

Pluperfect Subjunctive

Spanish · British English › Spanish

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The Past Perfect Subjunctive (Subjuntivo Pluscuamperfecto)

Welcome to the world of the Subjuntivo Pluscuamperfecto! This tense is used to talk about hypothetical situations or to express feelings, doubts, or opinions concerning events that **had taken place in the past BEFORE another past action**. It's like stepping back in time to describe something that happened even earlier, but from a subjective viewpoint.

Remember, the Subjunctive always expresses subjectivity, and the Past Perfect indicates that this action **preceded** another past action (e.g., in the Imperfect, Preterite, or Conditional Indicative).

Subject + **haber (Imperfect Subjunctive)** + **past participle**

We form the Subjuntivo Pluscuamperfecto by combining the auxiliary verb **haber** in the **Imperfect Subjunctive** with the **past participle** of the main verb. Remember that the past participle is invariable (always ending in -o) when used with **haber**.

Pronoun	Haber (Imperfect Subjunctive)	Past Participle (e.g., hablar)
yo	hubiera / hubiese	hablado
tú	hubieras / hubieses	hablado
él/ella/usted	hubiera / hubiese	hablado
nosotros/as	hubiéramos / hubiésemos	hablado
vosotros/as	hubierais / hubieseis	hablado
ellos/ellas/ustedes	hubieran / hubiesen	hablado

- To express **unreal conditions in the past** (the so-called **third conditional**): often after *si* (if).
- After expressions indicating **emotions, doubts, wishes, or opinions** in the past, concerning an action that happened earlier.
- After phrases like *como si* (as if), *antes de que* (before), *sin que* (without), when the main clause is in the past.

Si hubiera sabido la verdad, te habría avisado.

If I had known the truth, I would have warned you.

Me alegró que hubieras venido a la fiesta.

I was glad that you had come to the party.

Habló como si hubiese visto un fantasma.

He spoke as if he had seen a ghost.

Watch out! Don't confuse the Past Perfect Subjunctive (e.g., *hubiera hecho*) with the Past Perfect Indicative (e.g., *había hecho*)! The latter expresses objective facts from the past, while the Subjunctive always conveys subjectivity, doubt, wishes, etc. *Hubiera* and *hubiese* are interchangeable, but *hubiera* is much more commonly used.

Think of the Past Perfect Subjunctive as your time machine for expressing regret, hypothetical scenarios, and subjective views on what **could have happened** or **what if** in the past!

Part 1 — Choose the correct word

Circle the option that correctly fills each gap.

1. Si _____ algo en el tren, ahora no _____ hambre.

If we had eaten something on the train, we wouldn't be hungry now.

Gap 1: A) comiéramos B) comeríamos C) hubiéramos comido D) habíamos comido

Gap 2: A) tendríamos B) tendríamos C) tenemos D) tengamos

2. No me podía creer que _____ nuestro aniversario.

I couldn't believe you had forgotten our anniversary.

A) habrás olvidado B) hubieras olvidado C) habrías olvidado D) olvidarías

3. Si lo _____ entonces, no _____.

If I had known then, I wouldn't have gone.

Gap 1: A) sabía B) hubiera sabido C) habría sabido D) había sabido

Gap 2: A) habría ido B) habré ido C) iré D) he ido

4. Era como si nunca _____ en paz.

It was as if they had never lived in peace.

A) habían vivido B) hubieran vivido C) habrían vivido D) vivirían

5. Me extrañó que ya _____ la película.

I was surprised that they had already seen the film.

A) habrían visto B) habían visto C) verían D) hubieran visto

6. Nos extrañó que ya _____ la tienda.

We were surprised the shop had already opened.

A) había abierto B) abriría C) hubiese abierto D) habría abierto

7. Me sorprendió que no _____ de vacaciones.

It surprised me that they hadn't come back from holiday.

A) habrían vuelto B) volverían C) habían vuelto D) hubieran vuelto

8. Era dudoso que _____ el informe.

It was doubtful that we had written the report.

A) hubiéramos escrito B) habríamos escrito C) habíamos escrito D) escribiríamos

Part 2 — Fill in the gap

Write the missing word or phrase on the line.

1. Me molestó que no lo _____ antes de la clase.

It annoyed me that they hadn't read it before the class.

2. Lamenté que no _____ a tiempo.

I was sorry that he hadn't finished on time.

3. Si _____ los deberes, el profesor no se _____.

If we had done the homework, the teacher wouldn't have got angry.

4. Ojalá _____ un poco más.

I wish we had waited a little longer.

5. Si me _____ la verdad aquel día, ahora todo _____ distinto.

If you had told me the truth that day, everything would be different now.

6. Ojalá _____ ayer antes de la cena.

I wish I had arrived before dinner yesterday.

Part 3 – Translate

Write each word in Spanish on the line.

1. to learn › _____

2. to sleep › _____

3. to buy › _____

4. to break › _____

5. to decide › _____

6. to see › _____

Part 4 – Match the pairs

Write the letter of the matching translation next to each term.

Term		Translation	
1.	haber estudiado	A	to receive
2.	recibir	B	to put
3.	haber puesto	C	to solve
4.	haber perdido	D	to study
5.	haber vivido	E	to lose
6.	perder	F	to forget
7.	olvidar	G	to live
8.	resolver	H	to lose

Answer Key

Part 1 – Choose the correct word

1. Gap 1: C) hubiéramos comido; Gap 2: B) tendríamos
2. B) hubieras olvidado
3. Gap 1: B) hubiera sabido; Gap 2: A) habría ido
4. B) hubieran vivido
5. D) hubieran visto
6. C) hubiese abierto
7. D) hubieran vuelto
8. A) hubiéramos escrito

Part 2 – Fill in the gap

1. hubiesen leído
2. hubiese terminado
3. hubiéramos hecho; habría enfadado
4. hubiéramos esperado
5. hubieras dicho; sería
6. hubiese llegado

Part 3 – Translate

1. aprender
2. dormir
3. comprar
4. romper
5. decidir
6. haber visto

Part 4 – Match the pairs

1. D (to study)
2. A (to receive)
3. B (to put)
4. E (to lose)
5. G (to live)
6. E (to lose)
7. F (to forget)
8. C (to solve)