

Challenges and Common Mistakes

Overuse or Misuse of the Past Perfect

One common error is overusing the past perfect where simple past would suffice, leading to clunky sentences.

Example of overuse:

- Incorrect: She had gone to the store, and then she had bought groceries.
- Correct: She went to the store and then bought groceries.

Confusing Past Perfect with Other Tenses

Learners often confuse the past perfect with the simple past or past continuous, leading to grammatical inaccuracies.

Incorrect:

- I had saw him yesterday.
- Correct: I saw him yesterday.

Tip: Remember that "had" + past participle is past perfect; "saw" is simple past.

Misapplication in Conditional Sentences

Using the wrong tense in conditionals can distort meaning.

Incorrect:

- If she had studied, she would pass the exam.
- Correct: If she had studied, she would have passed the exam.

Strategies to Master the Past Perfect Tense

Practice with Timeline Exercises

Creating timelines of events can help visualize the sequence and reinforce correct tense usage.

Tip: Map out events and identify which happened first, then practice forming sentences accordingly.

Engage in Reading and Analysis

Reading literature, news articles, and historical accounts that employ the past perfect can improve understanding and intuition.

Exercise: Highlight sentences with past perfect and analyze their function.

Writing and Revising

Regularly practice writing stories or recounts involving past events. Review and revise to ensure correct tense usage.

Use Grammar Tools and Resources

Leverage online grammar checkers, tutorials, and exercises dedicated to past perfect tense.

Examples in Literature and Media

Many authors and speakers have utilized the past perfect to craft compelling narratives.

Literary Examples:

- In Charles Dickens' works, past perfect often appears to set historical context.
- In memoirs, authors frequently use past perfect to recount prior experiences.

Media and Journalism:

- News reports often employ the past perfect when describing events leading up to a recent incident.

Conclusion

The past perfect tense, though seemingly simple in structure, plays a crucial role in conveying complex sequences of past actions. Its correct application enhances clarity, storytelling depth, and grammatical precision. While it can pose challenges for learners, consistent practice, mindful analysis, and contextual reading can significantly improve mastery. As language users continue to refine their understanding of this tense, their ability to narrate, report, and analyze past events with nuance and accuracy will undoubtedly strengthen. Embracing the past perfect as a vital grammatical tool opens up richer ways to communicate the layered tapestry of human experiences and histories.

In summary, mastering the past perfect tense involves understanding its formation, recognizing its primary functions, avoiding common pitfalls, and applying it effectively in various contexts. Whether in academic writing, storytelling, or everyday conversation, the past perfect remains a powerful means to articulate the sequence and significance of past events with clarity and sophistication.

Question What is the past perfect tense used for in a paragraph? The past perfect tense is used in a paragraph to show that an action was completed before another past action or point in time. How can I identify a paragraph that uses the past perfect tense? Look for verbs that are in the form of had + past participle, which indicate actions completed before other past events within the paragraph. Why is it important to use past perfect tense correctly in a paragraph? Using past perfect correctly helps clarify the sequence of events, making the timeline of actions clear and improving the coherence of the paragraph. Can you give an example of a paragraph using the past perfect tense? Sure. 'She had finished her homework before her friends arrived. By the time I called, she had already left the house.' What are common mistakes to avoid when using past perfect tense in a paragraph? Common mistakes include using the past perfect with simple past instead of when it's necessary, or omitting 'had' and just using the past participle. How does the past perfect tense improve storytelling in a paragraph? It provides clarity on the sequence of events, helping the reader understand what happened first and how events are connected chronologically. Is it necessary to use past perfect tense in all past narratives? No, it's only necessary when you want to emphasize that one past action occurred before another past action. How do I change a simple past sentence into a past perfect sentence? Add 'had' before the past participle of the verb. For example, 'She finished her work' becomes 'She had finished her work.' What are some signal words that indicate the use of past perfect in a paragraph? Words like 'before', 'by the time', 'already', and 'when' often signal the need for past perfect tense. Can past perfect tense be used in both formal and informal writing within a paragraph? Yes, past perfect tense can be used in both contexts to clarify the sequence of events, although it is more common in formal writing.

Related keywords: past perfect tense, paragraph writing, grammatical structure, writing tips, tense usage, English grammar, sentence construction, language learning, writing skills, tense consistency

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