

Unit 38: USED TO

Used to can be a verb (Unit 3) or an adjective (Unit 64). The meanings of the verb and the adjective are not the same.

1 As a verb

It is a past simple formation (Unit 21). Put the base form of the verb after **to**:

used to go didn't use to go Did ... use to go?

We use it to talk about habits or states in the past.

Montreal	used to be	very polluted, but it is cleaner now.
My uncle	used to smoke	eighty cigarettes a day. He died at forty-five.
I never	used to like	coffee, but now I drink a lot of it.
We didn't	use to be able	to book a room online.
Did you	use to travel	for business often?

NOTICE: We can also use **would** for past habit:

My former boss **would** often become angry if anyone disagreed with him.

2 As an adjective

Put **get** or **be** before used to.

After used to, use a noun phrase (Unit 45) or a verbal noun (Unit 48).

It means "familiar with". For example:

I **am used to working** hard. It is not new to me.

I **am getting used to** the shift change, but it was difficult for me at first.

Don't worry about the new job. You'll soon **get used to** it.

He **was not used to working** on his own, so when he started, it felt very strange.

NOTICE: See the difference in meaning:

He **is used to getting** up early.

He has got up early for a long time.

He **used to get** up early.

But now he gets up late.