

Expressing habit

When we talk about habits in the past that are not true anymore, we can do it in different ways.

1-Used to + infinitive

We can also use **used to** to talk about past habits (repeated past actions) that don't happen anymore.

Examples:

We used to live in New York when I was a kid.

There didn't use to be a supermarket there. When did it open?

Did you use to have a garden?

She used to smoke but she gave up a few years ago.

I used to drive on the left

I used to want to be a lawyer but then I realised how hard they work!

How is Paris? Are you used to the cold weather yet?

I used to go swimming every Thursday when I was at school.

She used to be a long-distance runner when she was younger.

2-Be used to and get used to:

Be used to / get used to means 'be familiar with'. We use be used to / get used to to talk about the process of becoming familiar with something. Be used to and get used to are followed by a noun, pronoun or the -ing form of a verb, and can be used about the past, present or future. I didn't use to sleep very well, but then I started doing yoga and it really helps.

- No matter how many times I fly, I'll never get used to take-off and landing!
- I'm a teacher so I'm getting used to speak in public.
- I'm finding this new job hard but I'm sure I'll get used to it soon.
- It took my mother years to get used to living in the city after moving from the countryside.
- I'm getting used to the noise now. I found it stressful when I first moved in.
- The smell of fish is awful, but you'll get used to it after a couple of months on the job.
- I've just bought an Apple computer, and I think it will take me some time to get used to the new operating system.
- At first, I was really nervous about driving in freeway, but now I have got used to it.

3-Would

We can use would to talk about repeated past actions that don't happen anymore. Would for past habits is slightly more formal than used to. It is often used in stories. We don't normally use the negative or question form of would for past habits. Note that we can't usually use would to talk about past states.

Examples:

Every weekend I would go on a long bike ride.

My dad would read me amazing stories every night at bedtime.

4-Past simple

We can always use the past simple as an alternative to used to or would to talk about past states or habits. The main difference is that the past simple doesn't emphasise the repeated or continuous nature of the action or situation. Also, the past simple doesn't make it so clear that the thing is no longer true.

Examples:

We went to the same beach every summer.

We used to go to the same beach every summer.

We would go to the same beach every summer

If something happened only once, we must use the past simple.

Example: I went to Egypt in 2014.

Exercise: Choose the correct answer for the following sentences

1 I _____ chocolate when I was a child.

- a. wasn't used to liking
- b. didn't use to liking
- c. usen't to like
- d. didn't use to like

2 It's hard for me to _____ with the new operating system. It'll take me some time.

- a. be used to working
- b. get used to working
- c. be used to work
- d. get used to work

3 I _____ this kind of shoes. I find them uncomfortable.

- a. 'm not used to wearing
- b. don't use to wear
- c. 'm not used to wear
- d. don't get used to wear

4 I _____ to work, but now I take the bus.

- a. was used to driving
- b. used to drive
- c. got used to drive
- d. used to driving

5 You never _____ that when you were younger.

- a. used to doing
- b. were used to do
- c. got used to do

d. used to do