


tex's french grammar
plus-que-parfait

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The pluperfect (**le plus-que-parfait**) is formed with the auxiliary in the [imparfait](#) followed by the [past participle](#) of the verb. The choice of auxiliary, **être** or **avoir**, is the same as for the passé composé (the [Alamo of être](#) applies).

Plus-que-parfait = auxiliary in the imparfait + past participle of verb


| manger 'to eat' | |
|---|---|
| j' avais mangé , I had eaten | nous avons mangé , we had eaten |
| tu avais mangé , you had eaten | vous aviez mangé , you had eaten |
| il, elle / on avait mangé , he, she (it) / one had eaten | ils / elles avaient mangé , they had eaten |

| aller 'to go' | |
|--|---|
| j' étais allé(e) , I had gone | nous étions allé(e)s , we had gone |
| tu étais allé(e) , you had gone | vous étiez allé(e)s , you had gone |
| il, elle / on était allé(e) , he, she (it) / one had gone | ils / elles étaient allé(e)s , they had gone |

The negation is formed in the usual manner by placing **ne ... pas** around the conjugated verb, which in this case is the auxiliary: Je n'**avais pas** mangé (I had not eaten), Je n'**étais pas** allé (I had not gone), etc.

uses

In past narration, the plus-que-parfait is used to express an **action which precedes another past action** or moment. In other words, the action in the plus-que-parfait is prior to another past action or moment. In English the plus-que-parfait is indicated by **had + past participle**. In affirmative sentences in French, it is often, but not always, accompanied by the adverb **déjà** (already).

| | |
|--|--|
| <p> A l'âge de sept ans, Tex avait déjà rédigé dix poèmes.</p> <p>Quelques années plus tard, il avait abandonné tout espoir de gloire littéraire. Mais il a changé d'avis quand il a lu les poèmes à Tammy.</p> <p>Elle a adoré les poèmes innocents que Tex avait écrits pendant sa jeunesse.</p> | <p>At the age of seven, Tex had already composed ten poems.</p> <p>A few years later, he had abandoned all hope of literary fame. But he changed his mind when he read the poems to Tammy.</p> <p>She adored the innocent poems that Tex had written during his youth.</p> |
|--|--|

Not all instances of **had + past participle** in English are translated into plus-que-parfait in French. For example, in French [depuis](#) is usually used with the imperfect (**not** the pluperfect) and 'had **just** done something' is generally

Passé Composé**Plus-que-parfait**j'**ai** mangé*I have eaten*J'**avais** mangé*I had eaten*tu **as** mangé*you have eaten*Tu **avais** mangé*you had eaten*elle **a** mangé*she has eaten*elle **avait** mangé*she had eaten*nous **avons** mangé*we have eaten*nous **avions** mangé*we had eaten*vous **avez** mangé*you (all) have eaten*vous **aviez** mangé*you (all) had eaten*ils **ont** mangé*they have eaten*ils **avaient** mangé*they had eaten*