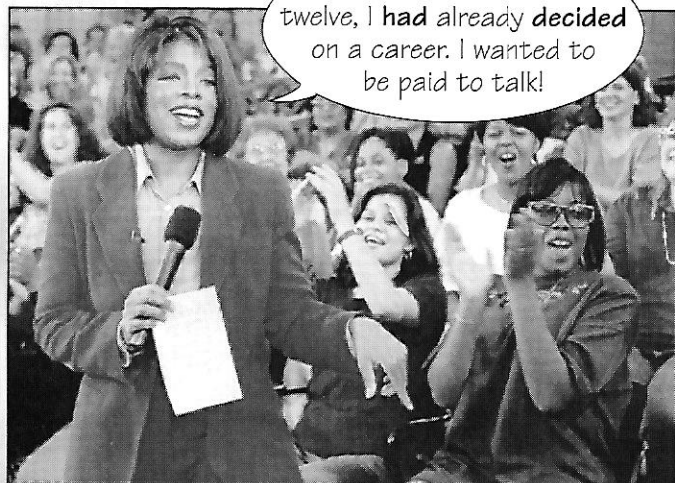


# UNIT 17

## Past Perfect



Talk-show host Oprah Winfrey with her TV audience.

### CHECK POINT

Check the event that happened first.

- ☐ Oprah turned twelve.  
☐ Oprah decided on a career.

#### CHART CHECK 1

Circle T (True) or F (False).

**T F** The past perfect uses **had** for all subjects.

| STATEMENTS            |           |                 |          |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------|
| SUBJECT               | HAD (NOT) | PAST PARTICIPLE |          |
| I/He/She/We/You*/They | had (not) | decided         | by then. |
| It                    |           | been            | easy.    |

\*You is both singular and plural.

#### CHART CHECK 2

Check the correct answer.

In past perfect questions, where does **had** go?

- ☐ before the subject  
☐ after the subject

| YES/NO QUESTIONS |         |                 |          |
|------------------|---------|-----------------|----------|
| HAD              | SUBJECT | PAST PARTICIPLE |          |
| Had              | she     | decided         | by then? |
|                  | it      | been            | easy?    |

| SHORT ANSWERS |     |      |          |     |         |
|---------------|-----|------|----------|-----|---------|
| AFFIRMATIVE   |     |      | NEGATIVE |     |         |
| Yes,          | she | had. | No,      | she | hadn't. |
|               | it  |      |          | it  |         |

| WH- QUESTIONS |     |         |                 |                         |
|---------------|-----|---------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| WH- WORD      | HAD | SUBJECT | PAST PARTICIPLE |                         |
| Why           | had | she     | decided         | to be a talk-show host? |
|               |     | it      | been            | easy?                   |

## EXPRESS CHECK

Complete this conversation with the verb **arrive**.

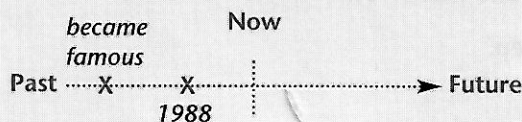
A: Had she \_\_\_\_\_ by 9:00?

B: No, she \_\_\_\_\_.

## Grammar Explanations

## Examples

1. Use the **past perfect** to show that something happened before a specific time in the past.



- By 1988 Oprah Winfrey **had become** famous.
- It was 1985. She **had** already **been** in a Hollywood film.

2. The **past perfect** always shows a relationship with another past event.

Use the **past perfect** for the earlier event. Use the **simple past** tense for the later event.

- **BE CAREFUL!** In these sentences with **when**, notice the difference in meaning between the **simple past** tense and the **past perfect**.

- In 1990 Oprah **invited** Matt on the show. He **had been** an author for two years. (*He was an author before 1990.*)
- By the time Jill **got** home, "The Oprah Winfrey Show" **had finished**.
- **When** the show ended, she **left**. (*First the show ended. Then she left.*)
- **When** the show ended, she **had left**. (*First she left. Then the show ended.*)

3. **Already, yet, ever, and never** are often used with the **past perfect** to emphasize the event which occurred first.

- I saw *The Color Purple* last night. I **had never seen** it before.
- Jason **had already seen** it.

4. When the time relationship between two past events is clear, you can use the **simple past tense for both events**. The meaning is usually clear when you use **after, before, or as soon as** to connect the events.

- **After** Oprah **had appeared** in *The Color Purple*, she **got** a part in another movie.
- OR
- **After** Oprah **appeared** in *The Color Purple*, she **got** a part in another movie.

5. We often use the **past perfect** with **by** (a certain time).

- **By 1966** Oprah **had decided** on a career.



|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 7:00 A.M. | Arrive at studio                              |
| 8:00      | Review day's schedule                         |
| 11:00     | Discuss future shows with assistant producers |
| 2:00 P.M. | Hair and makeup                               |
| 2:30      | Meet the day's guests                         |
| 3:00      | Tape the show                                 |
| 4:30      | Work out with trainer                         |

- A:** \_\_\_\_\_ with his trainer that day? **B:** \_\_\_\_\_

Oprah Winfrey is an amazing person! By the time she was twelve, she <sup>had</sup> ~~has~~-already decided on a career. Not long afterward, she got her first radio job. Although she hadn't have any experience, she became a news reporter. When she got her own TV talk show, she has already acted in a major Hollywood movie. By the late 1980s "Oprah Winfrey" had become a household word. Then in 1994 she decided to improve the quality of talk-show themes. She also made a personal change. She had always had a weight problem, but in 1995 TV viewers saw a new Winfrey. She had lost almost ninety pounds as a result of dieting and working out. She had also compete in a marathon. She has really been an inspiration to many people.