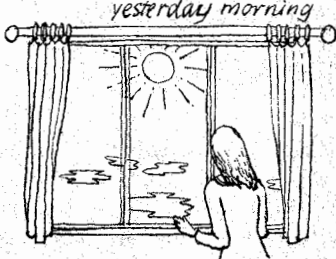


UNIT 23

Past perfect continuous (I had been doing)

a) Study this example situation:



Yesterday morning I got up and looked out of the window. The sun was shining but the ground was very wet.

It had been raining.

It wasn't raining when I looked out of the window; the sun was shining. But it **had been raining**. That's why the ground was wet.

Had been raining is the *past perfect continuous* tense:
I/he/she (etc.) **had** (= I'd / he'd / she'd etc.) **been doing**

Here are some more examples:

- When the boys came into the house, their clothes were dirty, their hair was untidy and one had a black eye. They **had been fighting**.
- I was very tired when I arrived home. I'd **been working** hard all day.

b) You can use the past perfect continuous to say how long something had been happening before something else happened:

- The football match had to be stopped. They **had been playing** for half an hour when there was a terrible storm.
- Ken **had been smoking** for 30 years when he finally gave it up.

c) The past perfect continuous (**I had been doing**) is the past of the present perfect continuous (**I have been doing**). Compare:

<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>
How long have you been waiting? (until now)	How long had you been waiting when the bus finally came?
He's out of breath. He has been running.	He was out of breath. He had been running.

d) Compare the past perfect continuous (**I had been doing**) and the past continuous (**I was doing**):

- When I looked out of the window, it **had been raining**. (= It wasn't raining when I looked out; it had stopped.)
- When I looked out of the window, it **was raining**. (= Rain was falling at the time I looked out.)

e) Some verbs (for example **know**) cannot be used in the continuous form. See Unit 3b for a list of these verbs.

For the past perfect simple see Unit 22.

UNIT 23 Exercises

23.1 *In this exercise you have to read a situation and then write a sentence.*

Example: The two boys came into the house. One had a black eye and the other had a cut lip. (they / fight) They had been fighting.

- 1 Tom was watching television. He was feeling very tired.
(he / study / hard all day) He
 - 2 When I walked into the room, it was empty. But there was a smell of cigarettes.
(somebody / smoke / in the room) Somebody
 - 3 When Mary came back from the beach, she looked very red from the sun.
(she / lie / in the sun too long)
 - 4 The two boys came into the house. They had a football and they were both very tired.
(they / play / football)
 - 5 Ann woke up in the middle of the night. She was frightened and she didn't know where she was. (she / dream)
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23.2 *In this exercise you have to read a situation and then write a sentence.*

Example: We began playing football. After half an hour there was a terrible storm.
We had been playing for half an hour when there was a terrible storm.

- 1 The orchestra began playing at the concert. After about ten minutes a man in the audience suddenly began shouting.
The orchestra for about ten minutes when
 - 2 I had arranged to meet Tom in a restaurant. I arrived and began waiting. After 20 minutes I realised that I had come to the wrong restaurant.
I when I
 - 3 Mr and Mrs Jenkins went to live in the south of France. Six months later Mr Jenkins died. They when
-

23.3 *Put the verb into the correct form, past perfect continuous (I had been doing) or past continuous (I was doing).*

Examples: Tom was leaning against the wall, out of breath. He had been running (run).
I tried to catch Tom but I couldn't. He was running (run) very fast.

- 1 Jim was on his hands and knees on the floor. He (look) for his cigarette lighter.
- 2 We (walk) along the road for about 20 minutes when a car stopped and the driver offered us a lift.
- 3 When I arrived, everyone was sitting round the table with their mouths full. They (eat).
- 4 When I arrived, everyone was sitting round the table and talking. Their mouths were empty but their stomachs were full. They (eat).
- 5 When I arrived, Ann (wait) for me. She was rather annoyed with me because I was late and she (wait) for a very long time.