

7.1.5 Past Perfect

Construction: The *grammatical construction* of *past perfect* tense is:

Had + past participle (refer to section 2.2.5 for *participles*)

For example: *had come, had done, had revealed, had studied* etc.

Past perfect tense should be used in the following scenarios:

- Scenario 1: An event that happened at *some point* “before” another event or time in the past -**
This represents the most common scenario of *past perfect* tense. This is used to express the scenario that an event happened at *some point* (expressed as *past perfect*, depicted by the *circle* in the illustration below) “before” *another event* (expressed as *simple past*, depicted by the *star* in the illustration below) in the past, or “before” *another time* (depicted by the *star* in the illustration below).



For example:

Michelle had already left for school by the time Peter came to pick her up.

- The event of Michelle leaving for school (expressed as *past perfect*) happened at *some time* “before” *another event* (in this case, Peter coming to pick her up, expressed as *simple past*).

By 2012, Amazon had established leadership position in the e-tailing business.

- The event of Amazon establishing leadership position in the e-tailing business happened at *some time* “before” *another time* (in this case, 1945).

James realized his mistake, but the damage had been done.

- The event of damage having been done (expressed as *past perfect*) happened at *some time* “before” *another event* (in this case, James realizing his mistake, expressed as *simple past*).

A sentence based on official question (#124, OG-13: *She was less successful after she had emigrated...*).

Less popular in the latter part of her career than she was in the initial years, Elizabeth Taylor was born in a northwestern suburb of London and went on to become one of the most famous film stars.

Analysis: As per the sentence, two different phases of Elizabeth Taylor’s life are being discussed: Latter part of her career and initial years. Hence the *earlier* of these two phases (*initial years*) should be in *past perfect* (she *had been*), and not in *simple past* (she *was*). So, the correct sentence is:

Less popular in the latter part of her career than she had been in the initial years, Elizabeth Taylor was born in a northwestern suburb of London and went on to become one of the most famous film stars.