



How to Teach 'Used To' for Past Habits

S06E21 | For teachers to adapt to their learners

Teaching focus

A: Start with a clear before-and-now contrast. Use *used to* + base verb for a past habit or state that has changed, then practise *didn't use to* and *Did you use to...?* in the same situation. Check the meaning before asking learners to complete the form.

Our suggested routine

1. Gav and Em suggest: before and now Mini-lesson: use *used to* + base verb for a past habit or state that has changed. After *did* or *didn't*, write *use to*. Check: choose the correct form: (1) Before moving, I *used to* take/taking the bus. (2) I *didn't use/used to* have a garden. (3) Did you *use to* live/living in a flat? Answers: (1) take; (2) use; (3) live. Our suggested practice: invent a before-and-now profile. Write one positive and one negative sentence, then ask a partner a *Did you use to...?* question. Partners explain what changed.

After the attempt

What could learners do? What needed another model or a smaller step? Choose one useful adjustment and try the task again.

Notes for our next lesson

Read the full teaching article and listen to the episode at howtoenglishpod.com