

Be Used To and Get Used To: Adaptation and Familiarity

INTERMEDIATE

Focus: Present states of familiarity, Something not new or strange, **Structure:** be + used to + noun/-ing, The process of becoming familiar, Describing changes over time, Past and future forms of 'get used to', Relocating and living abroad, Changing work schedules (night shifts), Daily routines and physical discomfort, I wasn't used to

1. Be Used To (State of Familiarity)

We use **be used to** to talk about things that are familiar, normal, or not strange for us anymore. It describes a **state**, not an action.

- **Structure:** Subject + **be** (conjugated) + **used to** + **Verb(-ing)** or **Noun**
- **Meaning:** "I am accustomed to it."

Type	Structure	Example
(+) Affirmative	I am used to waking up early.	It is normal for me now.
(-) Negative	He isn't used to the cold weather.	It is still strange or uncomfortable for him.
(?) Question	Are you used to driving on the left?	Is it familiar to you?

Note on Tense: You can use this in the past (**was/were used to**) to describe a past state of familiarity.

- *Example:* "When I lived in London, I **was used to** taking the bus every day."

2. Get Used To (Process of Adaptation)

We use **get used to** to talk about the **process** of becoming familiar with something. It implies a change from "strange" to "normal."

- **Structure:** Subject + **get** (conjugated) + **used to** + **Verb(-ing)** or **Noun**
- **Meaning:** "I am becoming accustomed to it."

Type	Structure	Example
(+) Future	You will get used to the noise soon.	Adaptation will happen in the future.
(+) Continuous	I am getting used to my new job.	Adaptation is happening right now.
(-) Negative	I can't get used to this spicy food.	The adaptation is impossible or very difficult.
(?) Question	Did you get used to the time difference?	Did the process happen?

⚠ Important Rule: The "-ing" Form

Both *be used to* and *get used to* are followed by a **noun** or a **verb ending in -ing**. Never use the base form (infinitive) of the verb.

- I am used to **working** late.
- I am used to ~~work~~ late.

Practice

Exercise 1: Fill in the Blanks

Instruction: Complete the sentences using the correct form of **be used to** or **get used to** and the verb in parentheses.

- Pay attention to the tense (present, past, future, or continuous).
- Remember to use the **-ing form** for verbs.

1. After living in Spain for three years, I _____ (be used to / eat) dinner late in the evening.
2. I don't like my new glasses. I _____ (not / get used to / wear) them yet.
3. _____ (you / be used to / drive) a manual car, or do you prefer automatic?
4. When Sarah moved to the countryside, she _____ (not / be used to / see) so many stars at night.
5. Don't worry about the new software update. You _____ (get used to / use) it very quickly.
6. _____ (he / get used to / live) alone after his roommate moved out last month?
7. My father works the night shift, so he _____ (be used to / sleep) during the day.
8. At first, the traffic was terrible, but now we _____ (get used to / the noise).
9. _____ (they / be used to / the spicy food) in Thailand, or is it too hot for them?
10. Even after two years, I _____ (not / can / get used to) the humidity in this city.
11. She is finding it difficult, but she _____ (slowly / get used to / wake up) at 5:00 AM for her new job.
12. We _____ (not / be used to / have) so much free time during the week.
13. _____ (you / get used to / work) from home, or do you still miss the office?
14. Before I became a teacher, I _____ (not / be used to / speak) in front of large groups of people.
15. Ideally, how long does it take to _____ (get used to / a new climate)?

Answer Key

1. am used to eating / 'm used to eating
2. haven't got used to wearing / haven't gotten used to wearing / can't get used to wearing
3. Are you used to driving
4. wasn't used to seeing / was not used to seeing
5. will get used to using / 'll get used to using
6. Did he get used to living / Has he got used to living
7. is used to sleeping / 's used to sleeping
8. are getting used to the noise / have got used to the noise
9. Are they used to the spicy food
10. cannot get used to / can't get used to
11. is slowly getting used to waking up
12. are not used to having / aren't used to having
13. Have you got used to working / Did you get used to working / Are you getting used to working
14. was not used to speaking / wasn't used to speaking
15. get used to a new climate