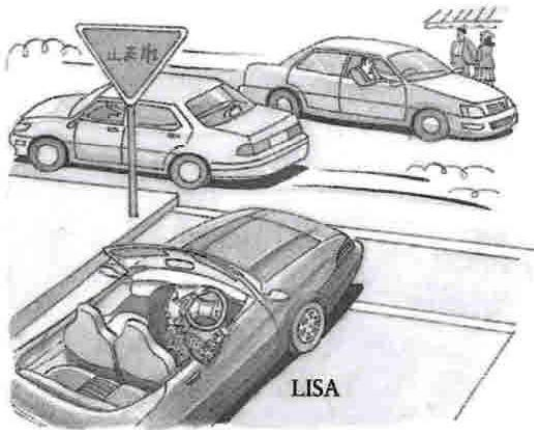


Be/get used to something (I'm used to . . .)

A

Study this example situation:



Lisa is an American who lives in Tokyo. When she first drove a car in Japan, she found it very difficult because she had to drive on the left instead of 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. So:

She got used to driving on the left.

Now, it's no problem for Lisa:

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. It is not strange for him. He is used to it. He is used to living alone.
- I bought some new shoes. They felt strange at first because I wasn't used to them.
- Our new apartment is on a very busy street. I suppose we'll get used to the noise, but for now it's very annoying.
- Diane has a new job. She has to get up much earlier now than before – at 6:30. She finds this difficult because she isn't used to getting up so early.
- Brenda's husband is often away. She doesn't mind. She is used to him being away.

B

After **be/get used** you cannot use the *infinitive* (to do / to drive, etc.). We say:

- She is used to driving on the left. (*not* she is used to drive)

When we say "I am used to something," **to** is a *preposition*, not part of the infinitive (see Unit 57C). So we say:

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

C

Do not confuse **I am used to doing** and **I used to do**:

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

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

I used to do something = I did something regularly in the past but no longer do it (see Unit 17). You can use this structure only for the past, not for the present. The structure is **I used to do** (*not* I am used to do):

- I used to drive to work every day, but these days I usually ride my bike.
- We used to live in a small town, but now we live in Los Angeles.

Exercises

58.1 Look again at the situation in Section A on the opposite page ("Lisa is an American . . ."). The following situations are similar. Complete the sentences using *used to*.

1. Juan is Spanish and went to live in Canada. In Spain he always had dinner late in the evening, but in Canada dinner was at 6:00. This was very early for him. When Juan first went to Canada, he wasn't used to having dinner so early, but after a while he _____ it. Now he thinks it's normal. He _____ at 6:00.
2. Julia is a nurse. A year ago she started working nights. At first she found it hard and didn't like it. She _____ nights, and it took her a few months to _____ it. Now, after a year, she's quite happy. She _____ nights.

58.2 What do you say in these situations? Use *I'm (not) used to*.

1. You live alone. You don't mind this. You have always lived alone.
Friend: Do you get a little lonely sometimes? *You:* No, I'm used to living alone.
2. You sleep on the floor. You don't mind this. You have always slept on the floor.
Friend: Wouldn't you prefer to sleep in a bed?
You: No, I _____.
3. You have to work hard. This is not a problem for you. You have always worked hard.
Friend: You have to work very hard in your job, don't you?
You: Yes, but I don't mind that. I _____.
4. You usually go to bed early. Last night you went to bed very late (for you), and as a result you are very tired this morning.
Friend: You look tired this morning.
You: Yes, _____.

58.3 Read the situation and complete the sentences using *used to*.

1. Some friends of yours have just moved into an apartment on a busy street. It is very noisy. They'll have to get used to the noise.
2. Jack once went to the Middle East. It was very hard for him at first because of the heat. He wasn't _____.
3. Sue moved from a big house to a much smaller one. She found it strange at first. She had to _____ in a much smaller house.
4. The children at school got a new teacher. She was different from the teacher before her, but this wasn't a problem for the children. The children soon _____.
5. Some people from the United States are thinking of going to live in your city or country. What will they have to get used to? They will have to _____.

58.4 Complete the sentences using only one word each time (see Section C).

1. Lisa had to get used to driving on the left.
2. Tom used to _____ a lot of coffee. Now he prefers tea.
3. I feel very full after that meal. I'm not used to _____ so much.
4. I wouldn't like to share an office. I'm used to _____ my own office.
5. I used to _____ a car, but I sold it a few months ago.
6. When we were children, we used to _____ swimming every day.
7. There used to _____ a movie theater here, but it was torn down a few years ago.
8. I'm the boss here! I'm not used to _____ told what to do.