

Have to and must

A

I **have to** do something = it is necessary to do it, I am obliged to do it:

- ☐ You can't turn right here. You **have to turn** left.
- ☐ I **have to wear** glasses for reading.
- ☐ Robert can't come out with us this evening. He **has to work** late.
- ☐ Last week Tina broke her arm and **had to go** to hospital.
- ☐ I haven't **had to go** to the doctor for ages.

You **have to turn** left here.



We use **do/does/did** in questions and negative sentences (for the present and past simple):

- ☐ What **do** I **have to do** to get a new driving licence? (*not* What have I to do?)
- ☐ Karen **doesn't have to work** Saturdays. (*not* Karen hasn't to)
- ☐ Why **did** you **have to leave** early?

You can say **I'll have to ...**, **I'm going to have to ...** and **I might / I may have to ...**:

- ☐ They can't fix my computer, so **I'll have to buy** a new one. *or* **I'm going to have to buy** a new one.
- ☐ Tom **might have to work** late tomorrow. *or* Tom **may have to work ...** (= it's possible that he will have to)

B

Must is similar to **have to**:

- ☐ It's later than I thought. I **must go**. *or* I **have to go**.

You can use **must** or **have to** to give your own opinion (for example, to say what *you* think is necessary, or to recommend someone to do something):

- ☐ I haven't spoken to Sue for ages. I **must phone** her. / I **have to phone** her. (= I say this is necessary)
- ☐ Mark is a really nice person. You **must meet** him. / You **have to meet** him. (I recommend this)

We use **have to** (*not usually must*) to say what someone is *obliged* to do. The speaker is not giving his/her own opinion:

- ☐ I **have to work** from 8.30 to 5.30 every day. (a fact, not an opinion)
- ☐ Jane **has to travel** a lot for her work.

But **must** is used in written rules and instructions:

- ☐ Applications for the job **must be received** by 18 May.
- ☐ (*exam instruction*) Answer all the questions. You **must write** your answers in ink.

You cannot use **must** to talk about the past:

- ☐ We didn't have much time. We **had** to hurry. (*not* we must hurry)

C

Mustn't and **don't have to** are completely different:

You **mustn't** do something = it is necessary that you do *not* do it (so don't do it):

- ☐ You **must keep** this a secret. You **mustn't tell** anyone. (= don't tell anyone)
- ☐ I promised I would be on time. I **mustn't be** late. (= I must be on time)

You **don't have to** do something = you don't need to do it (but you can if you want):

- ☐ You **don't have to tell** Tom what happened. I can tell him myself.
- ☐ I **don't have to be** at the meeting, but I think I'll go anyway.

D

You can use **have got to** instead of **have to**. So you can say:

- ☐ I've **got to** work tomorrow. *or* I **have to** work tomorrow.
- ☐ When **has** Helen **got to** go? *or* When **does** Helen **have to** go?