



Get It Done!

The rise of outsourcing and learning to say someone else did it for you

B2

Reading

Grammar

40 min

Lesson Objectives

- Read an article about outsourcing everyday tasks
- Learn vocabulary related to services and convenience
- Use the causative: have/get something done
- Distinguish between doing it yourself and having it done
- Discuss which tasks you do yourself vs outsource
- Write about services you use or would like to use

1 Before You Read

- Do you prefer to do things yourself or pay someone else?
- What household tasks do you find most annoying?
- Have you ever hired a professional for something you could have done yourself?

2 Reading: Why Do It Yourself When Someone Else Can?

Last Tuesday, Nadia ordered breakfast through an app, had her groceries delivered by noon, got her nails done, and had her flat cleaned while she was at work. She did not cook, shop, paint, or scrub a single thing.

Twenty years ago, if your tap was leaking, you either fixed it or called a plumber. Today, the range of tasks people **have done** for them has expanded far beyond plumbing and tailoring. You can **have** almost anything **done** — from laundry to tax returns, dog walking to furniture assembly.

The gig economy — freelancers and on-demand workers — was worth over 450 billion dollars in 2024. Apps for cleaning, handyman services, and virtual assistants have mushroomed. "People used to **get** their car **washed** at the weekend," says sociologist Dr. Kenji Mori. "Now they **get** their entire life **managed**."

Outsourcing personal tasks is a natural consequence of longer working hours and exhausting commutes. "I **get** my apartment **cleaned** every two weeks," says Tomasz, a developer in Warsaw. "I **have** my groceries **delivered** and recently **got** my bathroom **renovated**. The time I save, I spend with my daughter — a fair trade-off."

Critics warn we are losing self-reliance. Retired teacher Hanna Bergman: "My students **have** everything **done** for them — food prepared, clothes washed, homes cleaned. When something breaks, they open an app."

There are ethical questions too. Gig workers are paid by task, receive no benefits, and have precarious conditions. "Every time you **get** a meal **delivered** in the rain, someone is cycling through that storm for a fraction of what you paid," notes labour researcher Dr. Amira Haddad.

The question is no longer whether outsourcing is convenient. The real question is: at what point does convenience become dependency?

3 Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Example
leaking	liquid escaping through hole	<i>The tap has been leaking.</i>
plumber	fixes water pipes/taps	<i>Called a plumber.</i>
tailor	makes or alters clothes	<i>The tailor shortened trousers.</i>
assembly	putting parts together	<i>Furniture assembly.</i>
staggering	shockingly large	<i>A staggering 2 million.</i>
gig economy	short-term flexible jobs	<i>The gig economy is growing.</i>
freelancer	self-employed, hired per task	<i>A freelance designer.</i>
handyman	does small repairs	<i>The handyman fixed it.</i>
outsourcing	paying others to do work	<i>Outsourcing saves time.</i>
consequence	result of an action	<i>A consequence of overwork.</i>
commute	journey home to work	<i>My commute takes 45 min.</i>
precious	very valuable	<i>Free time is precious.</i>
trade-off	balance between two things	<i>A cost-time trade-off.</i>
self-reliance	doing things independently	<i>Values self-reliance.</i>
precarious	unstable, not secure	<i>Precarious working conditions.</i>
dependency	relying too much	<i>Convenience becomes dependency.</i>

Collocations: do it yourself • have it done • get it fixed • hire a professional • save time • on-demand service • pay by the task • job security

4 Grammar: Causative — Have/Get Something Done

□ In the Text, You Saw...

- "She **had** her groceries **delivered** by noon."
- "They **get** their car **washed** at the weekend."
- "He **got** his bathroom **renovated**."
- "They **have** everything **done** for them."

The causative means someone else does the action for you. Structure: have/get + object + past participle.

Tense	Have sth done	Get sth done
Present	I have my car serviced.	I get my car serviced.
Past	She had her hair cut.	She got her hair cut.
Pres. Perf.	We have had the roof repaired.	We have got it repaired.
Future	I will have it delivered.	I will get it delivered.
Modal	You should have it checked.	You should get it checked.

THREE DIFFERENT MEANINGS

1. Arranged service: "I had my suit dry-cleaned." = I paid the cleaner.
2. Negative experience: "She had her wallet stolen." = Someone stole it.
3. Do it yourself (informal get): "I need to get this essay finished." = I do it myself.

□ Have vs Get

Have sth done = more formal/neutral. Get sth done = more informal/conversational. Both correct.

△ Common Mistakes

- "I had cut my hair." → □ "I had my hair cut." (object before pp)
- "I had a plumber to fix it." → □ "I had it fixed by a plumber."
- "She has her car washing." → □ "She has her car washed." (pp not -ing)

5 □ Exercise: Did It Yourself or Had It Done?

1. Maria painted her living room last weekend. → Did it herself
2. Tom had his suit dry-cleaned for the wedding. → Had it done (causative)
3. I fixed the leaking tap with a YouTube tutorial. → Did it herself
4. We got our kitchen renovated by a local company. → Had it done (causative)
5. She had her phone stolen on the train. → Had it done (negative experience)
6. He cooked dinner for the whole family. → Did it himself

7. They are having their house painted next week. → Having it done (causative)
8. I washed my car this morning. → Did it herself
9. She got her eyes tested at the optician. → Had it done (causative)
10. He had his bike stolen outside the library. → Had it done (negative experience)

6 Comprehension Quiz

1. How much was the gig economy worth in 2024?

Answer: Over 450 billion dollars

2. Why does Tomasz outsource tasks?

Answer: To spend more time with his daughter

3. What does Hanna Bergman criticise?

Answer: Loss of self-reliance in young people

4. What ethical concern is mentioned?

Answer: Workers have precarious conditions and no benefits

5. 'I ___ my car ___ every month.' (have/service)

Answer: have my car serviced

6. 'She ___ her wallet ___.' (negative)

Answer: had her wallet stolen

7. Correct: I had my hair cut. (not: I had cut my hair)

Answer: Object before past participle

8. 'Where did you ___ it ___?' (get/repair)

Answer: get it repaired

7 Fill in the Blanks

Phrases: have my suit dry-cleaned • had her kitchen repainted • get the heating checked • had his phone stolen • get my eyes tested • have their office cleaned • get your teeth checked • had the roof replaced

1. I need to ___ before the interview.
2. She ___ last week. It looks great!
3. We should ___ before winter.
4. He ___ on the bus yesterday.
5. I'm going to ___ next month.
6. They ___ every Friday.
7. You should ___ regularly.

8. We ___ last summer. Expensive!

Answers: 1. have my suit dry-cleaned • 2. had her kitchen repainted • 3. get the heating checked • 4. had his phone stolen • 5. get my eyes tested • 6. have their office cleaned • 7. get your teeth checked • 8. had the roof replaced

8 Speaking & Writing

Discussion Questions

1. What do you do yourself? What do you have done by someone else?
2. Is outsourcing laziness or smart time management?
3. Are children today less self-reliant than before?
4. Would you get a robot to clean your house?
5. What ethical problems exist in the gig economy?

Example Dialogue

- A: I need to get my laptop repaired. Cracked screen.
 B: Fix it yourself? Tutorials online.
 A: No way! I'd rather have it done professionally.
 B: I had my phone screen replaced last month. 80 euros.
 A: Where did you get it done?
 B: Small shop near the station. 30 minutes.

Writing Task

Write 80–120 words about services you use or would like to use:

- What do you have done regularly?
- What would you like to get done if money were no problem?
- What do you prefer to do yourself? Why?

Use have/get something done at least 4 times.

9 Review Checklist

I can now...

- understand an article about outsourcing everyday tasks
- use vocabulary related to services and the gig economy
- use have/get something done in all tenses
- distinguish between doing it myself and having it done
- recognise the causative for negative experiences
- discuss and write about services and outsourcing



Congratulations!

You have completed Lesson 9: Get It Done!