

# 116 Easily confused phrases

In English, there are several phrases which sound or look similar, but have different meanings. It is important not to get these confused.

See also:

Present simple 1 Present continuous 4  
"Used to" and "would" 15

## 116.1 "GET USED TO" AND "BE USED TO"

To **"get used to (doing) something"** describes the process of adapting to new or different situations until they become familiar or normal.

Waking up early for my new job was difficult at first, but eventually I **got used to** it.



To **"be used to (doing) something"** means that something has been done for long enough that it is normal and familiar.

I've lived in the city for years, so I **am used to** the bad pollution.



### TIP

These phrases should not be confused with "used to" (without "be" or "get"), which is used when talking about a regular past action.

## FURTHER EXAMPLES



When I travel, I **get used to** different customs very quickly.

[I find it easy to adapt to different customs when I travel.]



I **got used to** the cold weather within a couple of weeks.

[I adapted to the cold weather within two weeks.]



I **am used to** spicy food as I've always eaten it.

[I am accustomed to eating spicy food.]



We **were used to** the old teacher, so it was a shame when she left.

[We were accustomed to our previous teacher, but then she left.]

## 116.2 "HAVE / GET SOMETHING DONE"

"Have" and "get" can be used with a noun and the past participle to talk about something someone does for someone else. "Get" is less formal than "have."

Did you **get** your computer updated?

[Did somebody update your computer for you?]



Yes, the company **has** the computers updated regularly.

[Yes, somebody regularly updates them for the company.]

### FURTHER EXAMPLES

The structure is used with "should" to give advice.

You **should get** your connection checked.

[I think you should arrange for someone to check your connection.]

They haven't **had** the locks changed yet.

[They haven't arranged for somebody to change the locks for them.]

Will you **get** the oven fixed soon?

[Will somebody fix the oven for you soon?]

The store **has** its produce checked daily.

[Somebody checks the store's produce each day.]

I need to **get** my hair cut.

[I need someone to cut my hair.]

Most people **have** burglar alarms installed.

[Most people have someone fit them a burglar alarm.]

### HOW TO FORM



"Have" and "get" can appear in different tenses.

The action happens to the object.