

Had better It's time ...

A Had better (I'd better / you'd better etc.)

I'd better do something = it is advisable to do it. If I don't do it, there will be a problem or a danger:

- I have to meet Ann in ten minutes. I'd better go now or I'll be late.
- 'Shall I take an umbrella?' 'Yes, you'd better. It might rain.'
- We'd better stop for petrol soon. The tank is almost empty.

The negative is I'd better not (= I had better not):

- 'Are you going out tonight?' 'I'd better not. I've got a lot to do.'
- You don't look very well. You'd better not go to work today.

Remember that:

The form is 'had better' (usually 'I'd better / you'd better' etc. in spoken English).

- I'd better phone Carol, hadn't I?

Had is normally past, but the meaning of had better is present or future, *not* past.

- I'd better go to the bank now / tomorrow.

We say 'I'd better do' (*not* to do).

- It might rain. We'd better take an umbrella. (*not* We'd better to take)

B Had better and should

Had better is similar to should but not exactly the same. We use **had better** only for a specific situation (not for things in general). You can use **should** in all types of situations to give an opinion or give advice:

- It's late. You'd better go. / You should go. (a specific situation)
- You're always at home. You should go out more often. (in general – *not* 'had better go')

Also, with **had better**, there is always a danger or a problem if you don't follow the advice.

Should only means 'it is a good thing to do'. Compare:

- It's a great film. You should go and see it. (but no problem if you don't)
- The film starts at 8.30. You'd better go now or you'll be late.

C It's time ...

You can say **It's time** (for somebody) to ... :

- It's time to go home. / It's time for us to go home.

But you can also say:

- It's late. It's time we went home.

Here we use the past (**went**), but the meaning is present, *not* past:

- It's 10 o'clock and he's still in bed. It's time he got up. (*not* It's time he gets up)

It's time you did something = you should have already done it or started it. We often use this structure to criticise or to complain:

- It's time the children were in bed. It's long after their bedtime.
- You're very selfish. It's time you realised that you're not the most important person in the world.

You can also say **It's about time** This makes the criticism stronger:

- Jack is a great talker. But it's about time he did something instead of just talking.

35.1 Read the situations and write sentences with **had better** or **had better not**. Use the words in brackets.

- You're going out for a walk with Tom. It looks as if it might rain. You say to Tom:
(an umbrella) We'd better take an umbrella.
- Michael has just cut himself. It's a bad cut. You say to him:
(a plaster)
- You and Kate plan to go to a restaurant this evening. It's a popular restaurant. You say to Kate:
(reserve) We
- Jill doesn't look very well – not well enough to go to work. You say to her:
(work)
- You received the phone bill four weeks ago, but you haven't paid it yet. If you don't pay soon, you could be in trouble. You say to yourself:
(pay)
- You want to go out, but you're expecting an important phone call. You say to your friend:
(go out) I
- You and Liz are going to the theatre. You've missed the bus and you don't want to be late. You say to Liz: (a taxi)

35.2 Put in **had better** where suitable. If **had better** is not suitable, use **should**.

- I have an appointment in ten minutes. I 'd better go now or I'll be late.
- It's a great film. You should go and see it. You'll really like it.
- I get up early tomorrow. I've got a lot to do.
- When people are driving, they keep their eyes on the road.
- I'm glad you came to see us. You come more often.
- She'll be upset if we don't invite her to the wedding, so we invite her.
- These biscuits are delicious. You try one.
- I think everybody learn a foreign language.

35.3 Complete the sentences. Sometimes you need only one word, sometimes two.

- I need some money. I'd better go to the bank.
 - John is expecting you to phone him. You better phone him now.
 - 'Shall I leave the window open?' 'No, you'd better it.'
 - We'd better leave as soon as possible, we?
- It's time the government something about the problem.
 - It's time something about the problem.
 - I think it's about time you about other people instead of only thinking about yourself.

35.4 Read the situations and write sentences with **It's time** (somebody did something).

- You think the children should be in bed. It's already 11 o'clock.
It's time the children were in bed.
- You haven't had a holiday for a very long time. You need one now.
It's time I
- You're sitting on a train waiting for it to leave the station. It's already five minutes late.
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- You enjoy having parties. You haven't had one for a long time.
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- The company you work for has been badly managed for a long time. You think some changes should be made.
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- Andrew has been doing the same job for the last ten years. He should try something else.
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