

## 16 The auxiliaries dare and used

### 161 dare

A In the affirmative dare is conjugated like an ordinary verb, i.e. *dare/dares* in the present, *dared* in the past. But in the negative and interrogative it can be conjugated either like an ordinary verb or like an auxiliary, i.e. it is a semi-modal.

Negative:	present	do/does not dare	dare/dares not
	past	did not dare	dared not
Interrogative:	present	do you/does he dare?	dare you/he?
	past	did you/did he dare?	dared you/he?

The ordinary verb construction is more commonly used.

B Infinitives after dare  
Negatives and interrogative forms with *do/did* are in theory followed by the infinitive with *to*, but in practice the *to* is often omitted:

*He doesn't dare (to) say anything.*

*Did he dare (to) criticize my arrangements?*

*dare I/he/you?* etc. and *dare not* forms take the infinitive without *to*;

*Dare we interrupt? They dared not move.*

When *dare* is preceded by *nobody*, *anybody* etc. the *to* is optional:

*Nobody dared (to) speak.*

C *dare* is not much used in the affirmative except in the expression *I daresay*. *I daresay* (or *I dare say*) has two idiomatic meanings:

1 'I suppose':

*I daresay there'll be a restaurant car on the train.*

2 I accept what you say (but it doesn't make any difference):

*ENGLISH TOURIST: But I drive on the left in England!*

*SWISS POLICEMAN: I daresay you do, but we drive on the right here.*

*TRAVELLER: But the watch was given to me; I didn't buy it.*

*CUSTOMS OFFICER: I daresay you, didn't, but you'll have to pay duty on it all the same.*

*daresay* is used in this way with the first person singular only.

D *how dare(d) you? how dare(d) he/they?* can express indignation:

*How dare you open my letters? (I am angry with you for opening them.)*

*How dared he complain? (I am indignant because he complained.)*

E *dare* is also an ordinary transitive verb meaning 'challenge' (but only to deeds requiring courage). It is followed by object + full infinitive:

*MOTHER: Why did you throw that stone through the window?*

*SON: Another boy dared me (to throw it).*

### 162 Used

A Form  
*used* is the past tense of a defective verb which has no present tense.

Affirmative: *used* for all persons

Negative: *used not/usedn't* for all persons

Interrogative: *used you/he/they?* etc.

Negative interrogative: *used you not/usedn't you?* etc.

Negative and interrogative can also be formed with *did*:

*didn't use to did you use to? didn't you use to?*

This is a more informal form, common in conversation.

*used* is followed by the full infinitive, and *to* remind students of this it is often referred to as *used to* (just as *have used* for obligation is referred to as *have to*).

B Use  
*used* is used:

To express a discontinued habit or a past situation which contrasts with the present:

*I used to smoke cigarettes; now I smoke a pipe.*

*He used to drink beer; now he drinks wine.*

*She usedn't to like Tom but she quite likes him now or*

*She used to dislike Tom but she quite likes him now.*

**used** is not normally stressed, but it can be stressed if the speaker wishes to emphasise the contrast between past and present.

To express a past routine or pattern. Here we are not making a contrast between past and present: we are merely describing someone's routine during a certain period. Very often there is a succession of actions, **used to** here is replaceable by **would** (but **would** cannot replace **used to** for a discontinued habit etc. as in 1 above). **used** here is always unstressed.

*Tom and Ann were a young married couple. Every morning Tom used to kiss Ann and set off/or work. Ann used to stand at the window and wave goodbye. In the evening she used to welcome him home and ask him to tell her about his day.*

If we use **would** we have:

*Every morning Tom would kiss Ann and set off/or work. Ann would stand at the window and wave goodbye etc.*

Remember that **used** has no present form. So for present habits or routines we must use the simple present tense.

### 163 **used as an adjective: to be/become/get used to**

**used** can also be an adjective meaning 'accustomed'. It is then preceded by **be, become** or **get** in any tense and followed by the preposition **to** + noun/pronoun or gerund:

*I am used to noise.*

*I am used to working in a noisy room.*

*You will soon get used to the electric typewriters.*

*You will soon get used to typing on electric typewriters.*

*They soon got used to the traffic regulations.*

*They soon got used to driving on the left.*

**I am used to ...** etc. is a psychological statement. *I am used to working in a noisy room* means that I have worked in a noisy room, so the noise doesn't bother me: I don't mind it. *You'll soon get used to typing on electric typewriters* means that after you have used them for a while you will find them quite easy to use. Very often *I'm used to it* has the meaning 'I don't mind it/It doesn't give me any trouble', as in the above examples. But it can work the other way. Imagine our canteen serves only tea with its meals. A Frenchman, newly arrived from France, might say:

*I'm used to wine with my meals, so I find these lunches rather unsatisfying.*

Do not confuse subject + **be/become/get** + **used to** with subject + **used to** (see 162).

In the first, **used** is an adjective and **to** is a preposition. In the second, **used** is a verb and **to** is part of the following infinitive. Do not confuse these forms with the regular verb **to use** /ju:z/ meaning 'employ'.