

UNIT 62

Be/get used to something (I'm used to ...)

a) Study this example situation:



Jane is American but she has lived in Britain for three years. When she first drove a car in Britain, she found it very difficult because she had to drive on the left instead of on the right. Driving on the left was strange and difficult for her because:

She wasn't used to it.
She wasn't used to driving on the left.

But after a lot of practice, driving on the left became less strange:

- She got used to driving on the left.

Now after three years, driving on the left is no problem for her:

- She is used to driving on the left.

I'm used to something = it is not new or strange for me:

- Frank lives alone. He doesn't mind this because he has lived alone for 15 years. So he is used to it. He is used to living alone.
- My new shoes felt a bit strange at first because I wasn't used to them.
- Our new flat is on a very busy street. I expect we'll get used to the noise but at the moment we find it very disturbing.
- Fred has a new job. He has to get up much earlier - at 6.30. He finds this difficult at present because he isn't used to getting up so early.

b) Notice that we say 'She is used to driving on the left.' (*not* 'she is used to drive'). To in **be/get used to** is a *preposition*, not a part of the infinitive (see also Unit 59e). So we say:

- Frank is used to living alone. (*not* 'is used to live')
- Jane had to get used to driving on the left. (*not* 'get used to drive')

c) Do not confuse **I am used to doing** (**be/get used to**) with **I used to do**. They are different in structure and in meaning.

I am used to (doing) something = something isn't strange for me:

- I am used to the weather in this country.
- I am used to driving on the left because I've lived in Britain a long time.

I used to do something means only that I did something regularly in the *past* (see Unit 25). You can't use this structure for the *present*. The structure is 'I used to do' (*not* 'I am used to do'):

- These days I usually stay in bed until late. But when I had a job, I used to get up early.

UNIT 62 Exercises

62.1 Read these situations and write three sentences with **used to** as in the example.

Example: Jane is American. She came to Britain and found driving on the left difficult.

- At first she ~~wasn't used to driving on the left~~
- But soon she ~~got used to driving on the left~~
- Now she has no problems. She ~~is used to driving on the left~~

1 Juan came to England from Spain. In Spain he always had dinner late in the evening. But in England dinner was at 6 o'clock. Juan found this strange at first.

- At first he wasn't
- But after some time he got
- Now he finds it quite normal. He

2 Diana is a nurse. She started working nights two years ago. At first she found it strange and didn't like it.

- At first she
- But after a while
- Now she doesn't mind it at all.

62.2 Now read these situations and write a sentence with **be/get used to**.

Example: Frank lives alone. He doesn't mind this. He has always lived alone.

(he / used / live / alone) He is used to living alone.

1 Ron sleeps on the floor. He doesn't mind this. He has always slept on the floor.

(he / used / sleep / on the floor) He is used to sleeping on the floor.

2 Sue moved from a big house to a much smaller one. What did she have to get used to?

(she had / used / live / in a smaller house) She had to get used to living in a smaller house.

3 Jack once went to the Middle East. It was too hot for him.

(he / not / used / the heat) He wasn't used to the heat.

4 Bill doesn't have any money. He doesn't find this unusual because he has never had any money. (he / used / have / no money) He is used to not having any money.

5 Tom is going to live in your country. What will he have to get used to? (*Write your own answer!*) He'll have to get used to living in your country.

62.3 Now you have to put the verb into the correct form, **-ing** or **infinitive** (**I am used to doing** or **I used to do**). If necessary, study Unit 25 first.

Examples: Jane had to get used to driving on the left. (drive)

Bill used to be very fit. Now he's in terrible condition. (be)

1 When I was a child, I used to go swimming every day. (go)

2 It took me a long time to get used to wearing glasses. (wear)

3 There used to be a cinema on this corner but it was knocked down. (be)

4 I'm the boss. I'm not used to being told what to do. (be)

5 You'll have to get used to eating less if you want to lose weight. (eat)

6 I used to like Ann but now she gets on my nerves. (like)

7 Ron got tired very quickly. He wasn't used to running so fast. (run)

8 Tom used to drink a lot of coffee when he was a student. (drink)