

1. Timeline Relay Race



Focus: Past Perfect vs. Past Simple

Best for: Teams of 3–5

Materials: Event cards, board, magnets/tape

How to play:

Prepare pairs of past events, for example:

- *The movie started.*
- *We arrived at the cinema.*
- *She finished her homework.*
- *Her friend called her.*
- *The thief escaped.*
- *The police arrived.*

Divide the class into teams. Put all the event cards on a table at the opposite side of the classroom.

One student from each team runs to the table, chooses **two logically connected events**, runs back, and puts them on the board in chronological order.

The team must then make one correct sentence:

The movie had started before we arrived at the cinema.

or:

When the police arrived, the thief had already escaped.

If the **timeline + grammar + meaning** are all correct, the team gets 3 points.

Challenge: Give them only **15 seconds** to decide which event happened first.

2. 🕵️ The Crime Scene Mystery



Focus: Past Perfect for explaining earlier events

Best for: Speaking + group problem-solving

Situation:

Tell the class:

“Someone broke into the school last night. When the principal arrived this morning, several strange things had happened.”

Prepare clues:

- The window was broken.
- The computer was missing.
- There were muddy footprints.
- The classroom door was open.
- Someone had eaten the teacher’s cake!
- A chair was lying on the floor.
- The security camera was off.

Teams become **detective agencies**.

They have 5 minutes to reconstruct what happened **before the principal arrived**.

They might say:

Someone had broken the window before they entered the classroom.

The thief had turned off the security camera.

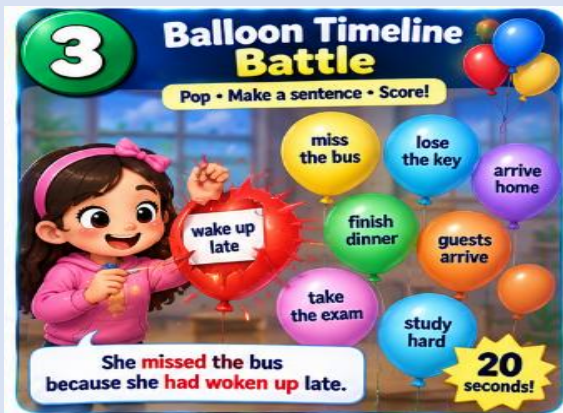
Someone had eaten the cake before they escaped.

The thief had left muddy footprints before the cleaner arrived.

Winning condition: Each team presents its theory. Give points for:

- correct Past Perfect
- logical sequence
- creativity
- number of connected clues

3. 🎈 Balloon Timeline Battle



Focus: Building Past Perfect sentences quickly

Best for: High-energy classes

Materials: Balloons + small event cards

Put one event card inside each balloon before inflating it.

Examples:

miss the bus

wake up late

lose the key

arrive home

finish dinner

guests arrive

study hard

take the exam

Divide students into teams.

A player runs to the balloons, chooses one, pops it and reads the event. Then another player pops a second balloon.

The team has **20 seconds** to connect the two events using Past Perfect + Past Simple.

For example:

wake up late + miss the bus

She missed the bus because she had woken up late.

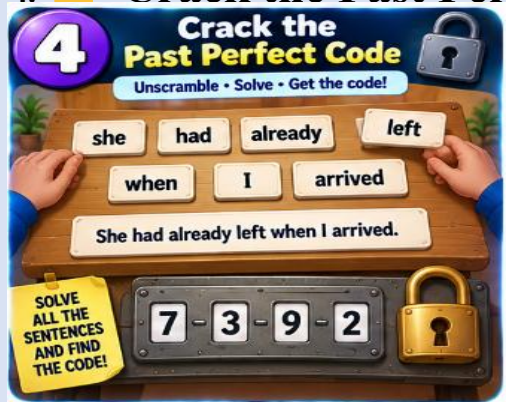
finish dinner + guests arrive

We had finished dinner before the guests arrived.

Correct sentence = 2 points.

Correct sentence + *already/just/never/by the time* = 3 points.

4. Crack the Past Perfect Code



Focus: Form and word order

Best for: Grammar accuracy

Give each team scrambled sentences:

already / had / left / when / I / arrived / she

Students must physically arrange word cards:

She had already left when I arrived.

Each correct sentence gives them a **number or letter**.

Example:

1. **had / before / eaten / arrived / we / they** → code 7

2. **had / by the time / left / started / it / raining / we** → code 3

After solving 5–6 sentences, they get a final code such as:

7 – 3 – 9 – 2

The first team to bring you the correct secret code wins.

Advanced version: Add unnecessary words as distractors.

5. 🏃 Before or After? Corner Race



Focus: Understanding chronological order

Best for: Whole-class movement

Put two signs on opposite classroom walls:

HAPPENED FIRST

HAPPENED SECOND

Read:

“When Jack arrived at the station, the train had left.”

Then shout:

“THE TRAIN LEFT!”

Students race to **HAPPENED FIRST**.

Then:

“JACK ARRIVED!”

They race to **HAPPENED SECOND**.

After several rounds, stop giving complete sentences. Give only two events:

Emma ate breakfast.

Emma went to school.

Students decide the order and then produce:

Emma had eaten breakfast before she went to school.

Anyone who chooses the wrong side loses one point.

6. 🧨 Past Perfect Bomb



Focus: Fast oral production

Materials: Ball or toy bomb + timer/music

Students stand in a circle.

Give the beginning:

“When I got to school...”

Pass the “bomb” quickly around the circle while music plays.

When the music stops, the student holding it must immediately complete the sentence:

“...the lesson had already started.”

Next round:

“When my mother came home...”

Possible answer:

“...I had already cleaned my room.”

They have **5 seconds**.

If they cannot answer, they receive a challenge card.

Challenge cards:

Use **already**.

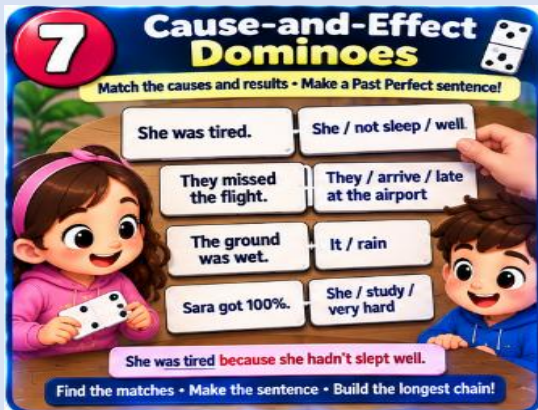
Use **never**.

Use **just**.

Use **before**.

Use **by the time**.

7. ✖ Cause-and-Effect Dominoes



Focus: Connecting earlier causes with later results

Create domino-style cards.

One half contains a **result**:

She was tired.

Another contains an earlier **cause**:

She / not sleep / well

Students find matching cards and create:

She was tired because she hadn't slept well.

Other combinations:

He was hungry. → He hadn't eaten breakfast.

They missed the flight. → They had arrived at the airport late.

The ground was wet. → It had rained.

Sara got 100%. → She had studied very hard.

The first group to build a complete grammatical domino chain wins.

8. 📷 What Had Happened Here?



Focus: Creative speaking and inference

Show students a strange situation:

- a broken window
- an empty birthday cake plate
- a wet floor
- a sleeping student
- an overturned chair
- an angry teacher

Ask:

“What had happened before this picture was taken?”

Teams get 60 seconds to invent as many explanations as possible:

Someone had broken the window.

The children had eaten the cake.

Someone had spilled some water.

The student had stayed up all night.

Then teams compare theories.

Bonus: Students must connect their ideas into one story rather than producing isolated sentences.

9. 🎲 Past Perfect Story Dice



Focus: Freer speaking

Materials: 3 dice

Assign each die a purpose:

Die 1 – Character

1. teacher
2. thief
3. astronaut
4. student
5. detective
6. tourist

Die 2 – Situation

1. missed a flight
2. lost something
3. arrived late
4. got angry
5. was surprised
6. got lost

Die 3 – Connector

1. because
2. before
3. after
4. by the time
5. already
6. never

A student rolls all three.

Example:

detective + was surprised + by the time

They might say:

By the time the detective entered the room, someone had removed all the evidence.
Award extra points for longer, logical stories.

10. 🚩 Grammar Auction



Focus: Error detection

Best for: More advanced students

Give each team **\$1,000 imaginary money**.

Display sentences:

- A. When I arrived, she had left.
- B. When I had arrived, she left already.
- C. By the time we got there, the shop had closed.
- D. He had went home before I called him.
- E. She was tired because she hadn't slept well.

Teams “buy” sentences they believe are grammatically correct.

For example:

Team A: “\$300 on sentence C!”

Reveal the answers after all bids.

Correct sentence → they earn the amount.

Incorrect sentence → they lose the amount.

This becomes especially competitive when teams start bluffing to make other teams bid on incorrect sentences.

11. 🧠 Ten-Second Memory Crime Scene



Focus: Past Perfect + memory

Place 10–15 objects on a desk.

Students look at them for **10 seconds**.

Then students close their eyes. Secretly change several things:

- remove a pen
- open a book
- move the ruler
- eat/remove a candy
- turn over a card

Students open their eyes.

Ask:

“What had happened while your eyes were closed?”

Teams report:

Someone had taken the pen.

Someone had opened the book.

The teacher had moved the ruler.

Someone had eaten the candy.

Hard mode: Students cannot repeat another team's sentence.

12. 🏆 Past Perfect Survival Race



Focus: Full mastery

Best for: End-of-lesson competition

Create 5 stations around the classroom:

Station 1 – Fix It

Correct an incorrect Past Perfect sentence.

Station 2 – Build It

Arrange scrambled words.

Station 3 – Explain It

Explain a situation using *because* + *Past Perfect*.

Station 4 – Timeline It

Put three events in chronological order.

Station 5 – Speak It

Create a 20-second story using at least two Past Perfect sentences.

Teams rotate through the stations.

Example final challenge:

wake up → miss bus → arrive late → teacher get angry

Students could produce:

Tom arrived late because he had missed the bus. He had missed the bus because he had woken up late. By the time he arrived at school, the lesson had already started.

Give **1 point for accuracy, 1 for speed, 1 for vocabulary, and 1 for teamwork** at each station.

★ Useful Language to Put on the Board

Past Perfect:

Subject + had + past participle

Useful language:

before – after – when – by the time – because – already – just – never – yet

Examples:

By the time we arrived, the movie **had already started**.

She was tired **because she hadn't slept** well.

They **had just finished** dinner when the phone rang.
He **had never seen** snow before he moved to Canada.
After they **had finished** the project, they went home