

# *Would and used to*

GRAMMAR

LEVEL  
Intermediate

NUMBER  
EN\_BE\_3A16G

LANGUAGE  
English

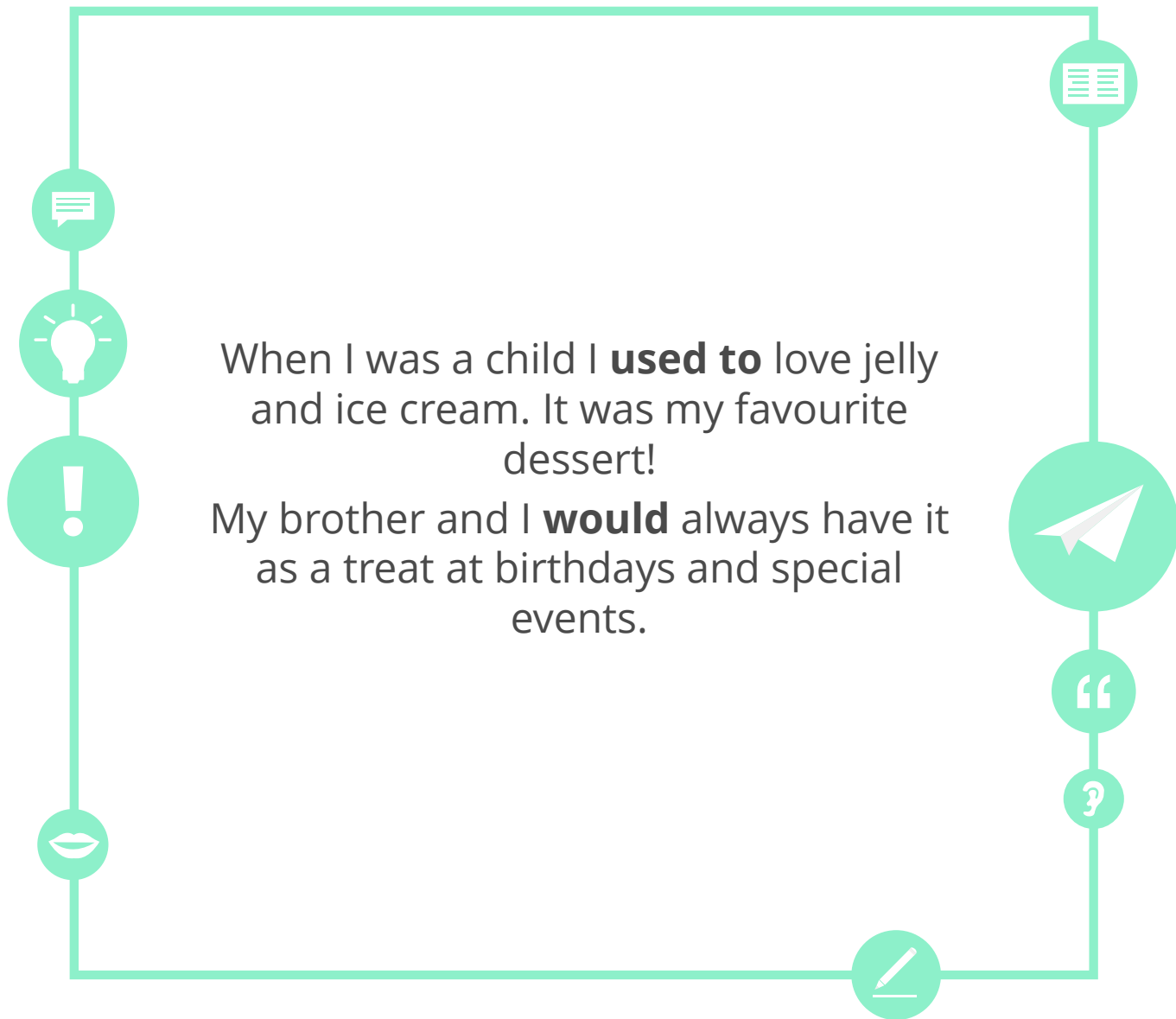




## Goals

- Can accurately use 'would' and 'used to' to talk about my past habits.
- Can talk about my past educational and professional experience in more detail.







## Preview and warm-up

- In English we can use **would** and **used to** in a similar way, to talk about certain events or actions in the past.



In this class you will find out exactly how to use these constructions to **talk about your past.**



## An introduction to using 'used to'

- We often use **used to** to describe **situations or actions which happened in the past but which are no longer true.**
- We only use **used to** to describe actions or situations in the past that **continued, or happened on a regular basis.**
- See the table below for some examples:

### Examples of how to use *used to*

I **used to** speak French fluently.

Mark **used to** be a vegetarian.

Holly **used to** live in Brazil.

I **used to** love maths.

I **used to** work as a banker.





## The present tense and *used to*



- There is **no present form** of the construction *used to*.
- When you want to talk about **habits** or **things that have a longer duration** in the **present**, use the **present simple tense**.



I **live** in Manchester and there are lots of great swimming pools in the city. I **go** swimming every Saturday morning.



## The negative of *used to*

- The most common way to form ***used to*** in the **negative** is to use ***never used to***.
- You might also hear the construction ***didn't use to***. **Remember to drop the -d at the end of *used to*** when using this construction in the negative.
- We often use the negative form of ***used to*** to contrast the present with the past when something has changed.

- I ***didn't use to*** like coffee but I'm a coffee addict these days!
- I ***never used to*** have time to cook so now I make it a priority to eat well and prepare a healthy meal every night.







## Asking questions and 'used to'

- When asking **questions**, we **drop the -d from *used to***.
- See the examples:



Didn't you **use to** work as a software developer?

What did you **use to** do in your spare time at university?







## Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps using the appropriate form of *used to*.

Hi Karen, I hear you \_\_\_\_\_ live in France.  
So did I!

Oh really, did you \_\_\_\_\_ eat croissants  
for breakfast every morning too?

Haha, yes, I \_\_\_\_\_ live right next to a  
really great bakery. It was fantastic! I miss it. I  
\_\_\_\_\_ like coffee before I moved to  
France but after three years there, I loved it. I  
\_\_\_\_\_ drink an espresso every morning  
with my croissant!





## Dialogue

Read the dialogue below with your teacher



So, I see from your CV that you used to work in an Italian restaurant. What did you **use to** do there? What was it like?

I used to work at Lorenzo's restaurant. I **used to** work at the weekend so it was always really busy. I don't want to do that again – it's too difficult when you have a family.



Yes, we **used to** keep our restaurant open at nights, too, but now we only serve lunch. The bar is open in the evenings but there's no restaurant service. I **used to** work the late shifts too, it was horrible!

Apart from the late nights, though, I loved working at Lorenzo's. I **used to** eat so much pizza – we were allowed to take home all the leftovers at the end of the shift.





## Talking about the past

Answer the questions below. Try to use *used to* in your answers.

Example: *They used to eat...*

What did the person in the interview do at their old job?

What was their experience like?

What does the interviewer say in response?

What did the restaurant staff eat a lot of?



Now it's your turn!

Now tell your teacher about your  
own past work experiences.  
Share what you did, and what you  
liked and didn't like.  
Use *used to* in your answers.



## Using *would* in the past

- We can use **would** in the same way we use **used to** to talk about or describe **situations or actions which happened in the past but which are no longer true**.
- However, when we talk about **past states** we cannot use **would**, in these cases you have to use **used to**.

- We **would** always go to stay with our grandparents during our summer holidays from school.





## Some points to remember



- We don't use **would** to ask questions about the past.
- Use the question form of **used to** instead.



Did you **use to** visit your grandparents in the summer?



## Unscramble these three sentences

late for school

always be

We would

because we  
missed the bus

I would

would catch  
the same train

day because we

see him every



Unscramble time!

always ask

They would

how she was  
doing

because they  
were very fond  
of her





## Fill in the gaps

I \_\_\_\_\_ like swimming but I broke my arm four years ago and I find it difficult now. Before then, I \_\_\_\_\_ go swimming every weekend in the mornings. I \_\_\_\_\_ swim for two hours each time. I was really fit. I even \_\_\_\_\_ compete in competitions! I \_\_\_\_\_ complain about the early starts but it was a lot of fun. Hopefully, I can go back to swimming soon. My doctor says my arm is getting much better!

**Fill in the gaps using would or used to as appropriate**



## Ask questions!

**Ask your teacher ten questions about their past educational experiences using *did you use to*.**

**Use the topics on the post-it notes below for ideas**

exams

school

extra curricular  
activities

university



## Now it's your turn



Now it's your turn! Answer the questions you asked your teacher and try to use *would* and *used to* as much as you can in your answers.

Give as much information as you can and share stories about your past!



## Past simple, *used to*, or *would*

- We only use ***used to*** and ***would*** to talk about things in the past that had a **longer duration**.
- When we are speaking about events that had a **shorter duration** we use the **past simple**.
- See the example below to help understand this difference:

- We **used to** go on holiday to France every year.
- We **would** buy fresh croissants every day for breakfast.
- However, one year my mum broke her leg and so the journey was too difficult. That year **we went to** Wales on holiday since it was much closer to home.

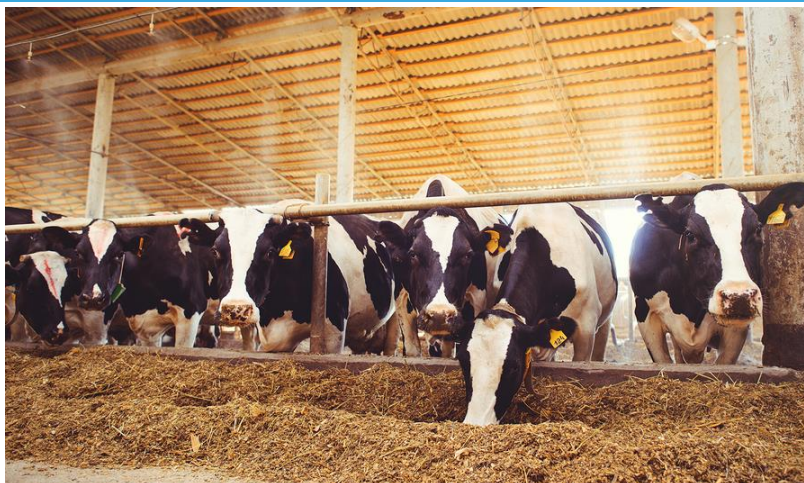




## used to + infinitive vs. be + used to + -ing



- Don't get confused between **used to + infinitive** versus **be + used to + -ing**.
- We use **used to + infinitive** to describe **situations which continued in the past but are no longer true**.
- We use **be + used to + -ing** to **show our familiarity with a habit**.



I **used to** help my mum every weekend on the farm. So from a young age I was **used to working** with animals.



## Used to + infinitive, and be + used to + -ing

- Here are some more examples of the difference between:
  - **used to + infinitive**
  - **be + used to + -ing**



**I used to** live in Spain, from the age of six to nine I went to school there.

So **I was used to speaking** foreign languages from a young age.





## Transform the sentences

1. I worked on a farm every weekend as a child.



I **used to** work on a farm every weekend when I was a child.

2. I was a member of the economics society at school.



\_\_\_\_\_

3. I was a journalist for my university's student newspaper.



\_\_\_\_\_

4. Our team went out for dinner together once a month.



\_\_\_\_\_

5. I worked part-time as a software developer when I was in my final year of university.



\_\_\_\_\_





## Follow-on sentences

Look at the sentences and pictures below. Can you make a follow-on sentence for each using the structure: *So, from a young age I used to...*

I used to work in my family's restaurant every weekend, even as a child.



I used to help my parents around the house with the housework.



I used to cycle to school even though it was 10 miles away.



They used to have about 10 pets at home.





## Put it into practice!

Imagine you are getting to know a new colleague who comes from another country. You want to know all about their past life and what it was like to grow up, go to school and work in a different country to yours. Ask lots of questions and reply to their questions about your past. Use *used to* and *would* as much as you can and use the correct forms in your questions too!

- You can also ask questions and make sentences in the simple past when you need to.
- Try to find out as much as you can about them.
- Remember you are excited to meet this new friend and find out all about their life!



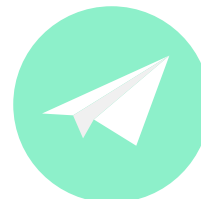


## Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no





## Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.  
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



If you have time, go over  
the most difficult slides again



## Answer key

### Exercise p. 9

used to, use to, used to, never used to, used to

### Exercise p. 16

used to, used to or would, used to, used to or would

### Exercise p. 22

2. I used to be a member of the economics society at school.

3. I used to be a journalist for my university's student newspaper.

4. Our team used to go out for dinner together once a month.

5. I used to work part-time as a software developer when I was in my final year of university.





## Homework writing activity

Make sentences using *would* and *used to* using the words on the cards below.

work

school

hate

sport

smoke

vegetarian







## Homework writing activity

**Write about your experiences as a child and your childhood using *used to* and *would* where appropriate. You can also practise using the negative forms. Think about where you went on holiday as a child, what you liked and didn't like, where you lived, your habits etc. Try to write at least 400 words!**

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