

B1 TEENS

Life Without Electricity

Questioning dependencies and using used to, be used to, get used to

B1 Intermediate | Grammar | Reading | 40 min

★ Lesson Objectives

- ✓ Read about what life was like before electricity
- ✓ Learn vocabulary related to daily life, technology and habits
- ✓ Use used to, be used to and get used to correctly
- ✓ Distinguish between used to + infinitive, be used to + -ing, get used to + -ing
- ✓ Discuss how technology has changed daily life
- ✓ Write about past habits, current routines and adapting to change

1 Before You Read

▶ What would you miss most without electricity for a week?

▶ How did teenagers 200 years ago spend their evenings?

▶ Have you ever experienced a power cut? What happened?

2 Reading: When the Lights Went Out

When the Lights Went Out

In 2019, a small town in Norway called Vardal decided to do something unusual. For one full week, fifty families agreed to live completely without electricity. No phones, no internet, no TV, no electric heating, no fridges, no washing machines. The experiment was part of a documentary called "The Blackout," and the results surprised everyone -- including the participants themselves.

"At first, it was terrifying," said Ingrid Haugen, a 42-year-old mother of three. "We used to rely on electricity for absolutely everything -- cooking, heating, entertainment, even waking up in the morning. When it was all taken away, I didn't know what to do with myself. My children used to spend three or four hours a day on screens. Suddenly they had to find other ways to have fun." By the end of the week, Ingrid's family had rediscovered board games, storytelling and long walks in the forest. "I'm not used to

being without my phone," her 14-year-old daughter Mia admitted, "but I got used to it faster than I expected."

The experiment revealed just how dependent modern life has become on electricity. Before the invention of the light bulb in 1879, people used to go to bed when it got dark and wake up at sunrise. They used to wash clothes by hand in rivers, cook over open fires, and entertain themselves with music, conversation and storytelling. Life was harder in many ways, but people were used to it -- they didn't know anything different.

Today, the average European household uses about 4,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year. We are so used to having constant power that most of us have never even thought about what life would be like without it. Hospitals would stop working. Water treatment plants would shut down. Traffic lights would go dark. Supermarkets would lose all their refrigerated food within hours. Communication would collapse within days.

Environmental scientist Dr. Lars Eriksson says the Vardal experiment taught an important lesson. "People used to think they couldn't survive without technology. But within a few days, most families got used to the new routine. They slept better, talked more, and felt less stressed. I'm not saying we should all give up electricity -- that's unrealistic. But we need to be aware of how dependent we've become, and we should be able to cope if the power goes out."

So here's a question worth thinking about: if your electricity was cut off tomorrow, what would you do first? And what would you miss the most -- or the least?

3 Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Example
electricity	energy for machines, lights, heating	"We depend on electricity."
power cut	when electricity stops suddenly	"Power cut during the storm."
dependent (on)	needing something to function	"Too dependent on technology."
rely on	to need or trust something	"Rely on electricity for cooking."
experiment	test to discover something new	"The experiment lasted one week."
participant	person who takes part	"Fifty families were participants."
household	all people living in one home	"Average household uses lots of energy."
routine	regular daily actions	"Got used to a new routine."
cope (with)	deal with difficulty successfully	"Can you cope without your phone?"
rediscover	find/enjoy something again	"Rediscovered board games."
collapse	fail completely and suddenly	"Communication would collapse."
entertainment	activities giving pleasure	"Created their own entertainment."

Word	Definition	Example
invention	new device created for first time	"The light bulb -- a life-changing invention."
sunrise / sunset	when sun appears / disappears	"Used to wake up at sunrise."
aware (of)	knowing something exists	"Be aware of our dependency."
unrealistic	not practical or possible	"Giving up technology is unrealistic."

Collocations: power cut • rely on technology • daily routine • cope with change • dependent on electricity • light bulb • be aware of • take for granted

4 Grammar: used to / be used to / get used to

used to + infinitive (past habit): "We used to rely on electricity for everything."

be used to + -ing (familiar now): "I'm not used to being without my phone."

get used to + -ing (adapting): "I got used to it faster than I expected."

Structure	Meaning	Form	Example
used to	past habit (not now)	used to + base verb	I used to walk to school.
be used to	familiar / comfortable	am/is/are used to + -ing	She is used to waking early.
get used to	becoming familiar	get/got used to + -ing	I'm getting used to it.

Negative and Question Forms

Negative: "I didn't use to like coffee." / "I'm not used to the cold."

Question: "Did you use to play football?" / "Did you get used to living abroad?"

⚠ Common Mistakes

~~I used to going to school by bus.~~ → I used to go... (used to + base verb)

~~I'm used to wake up early.~~ → I'm used to waking up early. (be used to + -ing)

~~I didn't used to like maths.~~ → I didn't use to... (no -d after didn't)

5 Match the Halves

#	Beginning	Ending
1	I used to watch TV every evening,	but now I prefer reading.
2	She's used to living alone,	so she doesn't mind the quiet.
3	He's getting used to	his new job -- it was hard at first.
4	People didn't use to have	smartphones before 2007.
5	I'm not used to walking so much,	so my legs are very tired.
6	Did you use to play	any sports when you were younger?
7	We used to write letters,	but now everyone sends messages.
8	She couldn't get used to	the food in her new country.
9	They're used to cold weather	because they grew up in Finland.
10	I used to hate vegetables,	but now I eat them every day.

6 Comprehension Quiz

1. What did Vardal families agree to do?

Answer: Live without electricity for one week

2. What did Ingrid's family rediscover?

Answer: Board games, storytelling and walks

3. Before the light bulb, people used to...

Answer: Go to bed when it got dark

4. What happened to most families (Dr. Eriksson)?

Answer: Slept better, talked more, less stressed

5. 'I used to walk to school' means...

Answer: I walked in the past, but not now

6. 'She is used to waking up early' means...

Answer: It's normal and comfortable for her

7. 'I'm getting used to my new school' means...

Answer: I'm still adapting -- it's a process

8. Which is WRONG?

Answer: I'm used to wake up at 6 AM.

7 Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: used to • didn't use to • am used to • is used to • got used to • getting used to • isn't used to • use to

1. I _____ ride a bicycle to school, but now I take the bus.
2. She _____ living in a big city -- she's lived in London for ten years.
3. When I moved to Spain, I quickly _____ the warm weather.
4. He _____ working at night -- he finds it very difficult.
5. I _____ like spicy food, but now I love it.
6. Did you _____ have a pet when you were a child?
7. I _____ waking up early -- I've done it for years.
8. She's slowly _____ her new school.

Answers: 1. used to • 2. is used to • 3. got used to • 4. isn't used to • 5. didn't use to • 6. use to • 7. am used to • 8. getting used to

8 Speaking & Writing

◆ Discussion Questions

What did you use to do as a child that you don't do anymore?

What is something you are used to now that was difficult at first?

Could you survive a week without electricity?

What will people 100 years from now think about how we live?

Is technology making our lives better or are we too dependent?

◆ Example Dialogue

A: Could you survive without electricity for a week?

B: I don't think so. I'm so used to having my phone.

A: I used to spend hours outside as a kid, but now I'm mostly on screens.

B: During the last power cut, I got used to reading by candlelight quickly.

A: Maybe we should all try a digital detox sometimes.

B: I'm not used to being offline, but I think I could get used to it.

 **Writing Task**

Write 80-120 words. Use at least 2 examples of each: used to, be used to, get used to:

Option A: How has your life changed in 5 years? What did you use to do? What are you used to now?

Option B: Imagine you moved to a different country. What would you get used to?

9 Blackout Survival – The Game

Interactive game available online. Choose the correct form: used to, be used to or get used to in 10 scenarios!

#	Sentence	Answer
1	People ___ candles before electricity.	used to use
2	She ___ living in a hot country (Thai).	is used to
3	In Japan, I quickly ___ chopsticks.	got used to
4	Grandmother ___ wash clothes by hand.	used to
5	I'm not ___ waking up this early!	used to
6	He ___ living alone -- 10 years.	is used to
7	Months to ___ Finnish cold.	get used to
8	Did you ___ have long hair?	use to
9	She's slowly ___ her new school.	getting used to
10	I ___ like coffee, now I love it.	didn't use to

10 Review Checklist

- ✓ I can understand a text about life without electricity
- ✓ I can use vocabulary for daily life and technology
- ✓ I can use 'used to' for past habits no longer true
- ✓ I can use 'be used to' for things I'm comfortable with
- ✓ I can use 'get used to' for the process of adapting
- ✓ I can write about past habits, current routines and change

Congratulations!

You have completed this lesson: Life Without Electricity