





example 2:

Nachdem sie das Visum **bekommen hatte**, ist sie sofort nach Deutschland geflogen.  
(After she had got the visa she flew immediately to Germany.)

- event 1: she got the visa
- event 2: she flew to Germany
- both events happened in the past
- for event 1 you always use "Plusquamperfekt" and for event 2 "Präteritum" or "Perfekt"

**Indicators for "Plusquamperfekt"**

There are a row of conjunctions which are clear indicators for "Plusquamperfekt" :

- **nachdem** (=after)
- **als** (=when)
- **bevor** (=before)

examples:

- **Nachdem** ich die Prüfung **bestanden hatte**, habe ich eine große Party gemacht.  
(After I had passed the exam I made a big party.)
- **Als** wir zur Party kamen, **waren** die meisten Leute schon **gegangen**.  
(When we arrived at the party most people had gone already.)
- **Bevor** ich Cathy kennen lernte, **hatte** ich mich noch nie intensiv mit der deutschen Grammatik **beschäftigt**.  
(Bevore I met Cathy I hadn't never dealt intensively with the German grammar.)

**How do you form the tense "Plusquamperfekt"?**

**Hilfsverb im Präteritum** + **Partizip II**  
(auxiliary verb in past tense) (past participle)

**Hilfsverben (auxiliary verbs = "helping verbs")**

There are two "Hilfsverben" in German:

- haben (have) --> Präteritum form: **hatte** (had)
- sein (be) --> Präteritum form: **war** (was)



### When do you have to use "haben" and when "sein"?

- You use "sein" when the verb shows a change of position or condition e.g. gehen (go), kommen (come), wandern (hiking)
- You use "sein" when the verb shows a crossing of a "boundary" e.g. sterben (die), einschlafen (fall asleep)
- You use "sein" when the verb is an intransitive verb (=verb without direct object)

For all other cases use "haben" as "Hilfsverb".

Another useful rule is that almost all weak verbs (see below) take "haben" as their "Hilfsverb". The only exception are the verbs "reisen" (travel) and "passieren" (happen).

#### examples:

- Ich **bin** gestern gekommen. (I arrived yesterday.)
- Er **ist** gerade gegangen. (He has just gone.)
- **Bist** du schon eingeschlafen? (Did you fall asleep ahead?)

The "Hilfsverb" is conjugated as usual. The main verb is transformed into the "Partizip II".

### What is the "Partizip II" and how do you form it?

We spoke in detail about "*Partizip II*" when we learned the "Perfekt" tense. Please check this topic for more information.