

UNIT
41

Have/get something done; want something done, etc.

A

Have/get something done

We can use **get** or **have** followed by an **object + past participle** when we want to say that somebody arranges for something to be done by someone else:

- We **had/got the car delivered** to the airport. (= it was delivered)
- While I was in Singapore I **had/got my eyes tested**. (= they were tested)

Got in this pattern is normally only used in conversation and informal writing.

Notice that the word order is important. Compare:

- We **had the car delivered** to the airport. (*Someone else* delivered the car) *and*
- We **had delivered the car** to the airport. (= past perfect; *we* delivered the car)

We use <i>have</i> ...	We use <i>get</i> ...
if it is clear that the person referred to in the subject of the sentence is not responsible for or has no control over what happens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I had my appendix removed when I was six. • They had their car broken into again. However, in informal speech some people use get in sentences like this.	when we say that the person referred to in the subject of the sentence does something themselves, causes what happens, perhaps accidentally, or is to blame for it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'll get the house cleaned if you cook the dinner. (= I'll clean the house) • Sue got her fingers trapped in the bicycle chain. (= Sue trapped her fingers)
We prefer have if we want to focus on the <i>result</i> of the action rather than the action itself: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'll have the house cleaned by the time you get home. • Sue had her fingers trapped in the bike chain for half an hour. 	

B

We use **won't** (or **will not**) **have**, not **get**, if we want to say that we won't allow something to happen to someone or something:

- I **won't have him** spoken to like that.
- I **won't have my name** dragged through the dirt by the press.

C

Want something done, etc.

We use **need**, **prefer**, **want**, and **would like** followed by an **object + past participle** to say that we need, prefer, etc. something to be done. Notice that we can include **to be** before the past participle form with a similar meaning. After **need** we can use an **object + -ing** with the same meaning, but we can't use **to be** with an **-ing** form:

- Be careful washing those glasses! I don't **want them** (to be) **broken**.
- We **needed the house** (to be) **redecorated**. (or ...the house **redecorating**.)
- I'd like **my car** (to be) **serviced**, please.

D

Hear, feel, see, watch

We can use **hear**, **feel**, **see** and **watch** followed by an **object + past participle** to talk about hearing, etc. something happen. After **feel**, the **object** is often a reflexive pronoun:

- I haven't **heard the piece** played before. *and* • I **felt myself** thrown forward.

Compare:

- I heard her **called** Toni. (passive meaning; = she was called Toni) *and*
- I heard Sue **call** Toni. (active meaning; = Sue called Toni)

EXERCISES

41.1 Complete these sentences using **had/got + it + past participle** as in 1. Select from the verbs below and use each word once only. In these sentences you can use either **had** or **got**. (A)



delivered dry-cleaned framed mended photocopied put down rebuilt
redecorated serviced

- 1 Karen's car wasn't starting well and seemed to be using too much petrol so she had/got it serviced.
- 2 Peter bought a new bed, but couldn't fit it in his car so
- 3 Our poor cat was old and very ill so
- 4 In the storm the roof was blown off our shed and a wall fell down so
- 5 Janet spilt coffee on her silk dress. It couldn't be washed by hand, so
- 6 I needed a copy of my driving licence for my insurance company so
- 7 When Bill's watch broke he decided he couldn't afford to buy a new one, so
- 8 Our bedroom was in a mess, with the wallpaper and paint peeling off, so
- 9 The poster Sue had brought back from Brazil was getting damaged so

41.2 Complete these sentences with the most likely form of **have** or **get**. Give possible alternatives. (A, B & C)

- 1 Carl had food poisoning and had to his stomach pumped.
- 2 She left the lights on overnight and in the morning couldn't the car started.
- 3 We always the car cleaned by the children who live next door.
- 4 When they it explained to them again, the students could understand the point of the experiment.
- 5 I won't my valuable time taken up with useless meetings!
- 6 We the painting valued by an expert at over \$20,000.
- 7 When he tried to tidy up his desk, he all his papers mixed up.
- 8 I won't Richard criticised like that when he's not here to defend himself.

41.3 Complete the sentences with an object from (i) and the past participle form of one of the verbs in (ii), as in 1. (D & E)

i

her paintings my bike your bedroom
herself the play the team

ii

tidy beat display
repair perform lift up

- 1 It was disappointing to see the team beaten by weaker opposition.
- 2 She wants in the gallery, but we don't think they'd be very popular.
- 3 I'll need before I can go very far.
- 4 We heard on the radio a few years ago.
- 5 I'd like before I get home from work. It's in a terrible mess.
- 6 She felt by the wind and thrown to the ground.

41.4 Here are some verbs commonly used in the pattern **get/have something done**. Do you know what they mean? (A)

get/have a prescription filled get/have something fixed get/have a job costed
get/have something overhauled get/have your house done up
get/have your hair permed