

DIALOGUE WITH THE PAST PERFECT SIMPLE TENSE

[Rachel and Takondwa](#) are best friends. They go to the same secondary school and they are in the same class. Today, we find them at Takondwa's house. Her mother and grandmother are there. They talk about life in general.

Takondwa's mum: Welcome, welcome Rachel! Come in. Takondwa just arrived from the market. She had gone there to buy some mangoes for you.

Rachel: Thank you Auntie! Really? Takondwa's crazy. Did she really do that? Takondwa! Where are you?

Takondwa: I'm here! Is that Rachel?

Rachel: Yes, it's me. Is it true that you went to the market to get some mangoes for me?

Takondwa: Yes, I did! I found these juicy mangoes. You'll love them.

Rachel: Wow, those are huge! I can't wait to have one. Thanks Takondwa! Now I understand because when I called your landline, no one answered. Maybe you'd already left and no one was at home then.

Takondwa's grandmother: I was here but you know with us old people. My ears are getting deafer and deafer by the day. I did not hear anything. Takondwa had told me before she left that you might call. I completely forgot. My memory is gone too. Old people will always be old people.

Rachel: *Agogo*, you look younger and younger. You're a beautiful woman on top of that.

Soon, you will be competing with us. We'll be no match for your beauty!

Takondwa's grandmother: *Ha, ha, ha* Rachel. You are kind my granddaughter. Your parents did a good job raising you. Until now, I thought my poor old ears had heard all they had to hear but some things will never cease to surprise me. Look at this young girl in her prime talking about youth and beauty to me. How can I look young and beautiful with these wrinkles?

ENGLISH GRAMMAR: THE PAST PERFECT

AFFIRMATIVE FORM (+)

FULL FORM	SHORT FORM
I had won.	I'd won.
You had won.	You'd won.
He had won.	He'd won.
She had won.	She'd won.
We had won.	We'd won.
You had won.	You'd won.
They had won.	They'd won.

NEGATIVE FORM (-)

FULL FORM	SHORT FORM
I had not eaten.	I hadn't eaten.
You had not played.	You hadn't played.
He/she/it had not run.	He/She/It hadn't run.
We had not sung.	We hadn't sung.
You had not gone.	You hadn't gone.
They had not sat.	They hadn't sat.

INTERROGATIVE FORM (?)

YES/NO QUESTIONS

I
you
he
she
Had it **started?**
we
you
they

WH-QUESTIONS

What had I **started?**
How long had you **done** that?
Where had he **been?**
Who had **seen** her?
How had we **faired** so far?
How often had you **played?**
Why had they **written?**

REGULAR VERBS

Arrive Arrived	Slice Sliced
Start Started	Want Wanted
Play Played	Stay Stayed
Ban Banned	Plan Planned
Stop Stopped	Skip Skipped
Marry Married	Try Tried

IRREGULAR VERBS

Make Made	Sit Sat
Have Had	Stand Stood
Be Been	Buy Bought
Do Done	Teach Taught
Get Got	Speak Spoken
Run Run	Write Written

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Rachel: It's true *agogo*, you're becoming a threat. All the boys' admiring looks will go towards you. Isn't it true Takondwa?

Takondwa: It's true Rachel.

Takondwa's grandmother: *Ha, ha, ha.* You girls will kill me with your jokes. You are too naughty.

Rachel: By the way Takondwa, take your mobile phone with you when you go out. I called you so many times. I was worried that you'd forgotten about our meeting.

Takondwa: No, I didn't forget. I just didn't want you to come to our place and have nothing to eat.

Rachel: All right, I understand.

Takondwa's mum: How is your mother Rachel?

Rachel: She's fine but she isn't at home right now. She went to our home village yesterday.

Takondwa's mum: Why?

Rachel: I don't know exactly. She'd received a phone call from her mother prior to her departure. I think she went there to discuss some things about my sister's upcoming wedding.

Takondwa: Your sister's getting married? I didn't know that!

Rachel: She is and she's so excited. She has known her future husband for quite some time now.

THE PAST PERFECT

AFFIRMATIVE FORM (FULL AND SHORT FORMS)							
I	You	He	She	It	We	You	They
had tried	had tried	had tried			had tried		
'd tried	'd tried	'd tried			'd tried		

NEGATIVE FORM (FULL AND SHORT FORMS)							
I	You	He	She	It	We	You	They
had not tried	had not tried	had not tried			had not tried		
hadn't tried	hadn't tried	hadn't tried			hadn't tried		

INTERROGATIVE FORM							
Had							
I	you	he	she	it	we	you	they
tried...?							

Takondwa: George's her fiancé, right? He's such a handsome and responsible young man.

Rachel: Yes, he is. He'd been her classmate before they started going out. He'd offered to help her with her homework so many times that she started to suspect that he wanted to be her boyfriend.

Takondwa's grandmother: Is that what you do nowadays? In my time, the boy had to go to his uncle first and express his wishes. He couldn't come to me directly. Only our uncles could talk first.

Takondwa: Is that how you got married *agogo*?

Takondwa's grandmother: Yes! They took me to my husband's house and that's how I started my married life. I had never even seen the boy before!

Rachel: What? You had never met your husband before you got married to him?

Takondwa's grandmother: I knew his character of course. He came from a very respectable family with good manners. I knew that he did not drink alcohol and that he had never been married before. He was no skirt chaser of course! I also knew that he had bought a farm just to welcome his new bride. He was serious about marriage.

Rachel: Really *agogo*? You were very lucky then. I don't know if I can ask this question. I don't want to offend you. How old was he?

Takondwa's grandmother: He was just three years older than I was. *Ha, ha, ha*, you young girls. Do not think that the past was all about marrying old shrivelled men. Most of my friends married people of the same age. Our past was perfect, I tell you. Nowadays, people get married for money and I do not know what to say about that. Look for character, girls. Character is what counts.

Rachel: Was he handsome? I mean, it's important that the person looks good. I don't want to marry an ugly person *agogo*. Would you have married your husband if he had been repulsive?

Takondwa's grandmother: I do not know how to answer your question. I have no idea what I would have done if I had discovered that he looked like the bottom of his feet. Fortunately, he was good-looking and he knew how to dress well. You should have seen him with his blue suit when he went to church. He used to be admired so much! Aand...you should have seen us when we went to visit my parents one year after we had started living together. He had put on a double-breasted black suit and my white dress was absolutely stunning!

Takondwa: The photos are really pretty Rachel and grandfather's still very good-looking.

He's such a charmer.

Takondwa's mother: Ha, ha, ha. Yes, that is true. My father has always known how to take care of himself. he is a true gentleman.

THE PAST PERFECT

AFFIRMATIVE FORM (+)

FULL FORM	SHORT FORM
I had eaten	I 'd eaten
You had eaten	You 'd eaten
He had eaten	He 'd eaten
She had eaten	She 'd eaten
It had eaten	It 'd eaten
We had eaten	We 'd eaten
You had eaten	You 'd eaten
They had eaten	They 'd eaten

NEGATIVE FORM (-)

FULL FORM	SHORT FORM
I had not eaten	I hadn't eaten
You had not eaten	You hadn't eaten
He had not eaten	He hadn't eaten
She had not eaten	She hadn't eaten
It had not eaten	It hadn't eaten
We had not eaten	We hadn't eaten
You had not eaten	You hadn't eaten
They had not eaten	They hadn't eaten

EXAMPLES (Eg.)

- I had never done that.
- You hadn't written it.
- He had gone to London.
- She'd been to Paris and had come back.
- They had sung that song a lot of times.
- Had you seen her?
- Had she eaten enough?
- We had won the game.
- There had been a fire.

INTERROGATIVE FORM

- Had I eaten ...? Had we eaten...?
- Had you eaten ...? Had you eaten...?
- Had he/she/it eaten? Had they eaten...?



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