



GRAMMAR PRACTICE

Past Perfect in Arts and Entertainment

Arts, Music and Entertainment | Earlier past events | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner. You may already use this grammar without noticing it.

No.	Question
1	Describe a film you watched after someone had recommended it.
2	Have you ever arrived after a concert had started?
3	What had you heard about a book before you read it?
4	Describe a festival or show that had already sold out.

2. Grammar in context

Read the text. The bold phrases show the grammar used in a natural topic context.

A Disappointing Evening at the Cinema

My friends and I went to see a film that our teacher **had recommended**. By the time we arrived, the best seats **had already been taken**, so we had to sit near the front.

I was surprised because I **had read** several positive reviews before buying the ticket. The trailer **had made** the film look exciting, but the story was slower than expected.

After the film ended, we realised that many people **had left** before the final scene. Still, the music was excellent, and the actors **had worked** hard to create a believable world.

3. Notice the pattern

Use the past perfect to show that one past action happened before another past action.

Use	Form / signal	Example
Form	had + past participle	I had read the reviews.
Earlier past	before another past event	The film had started when we arrived.
Already	had already + past participle	The seats had already been taken.
By the time	past perfect + past simple	By the time we arrived, the show had started.

4. Build accurate sentences

Complete each sentence using the grammar focus. Then write two examples of your own.

No.	Prompt	Use	Your answer
1	By the time we arrived, the concert / start.	had	
2	I watched the film because my friend / recommend / it.	had	
3	The festival / sell out / before we bought tickets.	had	
4	She understood the story because she / read / the book.	had	

1. _____

2. _____

5. Use it in exam answers

Complete the tasks using the grammar focus naturally.

Task	What to do
Speaking	Tell a story about a show, film or event using the past perfect.
Writing	Write a short review paragraph explaining what had happened before an entertainment event.
Reading	Underline past perfect forms in the context text and identify the later past event.

6. Common mistakes

Correct the mistakes.

No.	Mistake	Your correction
1	By the time we arrived, the film started already.	
2	I had watched the film because my friend recommended it yesterday.	
3	The tickets had sell out.	
4	She understand because she had read the book.	

7. Topic discussion questions

Use these for pair work, small-group discussion, or speaking-test warm-up practice.

1. Have you ever missed the beginning of a film or event?
2. Do reviews affect whether you choose a film, book or concert?
3. What had you heard about a famous film before watching it?
4. Why do some events sell out quickly?

Past Perfect in Arts and Entertainment

4. Build accurate sentences

1. By the time we arrived, the concert had started.
2. I watched the film because my friend had recommended it.
3. The festival had sold out before we bought tickets.
4. She understood the story because she had read the book.

Own answers will vary. Check that the grammar focus is accurate and natural.

6. Common mistakes

1. By the time we arrived, the film had already started.
2. I watched the film because my friend had recommended it.
3. The tickets had sold out.
4. She understood because she had read the book.

Notes for checking

1. Form: had + past participle - I had read the reviews.
2. Earlier past: before another past event - The film had started when we arrived.
3. Already: had already + past participle - The seats had already been taken.
4. By the time: past perfect + past simple - By the time we arrived, the show had started.