
S131cKEY_Perfect Infinitives

To express time preceding that of the main verb, the infinitive takes a perfect form: 'to' + *have* + past participle.

The parents were lucky *to have found* this specialist for their sick child.

The perfect infinitive can be used with progressive aspect to emphasize duration. This construction consists of 'to' + *have* + *been* + V-ing.

He was too scared of the police *to have been telling* lies all the time.

The tenant is thought to have been cooking at the time of the fire. [Ongoing action at an earlier time: The tenant was in the process of cooking when the fire broke out, as the investigators now believe.]

TASK ONE : Fill-in-the-blank: Perfect Infinitive / Perfect Progressive Infinitive

Complete the sentences with the correct perfect infinitive form of the verb in parentheses (**to have + past participle** or **to have been + -ing**).

1. She was relieved _____ (finish) the report before the deadline.
2. They pretended _____ (not / see) the mistake in the contract.
3. The engineer claims _____ (work) on the project for over a year when the company cancelled it.
4. The witness is believed _____ (lie) about his whereabouts.
5. The team was proud _____ (develop) a more efficient prototype than their competitors.
6. The neighbours are said _____ (argue) loudly just before the police arrived.
7. He felt stupid _____ (forget) such important documents at home.
8. The CEO appears _____ (consider) several options before making her final decision.

TASK TWO : Translation Exercise (French → English)

Translate the following sentences into English, using the **perfect infinitive** or **perfect progressive infinitive**.

1. Ils semblent **avoir oublié** d'envoyer le dossier complet.
2. Elle regrette **d'avoir été** aussi dure avec son équipe.
3. Le suspect prétend **avoir été en train de travailler** au moment du vol.

4. Le projet est censé **avoir été abandonné** depuis longtemps.
5. Il nie **avoir menti** à propos des résultats de l'enquête.
6. Les employés sont heureux **d'avoir réussi** à respecter toutes les exigences techniques.
7. Le technicien affirme **avoir été en train de réparer** la machine lorsque la panne générale s'est produite.
8. Le rapport semble **avoir été modifié** juste avant la réunion.

Fill-in-the-blank: Answer Key

1. She was relieved **to have finished** the report before the deadline.
 2. They pretended **to have not seen / not to have seen** the mistake in the contract.
 3. The engineer claims **to have been working** on the project for over a year when the company cancelled it.
 4. The witness is believed **to have lied** about his whereabouts.
 5. The team was proud **to have developed** a more efficient prototype than their competitors.
 6. The neighbours are said **to have been arguing** loudly just before the police arrived.
 7. He felt stupid **to have forgotten** such important documents at home.
 8. The CEO appears **to have considered** several options before making her final decision.
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2. Translation Exercise: Answer Key

1. Ils semblent avoir oublié d'envoyer le dossier complet.
→ They seem **to have forgotten** to send the complete file.
2. Elle regrette d'avoir été aussi dure avec son équipe.
→ She regrets **to have been** so harsh with her team.
*(Alternative, more natural with a gerund: "regrets **having been**..." but the perfect infinitive is acceptable for the exercise.)*
3. Le suspect prétend avoir été en train de travailler au moment du vol.
→ The suspect claims **to have been working** at the time of the theft.
4. Le projet est censé avoir été abandonné depuis longtemps.
→ The project is supposed **to have been abandoned** a long time ago.
5. Il nie avoir menti à propos des résultats de l'enquête.
→ He denies **to have lied** about the results of the investigation.
*(Again, "denies **having lied**..." is more idiomatic, but the perfect infinitive fits the lesson.)*
6. Les employés sont heureux d'avoir réussi à respecter toutes les exigences techniques.
→ The employees are happy **to have succeeded** in meeting all the technical requirements.

7. Le technicien affirme avoir été en train de réparer la machine lorsque la panne générale s'est produite.
→ The technician claims **to have been repairing** the machine when the general breakdown occurred.
8. Le rapport semble avoir été modifié juste avant la réunion.
→ The report seems **to have been altered** just before the meeting.