THE PLUPERFECT TENSE
Thirtieth lesson – Trentième leçon
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1. Definition

- The pluperfect (le plus-que-parfait), also known as the past perfect, is used to speak of the past within the past.

- It expresses an event that happened before another event in the past.
1. Definition

- In English, this is formed with the auxiliary *to have* and the past participle.

- In French it’s formed with the auxiliary *avoir* and the past participle of the main verb.
2. Uses

Observe:

- *J’avais déjà dîné quand il m’a invité au restaurant.*
  - *I had already had dinner when he invited me to the restaurant.*

- *Il avait fini son travail quand je l’ai appelé.*
  - *He had finished his work when I called him.*
2. USES

Sometimes the pluperfect tense can also establish a relation between the past and the present.

This link is explicit or implied. In such a context the second verb of the sentence can be in the infinitive form, the imperfect tense or in the conditional mood:

- *Tu m’avais promis de m’aimer.*
- *You had promised to love me.*
3. **Forms**

- To form the pluperfect, you must know the imperfect conjugations of *avoir* and *être* and the past participle of the main verb.

- It is formed in the same way as the passé composé.

- The rules regarding when to use *être* and when to use *avoir* are also the same.
2. **Forms**

- **THE PASSÉ COMPOSÉ AND THE PLUS-QUE-PARFAIT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passé composé</th>
<th>Plus-que-parfait</th>
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</table>
| **J’ai pensé**  
*I (have) thought* | **J’avais pensé**  
*I (had) thought* |
| **Tu as vu**  
*You (have) seen / you saw* | **Tu avais vu**  
*You (had) seen / you saw* |
| **Il/elle/on s’est lavé(e)**  
*He/she (have) washed...* | **Il/elle/on s’était lavé**  
*He/she (had) washed...* |
| **Nous sommes parti(e)s**  
*We (have) left* | **Nous étions parti(e)s**  
*We (had) left* |
| **Vous avez compris**  
*You (have) understood* | **Vous aviez compris**  
*You (had) understood* |
| **Ils/elles ont bu**  
*They (have) drunk* | **Ils/elles avaient bu**  
*They (had) drunk* |
C’est tout pour aujourd’hui!

Au revoir!

Merci!