

Unit 18

Used to (do)

A Study this example situation:

a few years ago



Diane doesn't travel much these days.

She prefers to stay at home.

But she **used to travel** a lot.

She **used to go** away two or three times a year.

She **used to travel** a lot = she travelled a lot regularly in the past, but she doesn't do this any more.



B Something **used to** happen = it happened regularly in the past, but no longer happens:

- ☐ I **used to play** tennis a lot, but I don't play very often now.
- ☐ David **used to spend** a lot of money on clothes. These days he can't afford it.
- ☐ 'Do you go to the cinema much?' 'Not now, but I **used to**.' (= I used to go)

We also use **used to** ... for things that were true, but are not true any more:

- ☐ This building is now a furniture shop. It **used to be** a cinema.
- ☐ I **used to think** Mark was unfriendly, but now I realise he's a very nice person.
- ☐ I've started drinking tea recently. I never **used to like** it before.
- ☐ Nicole **used to have** very long hair when she was a child.

C 'I **used to** do something' is past. There is no present form. You cannot say 'I use to do'. To talk about the present, use the present simple (I **do**).

Compare:

<i>past</i>	he used to play	we used to live	there used to be
<i>present</i>	he plays	we live	there is

- ☐ We **used to live** in a small village, but now we **live** in London.
- ☐ There **used to be** four cinemas in the town. Now there is only one.

D The normal question form is **did (you) use to ... ?**:

- ☐ Did you **use to** eat a lot of sweets when you were a child?

The negative form is **didn't use to ...** (**used not to ...** is also possible):

- ☐ I **didn't use to** like him. (or I **used not to** like him.)

E Compare **I used to do** and **I was doing**:

- ☐ I **used to watch** TV a lot. (= I watched TV regularly in the past, but I no longer do this)
- ☐ I **was watching** TV when Mike called. (= I was in the middle of watching TV)

F Do not confuse **I used to do** and **I am used to doing** (see Unit 61). The structures and meanings are different:

- ☐ I **used to live** alone. (= I lived alone in the past, but I no longer live alone.)
- ☐ I **am used to living** alone. (= I live alone, and I don't find it strange or difficult because I've been living alone for some time.)

Past continuous (I **was doing**) → Unit 6 Would (= used to) → Unit 36

Be/get used to (doing) something → Unit 61

18.1 Complete the sentences with *use(d) to* + a suitable verb.

- 1 Diane doesn't travel much now. She used to travel a lot, but she prefers to stay at home these days.
- 2 Liz _____ a motorbike, but last year she sold it and bought a car.
- 3 We came to live in London a few years ago. We _____ in Leeds.
- 4 I rarely eat ice-cream now, but I _____ it when I was a child.
- 5 Jim _____ my best friend, but we aren't good friends any longer.
- 6 It only takes me about 40 minutes to get to work now that the new road is open. It _____ more than an hour.
- 7 There _____ a hotel near the airport, but it closed a long time ago.
- 8 When you lived in New York, _____ to the theatre very often?

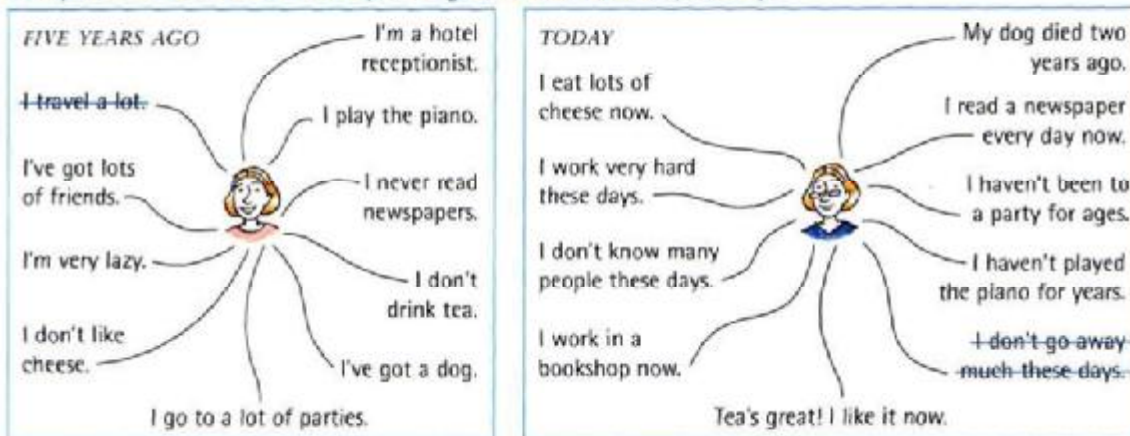
18.2 Matt changed his life style. He stopped doing some things and started doing other things:

He stopped	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> { studying hard { going to bed early { running three miles every morning 	He started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> { sleeping late { going out in the evening { spending a lot of money
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Write sentences about Matt with *used to* and *didn't use to*.

- 1 He used to study hard.
- 2 He didn't use to sleep late.
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____

18.3 Compare what Karen said five years ago and what she says today:

Now write sentences about how Karen has changed. Use *used to* / *didn't use to* / *never used to* in the first part of your sentence.

- 1 She used to travel a lot, but she doesn't go away much these days.
- 2 She used _____ but _____
- 3 _____ but _____
- 4 _____ but _____
- 5 _____ but _____
- 6 _____ but _____
- 7 _____ but _____
- 8 _____ but _____
- 9 _____ but _____
- 10 _____ but _____