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Download this explanation in PDF here. See my explanation about the causative verbs 'let' and 'make' here. Click here for our complete programme to perfect your English grammar. We use a causative verb when we want to talk about something that someone else did for us or for another person. It means that the subject caused the action to happen, but didn't do it themselves. Maybe they paid, or asked, or persuaded the other person to do it. For example, we can say: I cleaned my house. (This means I cleaned it myself). If I paid someone to clean it, of course I can say: A cleaner cleaned my house. But, another way is to use a causative construction. So I can also say: In a sense, using a causative verb is similar to using a passive. The important thing is that the house is now clean. We don't focus on who did the cleaning. Have + object + past participle (have something done) We usually use 'have something done' when we are talking about paying someone to do something for us. It's often used for services. The form is 'subject + have + object + past participle'. I had my car washed. John will have his house painted. Get + object + past participle (get something done) We can also use 'subject + get + object + past participle'. This has the same meaning as 'have', but is less formal. The students get their essays checked. I'll get my hair cut next week. He got his washing machine fixed. Try an exercise about 'have something done' and 'get something done' here. Have someone do something (have + person + infinitive) We can also use the construction 'subject + have + person + infinitive'. This has a very similar meaning to 'have something done', which we've already talked about, but this time we say who did the thing - we talk about the person who we asked to do the thing for us. I had the electrician look at my broken light. The doctor will have the nurse call the patients. The teacher had the students write the answers on the whiteboard. Get someone to do something (get + person + to + infinitive) Finally, we can also use the construction 'get + someone + to + infinitive'. Again, this means that you cause the other person to do the action, maybe by paying them to do it, or by asking them to do it, or by persuading them to do it. She gets her son to do his homework by promising him ice cream when he's finished. I got the cleaner to clean under the cupboards. Sometimes, this construction has the feeling that we needed to convince someone to do something, while the other constructions on this page are neutral. Try an exercise about 'have someone do something' and 'get someone to do something' here. By: Erin Kuester Thu Sep 12 2024EnglishVerbs, Sentence StructureCausative verbs in English are a type of verb that we use when someone or something causes another event or situation. The most common causative verbs in English are let, make, have, and get:The teacher let the students go to recess early.→ The students went to recess; the teacher caused that.I made my friend switch seats.→ My friend switched seats; I caused that.We'll have the manager review the report.→ The manager reviewed the report; we caused that.I got my brother to share his fries with me.→ My brother shared his fries; I caused that.These aren't the only causative verbs in English, though! In this post, we'll look at what's special about causative verbs, how to use causative verbs, which causatives are followed by a base form of a verb, an infinitive, or a combination, and what each causative verb means.Read on to learn all about causative verbs in English! Causative verbs (sometimes called causal verbs, or just causatives) are a specific type of verbs where a person or thing causes something to happen.Here are some of the most common causative verbs that we use in written and spoken English:Here is the most basic format for using a causative verb:causative verb(completed by the subject)verb(completed by the object)There are two cases where you do not need to include the second verb in a causative:When the causative verb is make (or sometimes have or get) and the second verb is be. Here we almost always drop the verb: The traffic made me be late for work. The traffic made me late for work.When the verb is clear from context, you can drop repeated words: The toddler didn't want to go to bed, but his mother made him go to bed. The toddler didn't want to go to bed, but his mother made him.Look at the second verb in each of the examples above. Do you notice something? The form of the verb that follows the causative verb is not always the same! The causative verb you use will determine the form of the second verb. Keep reading to learn more!As we saw above, a causative verb in English will be followed by an object and then by a second verb.The chart below shows the form of the verb that can be used after the causative verb. Notice that most causative verbs are either followed by the rootNo definition set for rootLorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum. form or the infinitiveNo definition set for infinitiveLorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum. form, but a few can be followed by a participle as well.causative verb + root form(e.g. let him go)causative verb + infinitive(e.g. forced him to go)require, permit, allow, force, cause, get, helpcausative + participle(e.g. got her caught)Let's have a closer look at exactly how and when you will use each of these verbs in English.We use make, force, and require when the object only does the action because the subject acted.Make is one of the most common causative verbs in English. It is used with an action that the object was not planning to do the action before the subject acted. It is always followed by the root form of the verb.The bride and groom made everyone turn off their phones before the wedding.She always makes the children clean their own plates.The bad traffic made me miss the appointment.Remember to drop the verb be after make! She made him be mad. → She made him mad.Force has the same meaning but it is stronger and it makes the situation sound more negative. Here, the object actively does not want to do the action. Force is always followed by the infinitive form of the verb:causative verbinfinitive formMy parents forced me to drive my little brother to soccer practice.Flight attendants will force passengers to put their phone in airplane mode.The weather forced all airplanes to stay grounded.Require has the same meaning as make, but we use it when the reason the object must do the action is because of a rule, law, or policy. This sounds more formal and official. Require is always followed by the infinitive form of the verb:causative verbinfinitive formThe state requires all new drivers to take a test.The university requires freshmen to live in the dorms.My job required me to buy a uniform.Remember:Use the root with make and the infinitive with force and require!The verbs have and get are similar in meaning to make, but their grammar is a little more complicated. Read on to find out more!We use let, allow, and permit, when the object wants to do the action or does the action naturally, and the subject does not stop the action.Let is one of the most common causative verbs in English. It is always followed by the root form of the verb.I don't let my children watch scary movies.Our reservation was at 6 p.m., but the restaurant let us sit early.Allow is just a more formal version of let. It is always followed by the infinitive form of the verb:causative verbinfinitive formMy parents allowed me to go to the concert.During the meeting, they allowed everyone to eat lunch.The open door allowed my dog to escape.Permit is a little bit more formal and is more common when we are discussing formal rules, policies, or regulations:causative verbinfinitive formThat park does not permit dogs to be off-leash.That private school permits students to wear jeans on Fridays.I permitted my children's friends to sleep over.Remember:Use the root with let and the infinitive with allow and permit!Cause is a neutral causative verb. All that it means is that the subject was responsible for the object's action. This verb is not used very often, but it is always followed by the infinitive form of a verb.causative verbinfinitive verbThe late report caused the project to stop.The high temperatures caused the teams to cancel the baseball game.My brother always causes us to be late to events.We use help when you cause an action and provide your assistance, so the subject and the object are both involved in the action.Help can be followed by the root form:She helped me write an email.I often help my neighbors mow their lawn.The teacher is helping the students find the correct answers.Help can be followed by an infinitive verb. This sounds a little more formal, but there is no difference in meaning.causative verbinfinitive formI helped her to find the perfect dress.My dad is helping me to move across the country.Craig always helps his grandmother to cross the road.When they are used as causative verbs, have and get imply that you paid someone or persuaded someone. In general have is a little more formal. In their most basic uses, have is followed by the root form and get is followed by the infinitive form.I had the doctor look at my sinuses.Elsa had her coworker lead the meeting.Peter always has his mom cut his hair.causative verbinfinitive formI got my mom to cut my hair.We got the kids to put away their toys.They got their manager to extend the deadline.Using have in this way can be a little confusing, because the same sentence can mean two different things:I had someone help me find a new job. → Causative meaning: I paid/asked someone to help me.→ Experiential meaning: I experienced someone helping me.There is usually more context to help you figure out which meaning is being used, but you can always ask for clarification!You can also use have and get before the past participle (root + -ed / irregular) of a verb.causative verbpast participleYesterday I had my hair cut.causative verbpast participleMary got her car washed last week.I will get my lawn mown by a landscaping company.Notice that in this type of sentence the object undergoes the caused action: it does not perform the action! This type of sentence comes about when the subject causes a passive verb. After the verbs have and get we drop the auxiliary verbNo definition set for auxiliary verbLorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum. be.causative verbroot formpast participle We had the car be towed (by the mechanic). We had the car towed (by the mechanic).causative verbroot formpast participle We got the lawn to be mown (by a landscaping company). We got the lawn mown (by a landscaping company).We can also use have (or, rarely, get) before the present participle (root + -ing), but only when describing someone's reaction to something:causative verbpresent participle The movie had the audience crying by the end. That TV show always gets us laughing. My mom is baking cookies and the smell has everyone drooling. I had my son cleaning his room.→ This sentence is not a reaction to anything.Sometimes you can use get before a prepositionNo definition set for prepositionLorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum. or a prepositional phraseNo definition set for prepositional phraseLorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum., when the preposition is the second part of a phrasal verbNo definition set for phrasal verbLorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum. with get. For example.get up = to waken:I got him to get up. (rare)I got him up. (common)get into = become interested in:I got her to get into Pickleball. (rare)I got her into Pickleball. (common)Have and get are not always causative verbs! If you want to learn all about these verbs, check out our post on to have or check out this list of all the uses of get in English to learn more about get.There are many other verbs in English that can be used as causative verbs. For example:Verbs for hiring or paying someone for work: pay, hire, employ, enlist, …Verbs for commanding or requesting: ask, tell, order, command, … Verbs for persuasion: persuade, convince, advise, coax, …In general, these other verbs are followed by the infinitive form, but you can read more about how to report commands, requests, and other acts of speech from our post on reported speech in English!In this post we learned all about causative verbs in English and what makes them special! Let's do a quick review:Causative verbs are always followed by an object, and usually by a second verb that describes an action the object completes.Some causative verbs are followed by the base form of a verb, and these include let, make, help, and have.Some causative verbs are followed by the infinitive form of a verb, and these include require, permit, allow, force, cause, help, and get.Have and get can be followed by past participles and a few other phrases.Now that you know all that, you're ready to get some practice using causative verbs. Check out these causative verb activities to help you become an expert at using causative verbs!The Mango Languages learning platform is designed to get you speaking like a local quickly and easily. In English, when the master performs an action independently, it is referred to as a simple verb.However, when the master directs or influences someone to do something, such as showing, teaching, feeding, etc., we use causative verbs.Causative verbs include words like let, make, have, get, and help because they make something else occur.Daily Grammar Test - Attempt NowCausative Verbs ExplanationExplanation #1Simple Verb: “clean”Causative Verb: “get (something) cleaned”Sentence 1: Tom cleaned the car.Sentence 2: Tom got the car cleaned at the car wash.Explanation: The first sentence uses the simple verb “clean” to describe Tom's action of cleaning the car. In the second sentence, the causative verb “get (something) cleaned” suggests that Tom arranged for someone else (car wash) to clean the car.Explanation #2Simple Verb: “cook”Causative Verb: “have (something) cooked”Sentence 1: Lisa cooked dinner.Sentence 2: Lisa had dinner cooked by a professional chef.Explanation: In the first sentence, the simple verb “cook” describes Lisa's action of preparing dinner. In the second sentence, the causative verb “have (something) cooked” implies that Lisa arranged for a professional chef to perform the cooking.Examples of Causative VerbsExamples of Causative Verbs Type #1Here are some more Causative Verbs Examples, where the Simple Verb is used in the first part of every pair of sentences and the Causative Verb, is used in the second part:She painted the room.The homeowner had the room painted by professionals.They cooked dinner.The chef cooked a delicious meal for the guests.He fixed the computer.The IT technician was called to fix the computer.We cleaned the house.They hired a cleaning service to clean the house.She cut her hair.The hairdresser cut her hair into a stylish bob.They built a house.The construction workers built a beautiful house.He opened the jar.She asked him to open the stubborn jar for her.We washed the car.They took the car to the car wash to get it washed.She taught the class.The professor taught an advanced physics class.He repaired the bike.The mechanic repaired the broken bike.In these examples, you can see that the causative verbs are used to indicate that someone else is responsible for or performs the action described by the simple verb.Examples of Causative Verbs Type #2Following are examples of simple verbs and their corresponding causative verbs formed by adding ‘le’ after the simple verb. From the following sentences, it can be seen that in many cases the forms of Simple Verbs and Causative Verbs are quite different.read – riddle (He reads books. – He riddles his friends with questions.)speak – speckle (She speaks English. – She speckles her speech with jokes.)write – wittle (I write stories. – I wittle ideas into my students' minds.)sing – single (They sing a song. – They single out their favorite singer.)dance – dandle (She dances ballet. – She dandles her baby sister in her arms.)cook – coddle (He cooks dinner. – He coddles his guests with delicious meals.)swim – swaddle (They swim in the pool. – They swaddle their newborn in a towel.)paint – paddle (She paints a picture. – She paddles her brush on the canvas.)play – poodle (He plays soccer. – He poodles his dog in the park.)sleep – slumber (I sleep peacefully. – I slumber my worries away.)Examples of Causative Verbs Type #3Here are examples of creating causative forms using other verbs. In these examples, the causative forms are created by using phrases like “had someone + base form of verb” or “helped someone + base form of verb.”The chef cooked a delicious meal.The chef had the sous chef prepare a delicious meal.Maria cleaned the house.Maria had her sister clean the house.The mechanic repaired the car.The owner had the mechanic fix the car.Jack opened the door.Jill helped Jack open the door.Sarah painted a beautiful picture.Sarah had her friend paint a beautiful picture.The doctor examined the patient.The nurse helped the doctor examine the patient.John wrote a letter.John had his secretary write a letter.Lisa mowed the lawn.Lisa had her brother mow the lawn.The homeowner built a fence.The contractor helped the homeowner build a fence.James planted flowers in the garden.James had his daughter plant flowers in the garden.Examples of Causative Verbs Type #4Following are examples of using verbs like “make,” “get,” “cause,” “have,” and “help” to create a causative sense for verbs that do not have a direct causative form:The music moved her to tears.The storm destroyed the house.The storm caused the house to be destroyed.The smell of the food made my mouth water.The smell of the food caused my mouth to water.The loud noise startled the dog.The loud noise caused the dog to be startled.The sudden downpour soaked the pedestrians.The sudden downpour caused the pedestrians to get soaked.The earthquake left the city in ruins.The earthquake caused the city to be reduced to ruins.The unexpected loud bang frightened the children.The unexpected loud bang caused the children to become frightened.The news of their favorite band's reunion filled them with excitement.The news of their favorite band's reunion caused them to be filled with excitement.The fire engulfed the building.The fire caused the building to be engulfed.The strong wind toppled the trees.The strong wind caused the trees to be toppled.You Asked, We Listened – List of All Grammar Chapters Updated 😊😊Also, ReadDaily Grammar Test - Attempt Now Causative verbs in English convey the idea that one entity influences another to perform an action or assume a certain state. In this article, we'll explore causative verbs' definition, formation, common examples, and how they operate in various tenses.Causative structures indicate that one thing or person causes another thing or person to do something rather than performing the action themselves.In other words, causative verbs convey the idea that one entity influences another to perform an action or assume a certain state.Here are some examples:Examples:Have (give someone the responsibility to do something)I had John fix the car.I had my hair cut.Make (force someone to do something)The teacher made the students work in groups.Our boss made us work extra hours.Get (convince or trick someone into doing something)He got the mechanic to repair the machine.She got him to read more.Let (allow someone to do something)Jane let her son go out.They let the children play in the yard.Causative verbs are often formed using specific structures. Let's examine some examples:Subject + Causative Verb + Object + Infinitive Without To (Bare Infinitive)She had the chef prepare a special dish.In this structure, the subject (She) initiates the action using the causative verb (had), followed by an object (the chef), and the base form of the main verb (prepare).The storm made us cancel the outdoor event.Here, the subject (The storm) causes the action through the causative verb (made), followed by an object (us), and the base form of the main verb (cancel).I let my friend borrow my car for the weekend.In this case, the subject (I) allows or permits the action using the causative verb (let), followed by an object (my friend), and the base form of the main verb (borrow).Subject + Causative Verb + Object + Infinitive With ToThey got the dog to fetch the ball.Here, the subject (They) influences the action through the causative verb (got), followed by an object (the dog), and an infinitive phrase that includes the base form of the main verb (to fetch).He persuaded his colleagues to join the charity event.In this structure, the subject (He) persuades the object (his colleagues) to perform the action through the causative verb (persuaded), followed by an infinitive phrase (to join the charity event).Subject + Causative Verb + Object + Past ParticipleShe had the job done.In this structure, the subject (She) causes the action by using the causative verb (had), followed by an object (the job), and the past participle of the main verb (done).He got his car fixed.In this structure, the subject (He) causes the action by using the causative verb (got), followed by an object (his car), and the past participle of the main verb (fixed).Subject + Causative Verb + Object + Present ParticipleHe had his team working on the project.Here, the subject (He) causes the action through the causative verb (had), followed by an object (his team), and the present participle of the main verb (working).StructureExampleExplanation1. Object Followed By Base Form Of The VerbShe had the chef prepare a special dish.The subject (She) initiates the action using the causative verb (had), followed by an object (the chef), and the base form of the main verb (prepare).2. Object Followed By Infinitive With “To”They got the dog to fetch the ball.The subject (They) influences the action through the causative verb (got), followed by an object (the dog), and an infinitive phrase that includes the base form of the main verb (to fetch).3. Object Followed By Past ParticipleShe had the job done.The subject (She) causes the action by using the causative verb (had), followed by an object (the job), and the past participle of the main verb (done).4. Object Followed By Present ParticipleHe had his team working on the project.Here, the subject (He) causes the action through the causative verb (had), followed by an object (his team), and the present participle of the main verb (working).Causatives express diverse meanings. Here are some examples:Have (give someone the responsibility to do something)I had John fix the carI had my hair cutMake (force someone to do something)The teacher made the students work in groupsOur boss made us work extra hoursGet (convince or trick someone into doing something)He got the mechanic to repair the machine.She got him to read more.Let (allow someone to do something)Jane let her son go outThey let the children play in the yardHere are some commonly used causative verbs along with example sentences for each:Allow:The school allows students to bring their own lunch.The manager allowed the employee to take a day off.Help:Sarah helped her friend write a cover letter.The tutorial video helped me understand the software.Enable:The new software enables users to edit photos easily.The modifications enabled the system to run more efficiently.Force:The circumstances forced them to reconsider their decision.The law forced companies to disclose their environmental impact.Require:The job requires employees to have strong communication skills.The assignment requires students to conduct thorough research.Persuade:He persuaded his colleagues to join the charity event.The advertisement persuaded customers to try the new product.Have:She had the chef prepare a special dish.We had the team complete the project.I had John fix the car.I had my hair cut.Make:The storm made us cancel the outdoor event.His argument made me rethink my decision.The teacher made the students work in groups.Our boss made us work extra hours.Get:I got my friend to help with the move.They got the dog to fetch the ball.He got the mechanic to repair the machine.She got him to read more.Let:She let me borrow her car for the weekend.They let us choose the movie.Jane let her son go out.They let the children play in the yard.More on teaching causative verbs here.My parents made me clean my room before going out.The urgent deadline made him work late into the night.She had her brother fix her computer because it wasn't working.The manager had the team prepare a detailed report for the client.I need to get my car serviced this weekend.The teacher got the students to complete the assignment by the end of the day.They let their children play in the park after finishing their homework.The supervisor let the employees leave early as a reward for their hard work.The rules don't allow students to use phones during exams.The company policy doesn't allow employees to bring pets to the office.Can you help me find a suitable dress for the party?The tutorial helped the students understand the complex topic.The heavy rain forced us to cancel the outdoor event.Unexpected circumstances forced him to reconsider his travel plans.She persuaded her friend to join the gym with her.In summary, causative verbs indicate that one thing or person causes another thing or person to do something rather than performing the action themselves. Key examples of these verbs, such as “have,” “let,” “make,” and “get,” showcase the diverse ways in which actions are initiated, permitted, forced, or convinced.The structure takes different forms: the object may be followed by a base form of the verb, the infinitive with to, the past participle, or the present participle. Causative verbs are a unique category of verbs in English langauge that express the idea that one person or thing causes another to act. They are essential for conveying relationships where the subject does not directly perform the action but instead facilitates it through another party. Through this blog, we will explore what causative verbs are, their structures, and examples of their usage. Read more on Learn English from here! Causative Verbs are those types of verbs which show the causes behind an action or an event in a sentence. They are used to express that someone or something was responsible for causing a certain action. For example: “Sarah caused the accident.” In this sentence, it can be seen that Sarah was responsible for causing the accident. Here the verb ‘caused’ is the causative verb in the sentence. Similarly, Causative Verbs are also responsible for showing that someone was responsible for making something happen. For example: “Peter made the cake.” In this sentence, it can be made out that Peter was responsible for baking the cake. Here the verb ‘make’ will come under the causative verb. Causative verbs improve writing in the following ways: Clarifying cause and effect: They show who/what makes an action happen. Increasing conciseness: They express ideas efficiently. Adding variety: They make writing more engaging. Emphasising responsibility: They highlight who's in charge. Conveying nuance: Different verbs express subtle differences. Preventing ambiguity: They ensure clear meaning. Also Read: Types of Verbs Causative verbs are of many types. Each causative verb has specific structures that dictate how they are used in sentences. Let us look at each one of them and how they can be used in the formation of sentences. To force or require someone to do something. Structure: Subject + make + object + base form of the verb. Example: She made him cry. To arrange for someone else to do something, often involving services. For services: Subject + have + object + past participle.For actions: Subject + have + person + base form of the verb. Examples: Service: “I had my hair cut.” Action: “I had my assistant write the report.” To persuade someone to do something. Structure: Subject + get + person + to-infinitive. Example: I got my brother to help me. To allow someone to do something. Structure: Subject + let + object + base form of the verb. Example: They let their children play outside. To assist someone in doing something. Structure: Subject + help + object + (to) infinitive. Example: He helped her to finish her project. Also Read: Verb Forms v1 v2 v3 v4 v5 Causative verbs indicate that someone or something causes another person or thing to act. Here's a breakdown of the common types and how they function: Core causative verbs can further be subdivided into multiple other categories, which are as follows: Have: Indicates that the subject arranges for someone else to do something. Example: I had my car repaired. (Someone else repaired the car for me) Get: Can be similar to “have,” but often implies more persuasion or effort. It can also be used when the person performing the action is not specified. Examples: I got my brother to help me with the dishes. (I persuaded him) / I got my hair cut. (Someone cut my hair) Make: Implies that the subject forces or compels someone to do something. Example: My mom made me clean my room. (She forced me to clean it) Let: Means to allow someone to do something. Example: My parents let me stay out late. (They gave me permission) Help: Indicates that the subject assists someone in doing something. Example: I helped my friend move the furniture. (I assisted him) Many other verbs can function causatively, depending on the context. These often express ideas like: Persuasion: persuade, convince, encourage, coax Example: I persuaded him to join the team. Compulsion: force, require, oblige, compel Example: The law requires all citizens to pay taxes. Permission: allow, permit, authorise Example: The teacher allowed us to use notes on the test. Enabling: enable, allow, facilitate Example: The new software enabled us to finish the project on time. Causative verbs can also be used in a passive way, where the thing being acted upon is the focus. Example: I had my house painted. (Passive causative, focus on the house) Contrast: I painted my house. (Active, focus on the person doing the painting) Let's explore how causative verbs change across different tenses in English. We'll use “have,” “get,” “make,” and “let” as our primary examples, as they are the most common. Remember, the core concept of a causative verb is that the subject causes another person or thing to act. Causative Verbs in Different TensesExamplesSimple Present TenseHave: I have my car washed every week. (habitual action)Get: I get my hair cut every month. (habitual action)Make: My boss makes me work overtime. (habitual action, implies compulsion)Let: My parents let me stay out late on weekends. (permission)Simple Past TenseHave: I had my house painted last year. (completed action)Get: I got my friend to help me move. (completed action)Make: The teacher made us do extra homework. (completed action)Let: My mom let me go to the party. (completed action)Present Continuous TenseHave: I'm having my computer repaired right now. (action in progress)Get: I'm getting my teeth cleaned next week. (future arrangement)Make: (Less common in continuous with causative meaning. Usually implies the act of making someone do something directly, not arranging for it.) “She is making him clean his room” is possible, but not a typical causative use. Let: (Rare in continuous with causative meaning. Usually used for the act of physically letting someone go, not giving permission.)Past Continuous TenseHave: I was having my portrait painted when the phone rang. (action in progress in the past)Get: (Less common in continuous with causative meaning, similar to present continuous.)Make: (Similar to present continuous, not typical for causative meaning.)Let: (Similar to present continuous, not typical for causative meaning.)Present Perfect TenseHave: I've had my car serviced. (completed action with relevance to the present)Get: I've gotten my passport renewed. (completed action with relevance to the present)Make: (Less common in perfect tenses with causative meaning.)Let: (Less common in perfect tenses with causative meaning.)Past Perfect TenseHave: I had had my dress altered before the wedding. (completed action before another action in the past)Get: I had gotten my tickets before they sold out. (completed action before another action in the past)Make: (Less common in perfect tenses with causative meaning.)Let: (Less common in perfect tenses with causative meaning.)Future (Will)Have: I will have my taxes done next week. (future arrangement)Get: I will get someone to fix the leak. (future arrangement)Make: (Less common in future with causative meaning. Usually implies a direct action of forcing, not arranging.)Let: My parents will let me go on the trip. (future permission)Future (Going to)Have: I'm going to have my house cleaned. (future plan)Get: I'm going to get my friend to help me. (future plan)Make: (Less common in future with causative meaning.)Let: My sister is going to let me borrow her car. (future permission) *The tenses that work best with causative verbs are generally the simple tenses, perfect tenses, and future tenses. Also Read: Tenses Cheat Sheet Here are a variety of examples using causative verbs, focusing on ‘have’, ‘get’, ‘make’ and ‘let’ as they are the most common. Have (Arranging for someone to do something): I had my car washed. (Someone else washed the car.)She's having a new dress made for the wedding. (A dressmaker is making the dress.)We had the plumber fix the leaky faucet. (The plumber fixed the faucet.)He had his portrait painted. (An artist painted the portrait.)They had their house renovated. (A construction crew renovated the house.) Get (Similar to ‘have,’ sometimes implying persuasion or when the agent is unspecified) I got my brother to help me with my homework. (I persuaded him.)She got her hair cut. (A hairdresser cut her hair.)We got the tickets for the concert. (Someone obtained the tickets for us.)He got his computer repaired. (Someone repaired his computer.)They got the information they needed. (Someone obtained the information for them.) ‘Make’ (Forcing or compelling someone to do something) My parents made me clean my room. (They forced me.)The teacher made us do extra homework. (The teacher compelled us.)The loud music made it difficult to concentrate. (The music compelled this feeling.)He made his dog sit. (He compelled his dog.)She made him apologise for his behaviour. (She compelled him.) ‘Let’ (Giving Permission) My parents let me stay out late. (They gave me permission.)The teacher let us use our notes on the test. (The teacher gave us permission.)He let his friend borrow his car. (He gave his friend permission.)She let the cat out of the bag. (Figuratively, she gave permission for the secret to be known.)They let me know about the changes. (They gave me permission to know.) Here are 100 sentences using causative verbs, covering a range of tenses and verbs. Have: I had my car serviced yesterday.She's having a new kitchen installed next month.We had the windows cleaned last week.He had his portrait painted by a famous artist.They had their wedding photos taken at the park.I'm having my suit dry-cleaned for the interview.She had her hair styled for the party.We had the roof repaired after the storm.He had his watch fixed at the jewellery store.They had their luggage shipped ahead of their trip.I have my mail forwarded when I'm on vacation.She has her groceries delivered every week.We have our carpets cleaned annually.He has his taxes done by an accountant.They have their house fumigated for termites.I had my eyes checked at the optometrist.She's having a party catered for her birthday.We had the fence painted last summer.He had his teeth whitened by the dentist.They had their wedding rings engraved. Get: I got my brother to help me move the furniture.She got her ears pierced at the mall.We got the tickets for the concert online.They got the information they needed from the library.He got his computer fixed by a technician.I'm getting my passport renewed next week.She got her dress altered at the tailor's.We got the car washed at the car wash.He got his shoes shined by the bootblack.They got their photos printed at the drugstore.I get my news from the internet.She gets her inspiration from nature.We get our coffee from the local roaster.He gets his exercise at the gym.They get their supplies from the warehouse.I got lost on the way to the meeting.She got caught in the rain without an umbrella.We got stuck in traffic for two hours.He got promoted to senior manager.They got married last year in a small ceremony. Make: My parents made me clean my room.The teacher made us do extra homework.He made his dog sit and stay.The loud music made it difficult to concentrate.She made him apologise for his behaviour.The cold weather made me shiver.The movie made me cry.The smell of cookies made me hungry.He made her laugh with his funny stories.They made him king of the club.I made myself a cup of tea.She made a cake for his birthday.We made a reservation at the restaurant.He made a promise to himself.They made a lot of noise at the party.The boss made them work late.The difficult questions made me think hard.The long journey made us tired.The good news made her happy.The bad news made him sad. Let (Giving Permission) My parents let me stay out late.The teacher let us use our notes on the test.He let his friend borrow his car.They let me know about the changes.She let the cat out of the bag.My boss let me take a day off.The sign lets you park for two hours.The guard wouldn't let us enter.She let him hold her hand.They let the children play in the garden.I let my imagination run wild.She let her hair grow long.We let the dog out to play.He let his feelings show.They let their worries go.The company let go of several employees.The airline let us board early.The hotel let us check in early.The store let me return the item.My parents let me choose my own college. Here are five engaging exercises designed to help you practice and reinforce your understanding of causative verbs. Each exercise focuses on different aspects of causative verbs, including their structures and meanings. Instructions: Complete the sentences using the appropriate causative verb from the list: make, have, get, let, help. The teacher ______ the students redo their assignments. I ______ my car serviced last week. She ______ her friend borrow her notes for the exam. He ______ his parents to attend his graduation ceremony. They ______ their dog stay outside during dinner. Answers: The teacher made the students redo their assignments. I had my car serviced last week. She let her friend borrow her notes for the exam. He got his parents to attend his graduation ceremony. They let their dog stay outside during dinner. Instructions: Rewrite the following sentences using a causative verb where appropriate. I asked my brother to fix my bike. The manager required the team to submit their reports by Friday. She allowed her children to play in the park. He persuaded his friend to join him for dinner. I arranged for a professional to clean my house. Answers: I had my brother fix my bike. The manager made the team submit their reports by Friday. She let her children play in the park. He got his friend to join him for dinner. I had a professional clean my house. Instructions: Read the following sentences and identify the causative verb used. Then, explain its role in the sentence. She had her hair styled for the wedding. They let their dog run freely in the yard. He made his brother apologize for being late. I got my computer fixed yesterday. The coach helped the players improve their skills. Answers: Causative Verb: had | Role: Indicates that she arranged for someone else to style her hair. Causative Verb: let | Role: Indicates permission granted for the dog to run freely. Causative Verb: made | Role: Indicates that he forced or required his brother to apologise. Causative Verb: got | Role: Indicates that I persuaded someone else to fix my computer. Causative Verb: helped | Role: Indicates assistance provided by the coach to improve skills. Instructions: Using each of the following causative verbs, create your own original sentence that clearly demonstrates its meaning: Answers: Make: “The teacher made us study for the exam.” Have: “I had my friend help me with my project.” Get: “She got her parents to agree to let her go to the party.” Let: “They let their kids choose what movie to watch.” Help: “He helped me understand the complex math problem.” Instructions: Transform the following passive sentences into active sentences using causative verbs where applicable. The documents were prepared by the assistant. The cake was baked by a professional chef. The house was painted by a contractor. The homework was completed by the students on time. The car was washed by John yesterday. Answers: The manager had the assistant prepare the documents. She had a professional chef bake the cake. They had a contractor paint the house. The teacher made the students complete their homework on time. I had John wash my car yesterday. Explore more blogs from Learn English! What are causative verbs? Causative verbs express the idea that someone or something causes another person or thing to do something. They indicate that the subject of the sentence doesn't perform the action directly, but rather arranges for it to be done by someone or something else. Think of it as “making” something happen. For example, in “I had my car repaired,” I didn't repair the car myself; I caused someone else to do it. Causative verbs show when someone or something makes something else happen.Common causative verbs include make, cause, allow, help, and require.The verb 'make' is the most common causative verb, more than 'cause'. In English grammar, a causative verb is a verb used to indicate that some person or thing makes—or helps to make—something happen. Examples of causative verbs include (make, cause, allow, help, have, enable, keep, hold, let, force, and require), which can also be referred to as causal verbs or simply causatives. A causative verb, which can be in any tense, is generally followed by an object and another verb form—often an infinitive or a participle—and are used to describe something that happens because of a person, place, or thing whose actions bring about change in another entity. Interestingly enough, the word "cause" isn't the prototypical causative verb in English because "cause" has a much more specific and less frequently used definition than "make," which is used most frequently to indicate someone making something happen. English grammar is full of small rules that help speakers understand the vast subtleties of correct usage and style. Such is the case with the rules pertaining to the causative verbs "allows" and "lets," wherein both convey the same meaning—a person permits another to do something—but require different noun-verb form pairings to follow them. The word "allows" is almost always followed by an object, which in turn is followed by the infinitive form of the verb "allows" is modifying. Such is the case in the sentence "Corey allows his friends to chat with him," wherein allows is the causative verb, "his friends" the object of the phrase, and "to chat" the infinitive form of what Corey is allowing his friends to do. On the other hand, the causative verb "lets" is almost always followed by an object and then the base form of the verb that's being modified. Such is the case in the sentence "Corey lets his friends chat with him," wherein "lets" is the causative verb, "his friends" the object of the phrase, and "chat" the base form of the verb Corey lets his friends do. One would think that "cause" would be the most frequently used and typical example of causative verbs, but that's simply not the case. Ugandan-born British linguist Francis Katamba explains in "Morphology" that the word "cause" is a "causative verb, but it has a more specialized meaning (implying direct causation) than 'make,' and it is much less common. Instead, "make" is the most common causative verb, which also differs from other causative verbs in that it omits the word "to" from complementary verb clauses that follow while in the active form (make), but does require the word "to" while in the passive form of "made." For example, "Jill makes me run daily," and "I was made to run daily by Jill." In both senses, the causative verb "make" still implies that someone causes the subject to run, but English grammar dictates that the accompanying verb phrase for "make" differs for that of "made." Rules like these abound in usage and style, and it's important for English as an alternative language (EAL) students to commit these types of guidelines to memory—as they don't often appear in other forms. Katamba, Francis. Morphology. Palgrave Macmillan, 1993. The causatives are the verbs that are used to indicate that one person causes another person to do something for the first person. One can cause somebody to do something for him/her by asking, paying, requesting, or forcing the person. Causative Verbs: This kind of verbs constitutes different structures for their sentences. Have Structure 1: Subject + have (any tense) + object (usually person) + base form of verb + ... Example: John had Alex clean the bedroom. He always has me do his work.   Mary will have Alex prepare her homework. Structure 2: Subject + have (any tense) + object (usually thing) + past participle form of verb + ... Example: John had his car washed. He always has his work done.   Mary will have her homework prepared. Get Structure 1: Subject + get (any tense) + object (usually person) + infinitive + ... Example: John got Alex to clean the bedroom. He always gets me to do his work.   Mary will get Alex to prepare her homework. Structure 2: Subject + have (any tense) + object (usually thing) + past participle form of verb + ... Example: John got his car washed. He always gets his work done.   Mary will get her homework prepared. Make ‘Make’ is stronger than ‘have/get’. It constitutes only one structure as it does not take anything ‘passive’ as its object. Subject + make (any tense) + object (always person) + base form of verb + . . . Example: Robert made me beat that little child.   He always makes me do his work.   Mary will make me prepare her homework.   I made him wash my car. He makes me laugh whenever I am down. Note: According to the grammar rules and structures, there are two more similar verbs that are not causative verbs by definition but they constitute similar sentence structures. Those two verbs are: Let ‘Let’ means ‘allow/permit’ but the use of ‘let’ in the sentence is different from these words. Structure: Subject + let (any tense) + object (always person) + base form of verb +. . . Example: Robert let me escape the prison. Let me go. (Subject ‘you’ is hidden)   The teacher let the students discuss among themselves.   I let him drive my car. Let's (let us) laugh and live a happy life.   The verb ‘permit’/‘allow’ does not follow this structure. It follows the regular sentence pattern of English language. Subject + permit/allow + object + infinitive + ... Example: John allowed him to drive his car. He always allows him to do that.   The teacher allowed me to sit for the exams. Help Help is not actually a causative verb either but is generally regarded as a causative verb because of its grammatical use in a sentence. It has two structures. Structure 1: Subject + help (any tense) + object (usually person) + base form of verb +. . . Example: Robert helped me escape the prison. He helps me prepare my presentations.   The teacher had helped the students understand a complex theory.   I helped him learn driving. It will help you move on.   Structure 2: Subject + help + object + infinitive + ... Example: John helped him to lift his car. He always helps me to find my stuff. The teacher helped me to understand the topic. Causative verbs are used to describe a person or thing that causes an action to happen. The most common causative verbs are let, make, have, get, and help.These verbs can be used in any tense. When you use a causative verb, however, there is a grammatically correct way to structure (organize) your sentence. Below, we'll take a look at how to use each of the most common causative verbs correctly.2. Examples of Causative Verbs Example 1-I wish my dad would let me go to the party.The correct pattern for the causative verb “let” is “Let” + person/thing + base verb.Does this sentence follow the pattern? Let's see.Do we see the causative verb let? Yes.Is it followed by a person? Yes, it's followed by me.Is the person (me) followed by a base verb? Yes, it's followed by go.This sentence correctly uses the causative verb “let.”Example 2-Joseph's mom made him take out the trash.The correct pattern for the causative verb “make” is “Make” + person + base verb.Does this sentence follow the pattern? Let's check.Does it include the base verb made? Yes, in the form of make.Is it followed by a person? Yes, him, which refers to Joseph.Is the person (him) followed by a base verb? Yes, it's followed by take.This sentence correctly uses the causative verb “make.”3. Types of Causative Verbs a. “Let”The causative verb “let” is used to express that we've given someone permission to do something. Sentences using the causative verb “let” generally follow this pattern:“Let” + Person/thing + Base form of verbThe base form of a verb, also simply called a base verb, is the basic, plain version of a verb that you would find in the dictionary, such as play, jump, run, sing, drive, and kick.Example:Mom let my brother drive the car.In this sentence we see the causative verb let.Let is followed by a person/thing (in this case, my brother).The person/thing (my brother) is then followed by a base verb, drive.Therefore, this sentence follows the pattern “Let” + Person/thing + Base form of verb, correctly using the causative verb “let.” Two less common causative verbs, “permit” and “allow” are synonyms of “let.” These two causative verbs follow a similar pattern:“Permit” or “Allow” + Person/thing + Infinitive form of verbThe infinitive form of a verb, also called an infinitive, is just the base verb with the word “to” in front of it, such as to play, to jump, to run, to sing, to drive, and to kick.Example:My school does not permit the students to wear flip flops.This sentence uses the causative verb permit.Permit is followed by a person/thing (the students).After the person/thing (the students), this sentence includes the infinitive to wear.This means that the sentence correctly uses the causative verb It follows the pattern “Permit” + person/thing + infinitive.This sentence would be the same if we used the verb “allow” instead of “permit,” as in, “My school does not allow the students to wear flip flops.” b. “Make”The causative verb “make” is used to express that someone has forced someone else to do something. With “make,” we use the following pattern:“Make” + person + base verbExample:My mom made me clean my room before the party.This example uses made, form of the causative verb “make.”Made is followed by a person (me).This person (me) is followed by the base verb clean.This sentence correctly follows the pattern “Make” + person + base verb. This is the proper way to use the causative verb “make”.“Force” and “require” are two less common causative verbs that have the same meaning as “make.” They follow a similar pattern:“Force” or “Require” + person + infinitiveExample:The law requires everyone to wear a seatbelt in the car.In this sentence, we see a form of the causative verb require.Requires is followed by a person (everyone).After the person (everyone), the sentence includes the infinitive to wear.This is how to correctly use the causative verb “require”: “Force” or “Require + person + infinitive.This sentence would be the same if we replaced the verb “requires” with the verb “forces” as in, “The law forces everyone to wear a seatbelt in the car.”c. “Have” The causative verb “have” is used to explain that we're going to get someone else to do something. There are two different patterns we can use with the causative verb “have.”The first pattern is:“Have” + person + base verbExample:I'll have my mom call your mom and ask if you can come over.This sentence uses the causative verb have.After have, the sentence mentions a person (my mom).My mom is followed by the base verb call.This sentence correctly uses the pattern for the causative verb “have”: “Have + person + base verb.The second pattern for the causative verb “have” is:Have + thing +past participle of verbA past participle is the base verb with an “ed” ending, such as played, jumped, painted, watched, or cried. (NOTE: This is only true for regular verbs, which follow a regular pattern. Irregular verbs don't follow this pattern and have different endings: drove, ran, sang, etc.)Example:I need to have my car washed.This example uses the causative verb have.Have is followed by a thing (my car).After my car, the sentence also uses a past participle (washed).This sentence also correctly uses the causative verb “have,” following the pattern “Have + thing + past participle of verb.Both patterns for the causative verb “have” explain that you're going to get someone else to do something. However, the first pattern is used when you're explaining exactly who is going to do the action. The second pattern is used when you aren't sure who's going to do the action.d. “Get”We use the causative verb “get” to describe convincing or encouraging someone to do something. It follows this pattern:Get + person + infinitiveExample:How can I get my sister to do my chores?This sentence uses the causative verbGet is followed by a person (my sister).This person (my sister) is followed by the infinitive to do.This sentence correctly uses the causative verb “get” by following the pattern “Get” + person + infinitive.e. “Help”The causative verb “help” is used when someone assists someone else in completing a task. There are two correct patterns for the causative verb “help.” You can use either one of the following:Help + person + base verbHelp + person + infinitiveAlthough both of these patterns are correct, the first one (the base verb instead of the infinitive) is more common.Example 1:My mom helps me complete my homework.In this example, we see the causative verb help.Help is followed by a person (me).The person (me) is followed by the base verb complete.This sentence demonstrates one way to correctly use the causative verb “help”: “Help” + person + base verb.Example 2:My mom helps me to complete my homework.This example also uses the causative verb help.Help is followed by a person (me) again.This time, the person (me) is followed by the infinitive to complete.This sentence demonstrates the second way to correctly use the causative verb help: “Help” + person + infinitive.Both of these sentences are grammatically correct, but most people would agree that the first version of the sentence sounds more natural.Remember that causative verbs are used to explain that someone or something causes an action to happen. You can use any form of the verb, but you do need to organize your sentences correctly.