

The Past Perfect: With Adverbs of Time

USE: The past perfect tells us that something happened in the past, before the event in the past that we are focusing on. The past perfect makes the sequence of events clear.

Example: *I had just been to the grocery store when he arrived.* (First I went to the grocery store. Second, he arrived.)

We can also use the words “Before” and “After” to indicate which event happened first.

Example: *I went to the grocery store before he arrived.*

We use the past perfect and “Before” and “After” together if we want to:

- Emphasize that the first action was fully completed before the second one started.

Example: *I had been to the grocery before he arrived.*

- Indicate a strong connection between the two events.

Example: *I had everything we needed for dinner. I had been to the grocery store before he arrived.*

Another word that can be used to place events in time is “previously”.

Example: *Previously, he had always played the guitar.*

Fill in the blanks below with either the PAST PERFECT or the SIMPLE PAST. Make sure the order of events is clear and that the emphasis is appropriate. There may be more than one possible answer. Be prepared to justify YOUR choice.

Did you know that buttons were invented 3500 years BEFORE buttonholes? Before buttonholes, people _____ (use) buttons for decoration. They _____ (made) buttons from sea shells, bone, pottery, wood and metal. Meanwhile, they _____ (fasten) clothes with ties and pins.

The Greeks and Romans _____ (be) the first to use buttons to fasten their clothes. They _____ (make) a loop to put the button through. In Europe people _____ (use) ties to fasten their clothes. But in the Middle Ages, tight clothing _____ (become) fashionable among the rich and powerful. In the 13th and 14th centuries, dressmakers _____ (start) to cut holes in the fabric. They _____ (reinforce) the holes with stitches to make the first buttonholes.

Intermediate 3 – Exercise 28 – The Past Perfect: With Adverbs of Time

Buttons _____ (be) still an expensive luxury. Rich people _____ (compete) to wear the most beautiful buttons made of ivory, glass, precious metals and gems. One king of France _____ (have) a suit with 13,400 buttons.

By the 17th century this _____ (change). Puritans _____ (condemn) the button as ungodly. After the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, this _____ (change) again. Manufacturers _____ (produce) buttons en masse from sheets of metal. Buttons _____ (become) cheap and widely available. Next, manufacturers _____ (made) buttons from plastic. Buttons _____ (become) even cheaper. Today, we _____ (have) buttons on almost all of our clothing.