

# Causatives: *get and have*

GRAMMAR

LEVEL  
Intermediate

NUMBER  
B2\_1052G\_EN

LANGUAGE  
English





## Goals

- Learn how to use *have* as a causative verb
- Learn how to use *get* as a causative verb
- Practise comparing *have* and *get* in causative sentences



Ever wondered how you say that you had **something done for you**?

Let's take a look at the different ways we can say that you **caused** something to be done, but that you **didn't do it yourself**.



## Preview and warm-up

- In this lesson, you will learn how to use **get** and **have** in order to give other people responsibility.



I **had** my bicycle **repaired**.



## Have as a causative verb

- To talk about things that you will have done or that have been done by someone else you use this structure:
  - **subject + have or had + the object + verb in the past participle.**
- This means that the subject of the sentence **didn't do the action that was done**, but that **they caused the action to happen** by, for example, paying for it or asking for it to occur. This is why **have** is called a **causative verb**.

In these examples someone other than the subject did the action

I had my hair washed and trimmed. (past)

Adrian will have his dog vaccinated. (future)

I had my house painted yesterday.

Molly will have her wedding dress repaired.

I had a special landscape painting commissioned.





## *Have* as a causative verb

- Remember that when you use the **have + object + verb past participle** construction, you are saying **that it was not you who did the action, but someone else!**



I **had** my flat professionally **cleaned** because it was too much work for me. I only paid the cleaner €100, so it was a real bargain!



## ***Have* as a causative verb when you want to say who did the action**

- When you want to say **who did the action**, you can use the following structure:
- **have + person who did the action + verb in the infinitive form.**

- I **had my brother clean** my house.
- I **had the veterinarian vaccinate** my dog.
- I **will have the electrician fix** my lighting.
- I **will have my mother repair** my trousers.





## Compare

- Compare:
  - **have + object + verb in the past participle** and
  - **have + the person who did the action + verb in the infinitive.**
- Here are some further examples showing the difference between the two uses of **have** when you want to say that you had something done.



I **had my** divorce papers **signed**.

I **had my lawyer sign** the divorce papers.

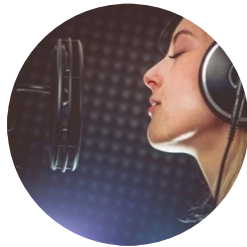






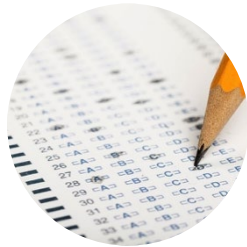
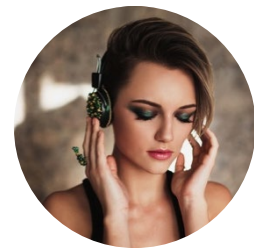
## More examples of *have* as a causative verb

- Pay close attention to the form of the verbs in these sentences.



I **had** my headphones **fixed**.

I **had** my friend **fix** my headphones.



I **had** my examination results **translated** into English.

I **had** my teacher **translate** my examination results into English.





Use either the have + object + past participle or have + person + verb in the infinitive to complete these sentences

Sonia

had/have

her clothes  
the seamstress

repair/repared

Matthew

had/have

his computer  
the technician

clean/cleaned



Time to prune the roses?

Nathan

had/have

his roses  
the gardener

prune/pruned



## Poor George: Fill in the gaps

Based on what you have learnt, fill in the gap with the correct form of the following verbs:

**prune; weed; pay; give; cut; take; order**

It was a sunny day and George had his daughter \_\_\_\_\_ the dog out for a walk. His joints had become too sore for an early morning walk, but he had the nurse \_\_\_\_\_ some more medication to help with his arthritis and he had promised Blighty the dog that he would walk him in the afternoon. He watched the sun slowly settle across the garden. He will have the garden beds \_\_\_\_\_ in the coming weeks, he thought, but the gardener will not be very enthusiastic about it. He too has a bad back. He had the trees \_\_\_\_\_ by the neighbour's gardener last month and he had hoped that his own gardener would be able to do the roses. His daughter had the lawn \_\_\_\_\_ only a month earlier, but it was already a little long. And then there were so many extra bills this season. He had his wife \_\_\_\_\_ the last bill, and he was quite sure she had been shocked by how expensive it was. Then there was the house. It needed repainting. George had the local painter \_\_\_\_\_ him an estimate of how much it would cost to repaint the house, and it was far more expensive than he had expected. Poor George! He had asked for a good year, but it was turning out to be a very difficult one.



## Who had what done and who did they get to do it?

Describe what is happening in these photos. Use a causative sentence to say who had what done and then who did what. You need to imagine a subject for each sentence. For example: *John had the fire contained in his back garden. John had the firefighters fight the fire in his back garden.*





## Georgia's day: What did Georgia have done? What do you have done?

Using causative sentences state what Georgia had done throughout her day. For example: *Georgia had her teeth cleaned. Georgia had the dentist clean her teeth.* Then practise describing a typical day in your life and the things that you have done by other people.

Georgia is at the dentist.



Georgia is at the chemist.



Georgia is at a work meeting.

Georgia is at home trying to organise dinner.



Georgia is at her son's football training.





## Using *get* as a causative verb

- *Get* is also used as a **causative verb**. As with *have*, *get* is used in the following way:
- **Get + object + past participle of the verb.**
- *Get* is more informal than *have*, but it means the same thing.
- As with the examples given for *have*, the action being performed in these sentences is done by someone else.

### Get as a causative verb

I get my gutters cleaned every three months.

Samantha gets her hair coloured twice a year.

The dog gets its nails clipped regularly.

The builders get their hard hats painted for fun.

Everyone gets their tattoos redone when they are elderly.





## Get and got as causative verbs

- You can also use the construction:
  - **got + the object + the past participle of the verb** if the action happened in the past.
- Remember that the **difference between *have* and *got* is the formality of the verb.**
- ***Get*** is more commonly used in **spoken English** whereas ***have* and *had*** are more commonly used in **written English.**

- The elephants **got their tusks sharpened** this year.
- The monkeys **got their toenails clipped** last month.
- The zoo keepers **got their salaries paid** on time this week.
- The zoo **got** their rare snake programme **sponsored** this year.





## When you want to say who performed the action with *get*: get + person + infinitive verb with *to*

- As with *have*, *get* can be used when you want to say who did the action that you caused to happen. This construction sounds like the subject has **persuaded or asked** another person **to do the action for them**.
- Remember that **to** is **not used** with the verb *have* in a causative sentence.



He **gets** his **boss to do** all his tax returns because he finds it too difficult.





## Further examples

- Here are some further examples of using **got** and **get** with the **person + infinitive verb with to**.



I **got** the boy next door **to shut** the gate.

I **get** the beekeeper **to check** the hives  
for disease.





## Turn these have/had sentences into get/got sentences

1. Angelo had his mother drive him to football training.

→ Angelo got his mother to drive him to football training.

2. Robin had her hairdresser cut her fringe really short.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Julian has his uncle barter with travelling salesmen.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Julia had her boyfriend make her dinner.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Hasan had his friend tune the piano.

→ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Using a get or got + object + past participle write a sentence describing these actions. Are there any that would be better with the verb *have*?

Mary's beer was refilled.

Tom's clothes were washed.

Adrian's school fees were paid.

Simon's rent was paid.

Damian's car was repaired.

Jack's engagement ring was reshaped to fit his finger.



## Using *get* and *got* to say someone did something

Who did Jonathon get to do these actions?

Who does Samantha get to do these actions?

Take turns with your teacher and make sentences using *get* and *got*.  
For example: *Jonathon gets his mother to wash his clothes, but Samantha gets her boyfriend to help her wash her clothes.*



take out the  
rubbish

talk to grumpy  
relatives

repair flat tyres

put the children  
to bed

clean the  
bathroom

rake the leaves

prepare dinner  
on a Friday  
night

pay the bills

wash the dishes



## Using reflexive pronouns to emphasise that we did something ourselves

- When we want to emphasise that we did an action for ourselves, rather than getting someone else to do it for us (as with causative verbs), we often use reflexive pronouns: **myself, himself, herself, ourselves.**



I wanted to make sure I didn't have to ride up too many hills and I didn't trust the group leader, so I worked out the route **for myself** and everything worked out fine.



## Using causative verbs from this lesson create a role play about responsibility

Simon and Frankie share an apartment and are having a discussion about responsibility.

What do Simon or Frankie do for themselves? What does Simon get Frankie to do? What does Frankie get Simon to do? What have others got Simon to do for them? What has Frankie done to make her life more organised?

- Simon loves to party. He cheers everyone else on and is always offering to help others, but he is very messy and has no idea how to organise anything.



- Frankie is grumpy. She does most things for herself and she doesn't understand why Simon offers to do things for other people when he can't even clean his own dishes or cook for himself.





## About you

**What do you get done  
for you and what do you  
do for yourself?**

I get my boss to  
do all the  
difficult tasks.

I get my sister to  
walk the dog.

I got my  
accountant to  
do all my tax  
returns.

I prefer to do  
things for  
myself.

I got my mother  
to collect my  
mail last week.



## Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no






## Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.  
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



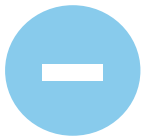
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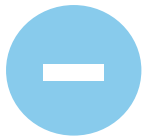
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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have time, go over  
the most difficult slides again





## Answer key

### Exercise p. 19

These actions could have taken place in a formal setting, so *have* may have been a better verb to use, but there is no rule that says you have to use *have* instead of *get*.  
Adrian's school fees were paid. Simon's rent was paid.

### Exercise p. 18

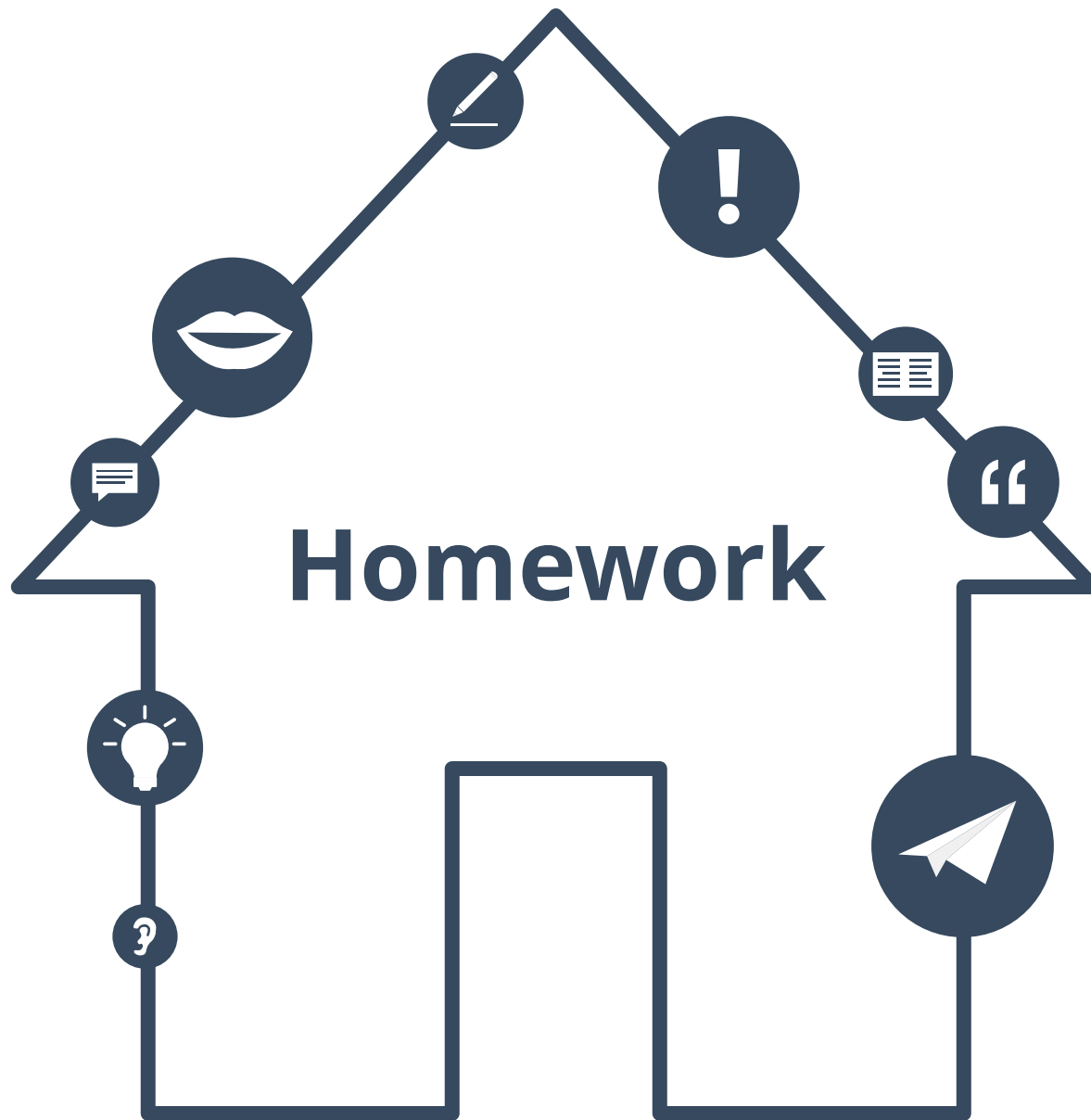
Robin gets her hairdresser to cut her fringe really short. Julian gets his uncle to barter with the travelling sales men. Julia gets her boyfriend to wax her skis. Hasan gets his friend to tune the piano.

### Exercise p. 11

take, order, weeded, pruned, cut, pay, give.

### Exercise p. 10

Sonia had her clothes repaired; Sonia had the seamstress repair her clothes; Matthew had his computer cleaned; Matthew had the technician clean his computer; Nathan had his roses pruned; Nathan had the gardener prune his roses.





Write four sentences for each topic using the causative verbs structures covered in this lesson:

subject + have or had + the object + past participle  
subject + have + person who did the action + infinitive  
subject + get or got + object + past participle  
get or got + person who did the action + to + infinitive







## Homework answer key

### Exercise p. 28

I had my mobile phone fixed; I had a technician fix my mobile phone; I got my mobile phone fixed; I got the technician to fix my mobile phone.

I had my assignment edited; I had a friend edit my assignment; I got my assignment edited; I got my friend to edit my assignment.

I had my bed made; I had my boyfriend make the bed; I got my bed made; I got my boyfriend to make my bed.

I had my dog walked; I had my sister walk the dog; I got my dog walked; I got my sister to walk the dog.

I had appointments made for me; I had the doctor make the appointments for me; I got the appointments made for me; I got the doctor to make the appointments for me.

I had my internet downloads paid for; I had my dad pay for my internet downloads; I got my internet downloads paid for; I got my dad to pay for my internet downloads. I had my glass bottles recycled; I had a friend recycle my glass bottles; I got my glass bottles recycled; I got my friend to recycle my glass bottles.

