

Common mistakes in the use of verbs

In this article we will take a closer look at some common mistakes in the use of verbs.

Incorrect: I have visited him yesterday.

Correct: I visited him yesterday.

Incorrect: They have finished the work a week ago.

Correct: They finished the work a week ago.

The present perfect tense cannot be used with adverbs that refer to a definite point of time in the past. If you want to say when something happened in the past, you have to use the simple past tense.

Incorrect: We had gone to the movies last night.

Correct: We went to the movies last night.

Incorrect: I had seen him yesterday.

Correct: I saw him yesterday.

The past perfect tense is not used to say that something happened some time ago. That idea is expressed using the simple past tense.

The past perfect tense is only used to suggest that an action had completed before another action commenced.

For example, you can say: We had eaten our dinner before we went to the movies last night.

Incorrect: I had spoken to the boys about my holiday.

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Correct: I have spoken to the boys about my holiday.

We use the present perfect tense to talk about actions and situations that happened at an unspecified point of time in the past.

Note that we use the past simple tense if we mention a specific point of time in the past.

Incorrect: He hanged the pictures on the wall.

Correct: He hung the pictures on the wall.

Incorrect: The terrorist was hung.

Correct: The terrorist was hanged.

Use hanged to talk about execution by hanging.