

## HABITS IN THE PAST: USED TO, WOULD

### USED TO

- Use:

We use *used to + infinitive* to talk about past habits which are now finished.

*I used to go climbing when I lived in Huesca  
(= I climbed regularly in the past, but I don't climb now)*

More examples:

*She used to live in London, but she moved in 1999.  
When I was a child, I used to play football in the breaks.*

We only use used to to talk about the past. When we talk about present

habits or present states, we use the present tense.

*I go swimming twice or three times a week.  
We live in Alcañiz.*

- Form

USED TO + INFINITIVE takes the same form in all persons:

*I/ you/ he/ she/... used to live in London.*

THE NEGATIVE OF USED TO is normally didn't use to.

*Last year I didn't use to play tennis very often.*

We can also use never used to: *You never used to like rap music.*

THE INTERROGATIVE OF USED TO is with did .....use to.....?

*What sort of books did you use to read when you were a child?*

### WOULD

We can use would with the same meaning to talk about past actions.

*When I was a child my father would take me fishing.*

When we talk about past states, we can use used to, but not would.

*I used to be slimmer when I was studying. (Not: I would be...)*

**Exercises:**

- Put one verb in each sentence into the *used to* form and the other verb into the present simple.

*Examples:*

*When Margot first became a doctor, she used to work (work) in a small hospital in Brighton, but now she works (work) in a large hospital in York.*

- 1 Robert \_\_\_\_\_ (be) interested in football, but he \_\_\_\_\_ (not be) very interested in it any more.
- 2 Nowadays Kate \_\_\_\_\_ (never / go) dancing, but she \_\_\_\_\_ (go) a lot before she was married.
- 3 That shop \_\_\_\_\_ (be) a grocer's when I was a child. Now it \_\_\_\_\_ (be) a supermarket.
- 4 Britain \_\_\_\_\_ (have) military service, but it \_\_\_\_\_ (not have) it any more.
- 5 France \_\_\_\_\_ (be) a republic now, but it \_\_\_\_\_ (be) a monarchy.
- 6 " \_\_\_\_\_ (you like) history when you were at school?" "No, I didn't, but now I \_\_\_\_\_ (find) it quite interesting".

- Which of these sentences can be completed with either used to or would? Which of them can be completed with used to?

*Examples:*

*We used to live in a village in the North of England.*

*When Robert was younger, he used to / would go running every morning.*

- 1 When Andrew was a small baby he \_\_\_\_\_ cry a lot.
- 2 When I was little, I \_\_\_\_\_ be afraid of the dark.
- 3 When we were children, we \_\_\_\_\_ visit my grandmother every Sunday afternoon.
- 4 When Mrs Woods was younger, she \_\_\_\_\_ play tennis every weekend.
- 5 Years ago I \_\_\_\_\_ have a motorbike.
- 6 There \_\_\_\_\_ be quite a lot of cinemas in the town, but now there aren't any.