

Perfect Tenses (Have, had, etc.)

The Spanish verb “haber” is a helping verb used to create sentences like the English “I have eaten, You had visited, etc.” These are called Perfect Tenses. To express these concepts, one needs to conjugate haber in the appropriate form and then add the past participle (-ed form in English) of the appropriate verb. Past participles are generally formed by adding “-ado” to -ar verbs (hablar : hablado) or “-ido” to -er/-ir verbs (comer: comido, vivir: vivido.) Some of the more common irregular past participles include:

abrir (to open) : abierto (opened)	cubrir (to cover) : cubierto (covered)
decir (to say, to tell) : dicho (said, told)	escribir (to write) : escrito (written)
hacer (to do, to make) : hecho (made, done)	morir (to die) : muerto (died)
poner (to put) : puesto (put)	romper (to break) : roto (broken)
ver (to see) : visto (seen)	volver (to return) : vuelto (returned)

The verb “haber” is conjugated below in the present, future, and past (imperfect, which is the most common for past perfect):

haber (present)		haber (future)		haber (past imperfect)	
he	hemos	habré	habremos	había	habíamos
has	habéis	habrás	habréis	habías	habíais
ha (hay)	han	habrá	habrán	había	habían

Examples:

I have spoken.	Yo he hablado.
They will have gone to the store.	Ellos habrán ido a la tienda.
We had eaten.	Nosotros habíamos comido.
He has broken the window.	Él ha roto la ventana.
You had washed your face.	Tú te habías lavado la cara.
John and Mary have not returned.	Juan y María no han vuelto. (no precedes both parts)

There is one additional special use of the verb haber. It is used alone to show the existence of something (hay, había, habrá). In English, this translates to “there is/there are”: Hay un restaurante en el hotel. (There is a restaurant in the hotel.), “there was/there were”: Había tres personas allí. (There were 3 people there.), etc. Please note that this use of “haber” is always in the singular third person (él/ella/usted) form.

To practice this concept, please visit:

<http://www.studyspanish.com/tutorial.htm> (exercises 100-103)

<http://www.colby.edu/~bknelson/exercises/perfects.html> (all exercises)

<http://www.conjuguemos.com> (Spanish, verbs, exercises 14-19)