

TO THE TEACHER

Have to is a very handy construction for talking about routine plans and obligations. It's an easy way to make an excuse, too.

"Sorry. Have to go."



a package with its own meaning

- doesn't mean *have*;
- doesn't mean *to*

Semi-modals

This kind of construction is called a semi-modal or phrasal modal. It is both like a modal (modifies meaning/takes Vb) and a VxS, VxO, VxD verb (it has a hidden X-Word).

- A semi-modal is a short phrase - a package - with its own meaning. Examples: *have to, used to, ought to, be able to, be supposed to..* Semi-modals match with a base verb
- You need to use **do, does, did** with *have to, have got to, ought to, *need to, and *want to*

*some people say need to and want to are semi-modals; others say they are verbs followed by infinitives.

Have to

Like a modal	Not like a modal
always adds Vb	doesn't use itself as its X-Word
adds meaning (obligation)	needs "do, does, or did" to make questions and negatives

The meaning of "have to"

Students are familiar with the word "have" and by now they're aware that *have* can be an X-Word. Have to is neither. It has its own meaning and its own X-Word system.

"Have to" does not mean "have" or "to." It means there is an obligation to perform whatever action the verb is telling you to do. However, more and more it is used with the base verb "be." In fact, according to COCA, the most common verb after have to (and has to and had to) is "be"

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- You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure that out.
- You have to be careful.
- There has to be a better way.

Have to is easy because it always takes Vb.

However, like VxO VxS and VxD, it does use the 3rd person "s" in the present and hidden X-Words for questions and negatives.

Don't use "have" as the X-Word

S	Vb	X	S	Vb
We	<u>have to be</u> careful.	Do	we	<u>have to be</u> careful?
S	Vb	X	S	Vb
She	<u>has to be</u> careful.	Does	she	<u>have to be</u> careful?
S	Vb	X	S	Vb
We	<u>had to be</u> careful.	Did	we	<u>have to be</u> careful?

The verb tenses are made in the same way as other verbs. In these examples, the "Have to" package is double underlined. **The X-Word/verb matchups haven't changed.** (in the first example, *had* as an X-Word takes a DTN - which just happens to be "had." Regardless, any form of have to takes a Vb.

S X dtn Vb

He had had to work hard all of his life.

S X Vb

He had to work hard all of his life.

S Vb

She has to work hard

We have to work hard.

S X Vb+X DTN Vb

We will have had to pass step one before we start on step two

* VxO

X Vb

We are going to have to work hard.

S X Vb

We will have to work hard.

For practice, you can stand in a circle with a koosh and ask "What do you have to do today?" Insist on a variety of verbs (not just "go" or "study.") And insist on things that don't sound like fun. Keep the obligation meaning. "I have to go to the beach," doesn't work.