

## Had better It's time ...

## A

Had better (I'd better / you'd better etc.)

**I'd better do** something = it is advisable to do it. If I don't do it, there will be a problem or a danger:

- ☐ I have to meet Amy in ten minutes. **I'd better go** now or I'll be late.
- ☐ 'Shall I take an umbrella?' 'Yes, **you'd better**. It might rain.'
- ☐ **We'd better stop** for petrol soon. The tank is almost empty.

The negative is **I'd better not** (= I **had** better not):

- ☐ 'The jacket looks good on you. Are you going to buy it?' '**I'd better not**. It's too expensive.'
- ☐ You don't look very well. **You'd better not go** out tonight.

Remember that:

The form is '**had** better' (usually 'I'd better / you'd better' etc. in spoken English).

- ☐ **I'd better** phone Chris, **hadn't** I?

**Had** is normally past, but the meaning of **had better** is present or future, *not* past.

- ☐ **I'd better go** to the bank **now** / **tomorrow**.

We say 'I'd better **do**' (*not* to do):

- ☐ It might rain. We'd better **take** an umbrella. (*not* We'd better to take)

## B

Had better and should

**Had better** is similar to **should**, but not exactly the same. We use **had better** only for a specific situation, not for things in general. You can use **should** in all types of situations to give an opinion or give advice:

- ☐ It's late. **You'd better go**. / You **should go**. (a specific situation)
- ☐ You're always at home. You **should go** out more often. (in general – *not* 'had better go')

Also, with **had better**, there is always a danger or a problem if you don't follow the advice.

**Should** means only 'it is a good thing to do'. Compare:

- ☐ It's a great film. You **should** go and see it. (but no problem if you don't)
- ☐ The film starts at 8.30. **You'd better** go now or you'll be late.

## C

It's time ...

You can say **It's time** (for somebody) **to** ... :

- ☐ It's time **to go** home. / It's time for us **to go** home.

But you can also say:

- ☐ It's late. It's time **we went** home.

When we use **it's time** + past (we **went** / I **did** / they **were** etc.), the meaning is present, *not* past:

- ☐ **It's time** they **were** here. Why are they so late? (*not* It's time they are here)

**It's time** somebody **did** something = they should have already done it or started it. We often use this structure to criticise or to complain:

- ☐ This situation can't continue. **It's time** you **did** something about it.
- ☐ He's very selfish. **It's time** he **realised** that he isn't the most important person in the world.

You can also say **It's about time** ... . This makes the criticism stronger:

- ☐ Jack is a great talker. But **it's about time** he **did** something instead of just talking.