

used to

English Grammar · B1

Past Habits and States

used to	
used to past habit <i>I used to play</i>	didn't use to negative (no d) <i>I didn't use to</i>

used to: reference card grid

used to indicates habits that were done frequently in the past but are no longer done now, or past states.

Structure: + **used to** +

I used to play football.

I used to play football. (I don't anymore now)

There used to be a cinema here.

There used to be a cinema here.

Note **used to** refers only to the **past**; for current habits, use the simple present (I play football now).

Negation and Interrogative

For negation and questions, auxiliary **did** is required, and **used** reverts to **use**:

- **Negation:** didn't use to + base verb.
- **Question:** Did + subject + use to + base verb ?

I didn't use to like coffee.

I didn't use to like coffee.

Did you use to live here?

Did you use to live here?

Note In negatives / questions it is **use to** (without d): ~didn't used to~~ × → didn't use to ✓.

Common Errors

- × ~I am used to play football.~~ → Do not mix up these two distinct structures:
✓ I **used to play** football. (Used to do, but don't now) vs ✓ I **am used to playing** football. (Accustomed to doing)— Here, to is a preposition followed by -ing; also note **get used to** (gradually becoming accustomed).
- × ~I use to get up early.~~ (meaning current habit) → ✓ I **usually** get up early. — use to has no present tense form; use usually for current habits.
- × ~She used to living in Shanghai.~~ → ✓ She used to **live** in Shanghai. — used to is followed by the base verb.