

To get



It's **getting** late. Let's stop reading now and **get** you to bed.

Definition

The verb 'to get' has many different meanings and uses. For example:<?xml:namespace prefix = "o" ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

You've **got** to **get** a ticket to **get** on the bus to **get** to town to **get** some scissors to **get** a haircut!

Construction

Present simple: get(s)<?xml:namespace prefix = "o" ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

Present participle: getting

Past simple and past participle: got

Uses

1. As a main verb with a variety of meanings. It is commonly used in conversation and sounds much more natural than standard verbs.

Meaning	Examples
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To become	<p>She was ill last week but she's getting better now.</p> <p>He got rich when he started his own business.</p>
To obtain or acquire	<p>I need to get a new laptop - this one's so slow.</p> <p>We're getting a new manager.</p>
To receive	<p>Did you get a reply to your email?</p> <p>We got a lot of complaints about the new system.</p>
To bring, fetch or take	<p>I'll just get a pen from my office and I'll join you in a minute.</p> <p>I need to get a message to George - are you seeing him later?</p>
To take or catch [transport]	<p>I always get a bus to work.</p> <p>We're getting a taxi to the airport - it's more expensive but quicker.</p>
With prepositions of place - to go and/or arrive at a location or state	<p>How can I get to the station?</p> <p>We didn't get out of the meeting until 7 o'clock.</p> <p>She got into trouble for arguing with the boss.</p>
With gerunds - to start doing something	<p>Let's get going or we'll be late.</p> <p>I met a nice Englishman at the conference and we got talking about football.</p>
To understand	<p>I don't get it. Why do we have to start so early?</p> <p>Now do you get why it's so important?</p>
To contract an illness or disease	<p>I think I'm getting a cold.</p> <p>She got flu last winter and couldn't work for two weeks.</p>
With the infinitive - to be able or allowed to or have an opportunity to do something	<p>We went to Paris but didn't get to see an opera - everything was fully booked.</p> <p>We started at 6 o'clock this morning so we get to leave early.</p>
To cause something to be done	<p>I'll get it finished by tomorrow.</p> <p>Can you get this calculator to work? I've tried but I can't.</p>

Where possible, we should avoid 'get' in very formal writing. Instead, use a standard verb or alternative expression. For example:

Informal	Formal
We got some new desks and chairs.	We bought some new desks and chairs.
We'll get to talk to him next week.	We will have an opportunity to talk to him next week.
We should get moving.	We should act now.
She's getting better at speaking English.	Her spoken English is improving.

2. 'Got' with 'have' as an alternative to:

a) 'have' for possession:

I have a red car. I've **got** a red car.

b) 'have to' for necessity:

I have to go to the dentist tomorrow. I've **got** to go to the dentist tomorrow.

3. As part of a phrasal verb. There are lots of phrasal verbs that are formed with get. Here are a few examples:

Phrasal verb	Meaning	Examples
get by	to manage or cope with limited resources	Two people are off sick at the moment but we're getting by . I have to get by on a much lower salary nowadays.
get through	1. to finish doing something 2. to use or finish a supply of something 4. To connect with someone on the phone	I don't think I'll get through all these emails today. We get through a lot of coffee in our office. I tried to call you but I couldn't get through .
get on	1. to have a good relationship 2. to enter a bus, train or some other forms of transport	We're getting on well with the new boss. Do your children get on ? Mine don't at all! We got on the train at 11.00 but it didn't leave the station until 11.30.

get out of something	To avoid doing something	I really don't want to go to the meeting tomorrow but I don't know how to get out of it. I got out of doing the presentation because an important client called.
get away with something	To evade detection, punishment or other consequences	She's always making personal calls - the boss shouldn't let her get away with it. It's not fair that some people get away with not paying tax.
get on to something	To begin doing or talking about something	In the UK, we get on to first name terms quite quickly. Let's get on to the next item.
get up	to leave one's bed	I usually get up at 6.30. I got up late yesterday and missed the bus.

Note that like a lot of other phrasal verbs, some of these have more than one meaning.

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