

Le past perfect continuous (I had been playing...)

Le past perfect continuous (ou past perfect continu) est aussi appelé past perfect progressive ou past perfect en be+ing.

- *When I went outside this morning the ground was wet. It **had been raining**.*
- = *Quand je suis sorti ce matin le sol était mouillé. Il avait plu.*
- *We **had been playing** football for ten minutes when it started to rain.*
- = *Nous jouions au football depuis dix minutes quand il s'est mit à pleuvoir.*

1/ Formation

sujet + had been + base verbale + ing

	Affirmative	Négative	Question
I / you / he / she / we / you / they	... had been playing	... had not (hadn't) been playing	Had ... been playing ?

- (+) *She **had been travelling** for one month when she finally arrived in Mexico.*
- (?) ***Had she been travelling** for one month when she finally arrived in Mexico ?*
- (-) *She **had not been travelling** for one month when she finally arrived in Mexico.*

2/ Utilisation

* **Quelque chose qui a commencé au passé et a continué jusqu'à une autre action ou événement passé (en combinaison avec le past simple):**

- *Carol **had been saving** money for more than a year before she left for Canada.*
- *How long **had you been studying** Japanese before you moved to Osaka ?*
- *How long **had he been watching** TV when he felt asleep ?*
- *We **had been trying** to open the door for five minutes when Peter found the key.*
- *Bruce wanted to walk because he **had been sitting** all day at work.*
- *How long **had you been waiting** before the bus arrived ?*
- *They **had been talking** for over an hour before Kat arrived.*
- *Phil **had been working** at that restaurant for two years when it went out of business.*

* **La cause et l'effet de quelque chose au passé**

On peut voir le résultat de quelque chose qui s'est passé (on peut utiliser 'because')

- *Tom was very tired. He **had been running**.*
- = *Tom was tired because he **had been running**.*
- *Tina gained weight because she **had been eating** too much.*
- *Somebody **had been smoking**. I could smell tobacco.*
- *I was disappointed when she canceled the trip. I **had been looking forward** to spend some time with her.*
- *Danny was crying because he **had been fighting** with his brother.*

* **le discours indirect**

- *'I was working late in the garage last night.' => Nathan told them he **had been working** late in the garage last night.*
- *'I have been partying all night.' => Carol said she **had been partying** all night.*

3/ Notes

Past Continuous ou Past Perfect Continuous ?

Avec le *past perfect continuous*, la durée de l'action a davantage d'importance, tandis qu'avec le *past continuous* c'est l'action en elle-même qui a le plus d'importance.

Toutefois, si on ne précise pas la durée (for 45 minutes, for one week, since friday...) de nombreux anglophones préfèrent utiliser le *past continuous*.

- *Past continuous => We were playing tennis when it started raining.*

Au moment où nous jouions au tennis il a commencé à pleuvoir. L'accent est mis sur ce que nous faisons au moment où il a commencé à pleuvoir (c'est-à-dire la partie de tennis).

- *Past perfect continuous => We had been playing tennis (for 45 minutes) when it started raining.*

Nous jouions au tennis depuis un certain moment, où on venait juste d'arrêter, quand il a commencé à pleuvoir. L'accent est mis sur la durée de l'action (ici la partie de tennis).

Certains verbes ne prennent pas la forme continue:

Il s'agit principalement de verbes abstraits ou liés à un état mental

like / love / hate / prefer / need / want / belong / contain / fit / consist / seem / realise / know / believe / imagine / understand / remember

- *Chris had been wanting to travel around the world before he died. FAUX*
- *Chris had wanted to travel around the world before he died. OK*

Il n'y a pas de past perfect continu pour le verbe être (to be):

Had been being est simplement remplacé par *had been*

- *Sam had been being very happy because he won to the lottery.*

La place des adverbes

Les adverbes se placent avant *been*: always, only, just, never, ever, still, etc.

- *He had just been waiting there for two minutes when the train arrived.*
- *Had he just been waiting there for two minutes when the train arrived ?*