

English Conversational Construction

Content:

1. Construction «Used to ...»
2. Construction «So ... / Neither ...»
3. Construction «It takes ...»
4. Absolute Participle Construction
5. Preferences Construction
6. Participle clauses: Having + Past Participle (PII)

1. Used to

Usage:

1. The construction «Used to» describes regular actions or states in the past and means as "when that happened before."
2. The construction «Used to» is used only in the past tense (Past Simple Tense), after which the infinitive of the verb uses with the particle to.
3. This construction «Used to» is used when the speaker wants to show that in the present tense some action is no longer taking place.

Examples

I used to go swimming a lot.

I used to get up at seven but now I get up later.

He didn't use to wake up so early.

What time did you use to wake up when you worked in a hospital?

Warning!

Which is correct use to or used to?

- ❖ Used to refers to something familiar or routine as in "I'm used to getting up early for work," or to say that something repeatedly happened in the past like "we used to go out more."
- ❖ Use to typically occurs with did; "did you use to work there?" or "it didn't use to be like that," describing something in the past...

- ❖ Used to is a phrase that can mean “accustomed or habituated to” or refers to something from the past that is no longer true.
- ❖ Use to and used to are also frequently used in English grammar as modal verb phrases.

Exercise. Rewrite sentences using construction the Used to.

Sample:

He played toy cars when he was a boy = He used to play toy cars when he was a boy

1. He studied French =
2. He was proud of his team =
3. Peter had more pocket money =
4. I lived near there =
5. When Grandpa was a student, he did sports =
6. She went to the disco every Sunday =
7. They were lucky =
8. He argued with his classmates =
9. Mary went shopping on Friday =
10. She had a short holiday in spring =

Test

1. Larry ... work as a lorry-driver, but now he works as a dispatcher at the station.
 - a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to
2. Our family ... live in Poland, but three weeks ago we moved to the UK.
 - a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to

3. Nancy ... forget about important meetings, but now she has bought a pocket planner.
- a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to
4. Dean ... translate technical literature to earn money, but now he has found a work of interpreter.
- a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to
5. My girlfriend ... like men with long hair, but now she is dating with me, and she likes my long hair!
- a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to
6. I ... wake up early and ... go to bed late before I started to work.
- a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to
7. Our car ... break down all the time until Freddy fixed it.
- a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to
8. Francesca ... travel a lot, and now she works as a journalist in international magazine.
- a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to
9. I ... use my mobile phone only to call my friends, but now I use it to access to the Internet.
- a) used to
 - b) didn't
 - c) use to

10. The students ... know how to use "used to", and now they know it!

- a) used to
- b) didn't
- c) use to

2. So do I / Neither do I

Affirmative form	Negative form
Peter: "I like stories by Jack London". Helen: "So do I".	– He doesn't like love stories. – Neither does she.

Pronouns	Agreement	Disagreement
I	So do I	Neither do I
He	So does he	Neither does he
She	So does she	Neither does she
It	So does it	Neither does it
You	So do you	Neither do you
We	So do we	Neither do we
They	So do they	Neither do they

Exercise. Agree or disagree using the construction So... I / Neither... I

1. I don't give way to despair. –
2. I am interested in football. –
3. I haven't visited the new museum yet. –
4. I don't forget to water the flowers. –
5. I can't talk when somebody is interrupting me. –
6. I am fond of playing music. –
7. I am going to watch a movie tonight. –

8. I went to the cinema yesterday. –
9. I don't like hot weather. –
10. I always tell the truth. –
11. She could swim when she was 5 years old. –
12. She was playing music from 5 till 6 in the evening. –
13. She wasn't sleeping at midnight. –
14. She doesn't like apples. –
15. She is not a good singer. –
16. She will do her best at her exams. –
17. She has baked a pie today. –
18. She hasn't been at the cinema this week. –
19. She must do the work in time. –
20. She won't take up dancing lessons. –

Test: <https://englsecrets.ru/grammatika/so-do-i-neither-am-i.html>

3. It takes...

Usage:

This construction is used when we say how long an action takes. For example, we can use it to ask how long it will take to get to your destination or how long it will take to get a taxi to the city center.

Examples:

It takes me an hour to get to work.
The flight to Moscow takes 3 hours.
My morning exercises take me 15 min.
It takes just a moment.
It takes some / a lot of doing.
It takes pluck to do what she did.
It takes nerve to do what she did.
It takes greatly from the pleasure.
It takes me ten minutes to walk to work.

4. Absolute Participle Construction

Usage:

The absolute participle construction is a special participle construction in which there is a subject, and instead of an action verb the participle form is used. This construction characterizes the main sentence, explaining:

Reason	The hour being late, she hurried home.
Time	His story told, he sighed.
Related circumstances	He was standing there silent, a bitter smile curling his lips

Rules:

1. An absolute participle construction in an English sentence is always separated by a comma.
2. An absolute participle construction is one of the most difficult participle constructions in the English language.

Examples

The weather being cold, he put on his overcoat

The weather having changed, we decided not to leave.

The bridge having been swept by the flood away, the train didn't arrive.

It being cold and damp, the weary travelers made a fire to warm themselves.

It being very late, they decided to put off their visit.

The sun having set an hour before, it was getting darker.

The weather being very warm, the windows were left open.

And the wind having dropped, they decided to set out to walk.

The next morning, it being Sunday, they all went to church.

There being nothing else on the table, the girl said that she wasn't hungry.

The children being tired, they returned more slowly home.

The wind being very strong, our yacht couldn't reach the bank of the island.

It being now pretty late, we took our candles and went upstairs.

5. Preferences constructions

The Preference constructions in English are divided into 3 groups:

1. Verbs that express a positive attitude to the action:

like, love, enjoy, prefer

Most importantly, after these verbs, the other action verb is always in the “-ing” form:

I like reading

I love reading books

I enjoy listening to music

I prefer playing football to playing basketball.

2. Verbs that express a negative attitude to the action:

dislike, hate, can't stand

I dislike cooking.

I hate washing up.

I can't stand getting up early.

If you are not so categorical, then you can use the verb don't mind:

I don't mind cooking.

I don't mind washing up.

I don't mind getting up early.

3. The preference constructions «**would rather**» vs «**would prefer**»

We use preference constructs when we say what we would like to do something in a particular situation.

Remember: I would rather = I would prefer = I would like

Do not confuse the expressions «I would rather do» and «I would prefer to do»!

I would rather stay home tonight.

I would prefer to stay home tonight.

Attention: I like traveling (gerund). vs I would like to travel (infinitive).

Exercise 1. Insert the verbs bellow into sentences:

do, draw, go, listen, play, read, ride, swim, talk, visit, work, buy

1. Our grandfather enjoys _____ in the garden.
2. My little sister likes _____ dolls.
3. The boys prefer _____ to music.
4. The child hates _____ in the swimming pool.
5. I don't mind _____ morning exercises.
6. I enjoy _____ short stories.
7. They want _____ a bike.
8. My brother hates _____ to museum.
9. Granny likes _____ about her garden.
10. Next time she is going to _____ a vase.

Exercise 2. Insert verbs in the blanks.

1. I hate (a, e, t, k) medicine.
2. He enjoys (e, e, m, t) new people.
3. We love (i, v, t, s, i) our country house.
4. She hates (e, g, t) up early.
5. Stop (l, t, a, k)!
6. They dislike (n, c, l, e, a) their room.
7. Do you like (y, p, a, l) the guitar?
8. They would like to (a, t, e) in the cafe.
9. I enjoy (a, i, n, t, p).
10. It stopped (n, r, i, a).

Exercise 3. Insert Infinitive VS Gerund.

1. "I don't want (play) the piano right now", said the girl.
2. I had some problems with my English and my brother offered (help) me.
3. I enjoy (help) my friends.
4. "Romeo and Juliet" is a very interesting and romantic film. It is worth (see).
5. The tourists come to Moscow (see) its wonderful places of interest.
6. My mother wanted (cook) a pie on my birthday.
7. She likes (cook) for our family. She is good at it.

8. My uncle is fond of (travel). He has been to ten countries!
9. I'd like (travel) all over the world when I grow up.
10. When did he (drive) a car? - When he was fourteen.
11. Little Nick would like (learn) to ride a bicycle.
12. I'd like (eat) five cakes, I'm so hungry.
13. My little brother hates (eat) oranges.
14. I hope (visit) many foreign countries when I grow up.
15. Clever students enjoy (do) difficult exercises.

Exercise 4. Tell, what you would like to do.

Use the construction «I would like to» and the preposition «instead of»

Example:

James would like to read a book instead of working in the garden.

Commentary: A gerund is placed after the preposition «instead of».

1. James / read the book / work in the garden.
2. Chris / play football / do his homework.
3. Jane and Mary / sunbathe / clean up.
4. Laura / watch TV / wash up.
5. Nick and Peter / ride their bicycles / play the computer.
6. Mr. Robertson / drink tea / make a bird house.
7. Mrs. Smith / talk over the phone / cook.
8. Irene / write a letter / go to work.
9. The children / swim / wash the car.
10. The dog / walk about the field / look through the window.

Exercise 5. Use the construction «I would prefer to ... rather than»

Example:

James would prefer to read a book rather than work in the garden.

Commentary: After «rather than» the infinitive of the verb is put without the particle «to».

1. James / read the book / work in the garden.
2. Chris / play football / do his homework.

3. Jane and Mary / sunbathe / clean up.
4. Laura / watch TB / wash up.
5. Nick and Peter / ride their bicycles / play the computer.
6. Mr. Robertson / drink tea / make a bird house.
7. Mrs. Smith / talk over the phone / cook.
8. Ireen / write a letter / go to work.
9. The children / swim / repair the car.
10. The dog / walk about the field / look through the window.

6. Participle clauses: Having + Past Participle (PII)

Usage:

The construction Having + Past Participle is used when a completed action is followed by another action in the past.

Examples:

1. Having bought all they needed, they went home.
2. Having finished his homework, he went to play with his friends.
3. Having shown my reports to the doctor, I decided not to consume liquor.
4. Having completed the project ahead of schedule, the team was able to take a break.
5. Having finished her homework, she went out to play.
6. Having examined the data thoroughly, the researchers concluded that further studies were necessary.
7. Having received the necessary approvals, we can now proceed with the project.
8. She felt relieved, having passed the exam.