

Past simple vs Past continuous – used to/would

used to – would

AFFIRMATIVE	I/You/He/She/It/We/They used to drive .
NEGATIVE	I/You/He/She/It/We/They didn't use to drive .
INTERROGATIVE	Did I/you/he/she/it/we/they use to drive ?
SHORT ANSWERS	Yes, I/you/he/she/it/we/they did .
	No, I/you/he/she/it/we/they didn't .



Centuries ago, people **didn't use to have** phones. They **used to communicate** by writing letters.

Form

- **Used to** is always a past form. It has no present form. It has the same form in all persons, singular and plural, in the affirmative. *I **used to play** golf. Tom and Pete **used to live** in Spain.*
- The interrogative form is **did + subject + use to**. ***Did** Jane **use to go** jogging?*
- The negative form is **subject + didn't use to**. *Paul **didn't use to travel** at all.*

Use

- **Used to** is used to talk about **past habits, repeated actions** and **routines** in the **past**, which **no longer** happen. *She **used to go** sailing a lot when she was younger.* (She doesn't go sailing any more.)
- We use **used to** for things that **were true**, but they are not true any more. *She **used to read** many comic books when she was a little girl.* (Now, she doesn't read many comic books.)
- We can use the **past simple** instead of **used to** with no difference in meaning. *She **used to work** as an accountant./She **worked** as an accountant.*
- We use the **past simple**, and not **used to**, in the following cases:
 - a) to refer to an action which happened at a definite time in the past. *She **cooked** a lovely meal yesterday.* (NOT: *She ~~used to cook~~ ...* – the action happened at a definite time in the past)
 - b) to say how many times an action happened at a definite time in the past. *They **went** football training twice last weekend.* (NOT: *They ~~used to go~~ ...*)

would

We use **would/used to** for **repeated actions** and **routines** in the **past**. We do not use **would** with stative verbs, because they describe states and not actions. *They **would/used to visit** their cousins every week.* (They don't visit their cousins anymore.) **BUT** *She **used to have** long blonde hair.* (NOT: *She ~~would have~~ long blonde hair.*)

8 Look at the picture and the words in bold. How are the affirmative, negative and interrogative of **used to** formed? Can you replace **used to** with **would** or the **past simple** in the example? Why/why not?

9 Complete the sentences. Use the correct form of **used to** and the verbs in brackets.

- 1 We **used to visit** (**visit**) our relatives in Wales once a year when we were children.
- 2 (**Shelley/wear**) glasses when she was young?
- 3 Dad (**play**) football when he was a teenager.
- 4 I (**not/enjoy**) flying, but now I love it.
- 5 (**you/be**) frightened of thunderstorms?
- 6 Max (**ride**) his bike to college before he passed his driving test.

10 Read the dialogue and fill in the gaps with the correct form of **used to** and the verbs in brackets.

A: Grandma, **1** **did you use to live** (**you/live**) in Italy when you were young?

B: Yes, we **2**
(**have**) a house in Naples, I **3**
(**speak**) Italian every day, but now I don't remember much.

A: What **4** (**you/do**) there?

B: Well, I **5** (**go**) to school just like you, but I **6**
(**not/watch**) TV or play computer games.

