

Paco had had a dream about this before: Paco visits Chicago

In this section we are going to study the *causative have* form, the *question tags* and the *schwa vowel sound* /ə/. This sound is very common in English. Identifying it is sometimes a bit difficult because its pronunciation is too slight, but, don't worry, you will easily learn how to recognize and reproduce it.

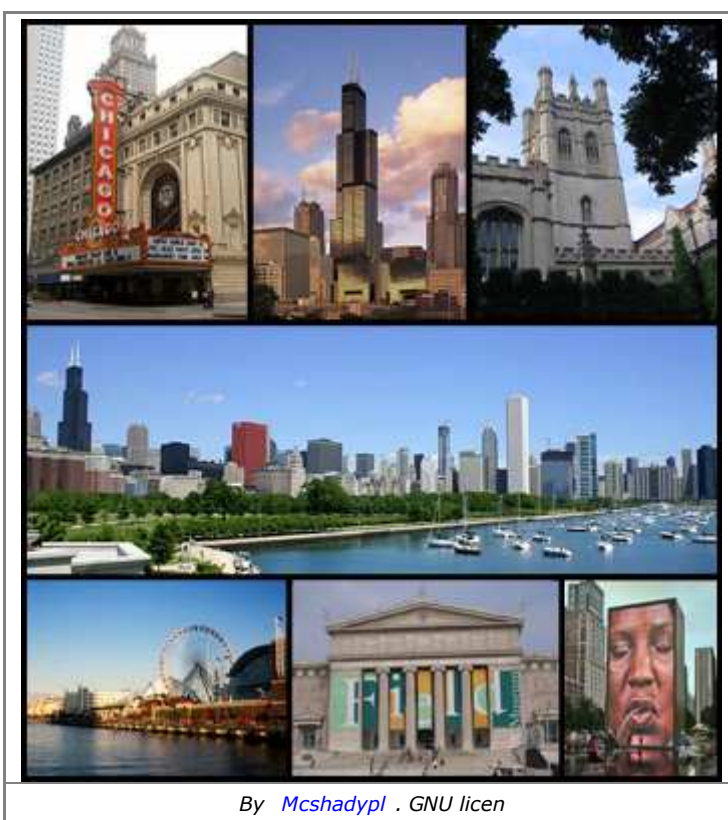
Actividad de lectura

Chicago is the **third largest city** in the United States, and with more than 2.8 million people, the largest city in the state of Illinois and the Midwestern United States. Located on the south-western **shores** of Lake Michigan and next to Indiana, Chicago is the third-most densely populated major city in the U.S., and **anchor** to the world's 26th largest metropolitan

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Taken from [Wikipedia](#) .

Would you like to watch a video tour of Chicago? If so, have a look at it.

Then, listen to the Illinois anthem.

Go to the [Click here](#) button and read the text carefully in order to find out which is the common mascot symbol for the Democratic Party in the United States and why. What about the one for the Republican Party?



Reflexiona

Compare these two sentences. Is there any difference in meaning between them?



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- 1) *I cut my hair.*
- 2) *I have my hair cut.*



Question tags are mainly used in English to ask for agreement.

"My, you are a mess, aren't you?"

(quotation from the film *The Big Sleep*)



The Big Sleep is a 1946 film noir directed by Howard Hawks, the first film version of Raymond Chandler's 1939 novel of the same name. It stars Humphrey Bogart as detective Philip Marlowe and Lauren Bacall as the female lead in a film about the "process of a criminal investigation, not its results."

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Curiosidad

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Springfield, the State capital of Illinois



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By [Immbastos](#) . Creative Commons

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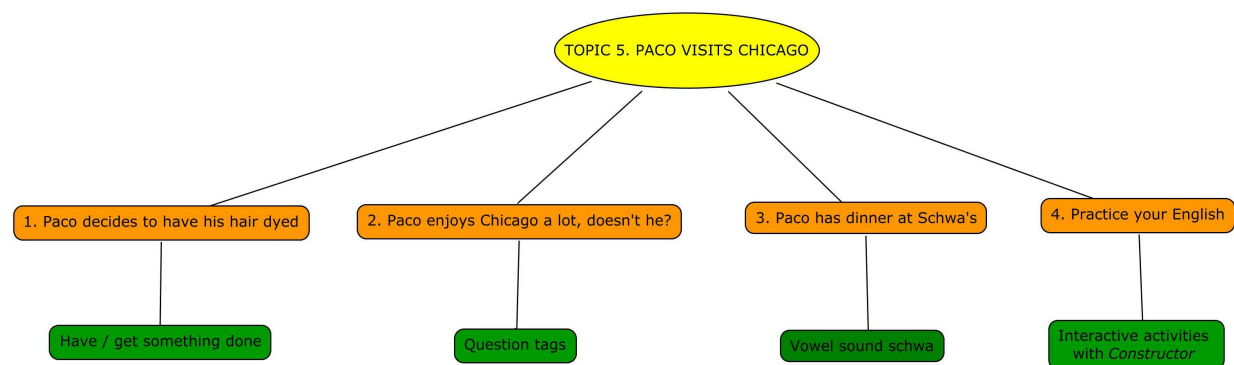
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[Click here](#) to use Mike

Map



1. Paco decides to have his hair dyed (causative HAVE)

The *causative have* (or also *have / get something done*) is an unusual structure in Spanish but not in English. **We use causative have when arranging for someone to do something for us**. If we say in Spanish *I cut my hair yesterday* we mean that somebody cut the hair for me and not myself. However, in English we should use the *causative have* structure: *I had my hair cut yesterday*, which implies that I went to the hairdresser and he or she cut my hair.

But it is not too difficult to learn the *causative have*. Just pay attention to this section and you will learn it easily.

Actividad de lectura

Search activity

Paco and the Lost Generation

After having visited New York, Washington D.C. and Miami, Paco goes northward again in the States: Chicago. This is another interesting city Paco had in mind to visit.

He knew that many relevant literary figures were related to Chicago. He had read at University a short story by [Hemingway](#) (born in Oak Park, Illinois) and had also known about [John Dos Passos](#), the author of *Manhattan Transfer*. Dos Passos, born in Chicago in 1896, was another outstanding writer who belonged to the so-called Literary Lost Generation, together with John Steinbeck, [Scott Fitzgerald](#) and other writers. Paco knew a lot about them because many of their novels had been turned into films, like Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Steinbeck's *East of Eden* and *The Grapes of Wrath*.



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But while he was waiting at the hairdresser's, he thought that he had never got his hair dyed, so ..., why not do it now?



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QUESTIONS ON GRAMMAR:

- 1) Find in the text the name of a place where you can buy newspapers, postcards, books, etc.
- 2) Find in the text the name of a place where you can have your hair washed, cut, dyed, etc
- 3) In the sentence *Paco had decided to have his hair cut*, do you think he is going to cut his hair by himself or somebody is going to cut his hair?

QUESTIONS ON WRITERS:

- 1) When was Ernest Hemingway awarded with the Nobel Prize for literature?
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- 4) Mention the three novels of Dos Passos' major work about U.S.A. trilogy.
- 5) What is Fitzgerald's most famous and celebrated novel?
- 6) What was Fitzgerald's posthumously published novel?

Answer the questions above about the three writers' lives and work.

You have to click on the author names' links and look for the information required.



Look at this explanation of the causative HAVE:



Ejercicio resuelto

Paco would have liked to be a writer. Obviously not everyone can be a writer. Let's have a look at some other jobs.

1. optician	A. have your car repaired
2. veterinary surgeon	B. have your blood pressure taken
3. mechanic	C. have your hair cut
4. doctor	D. have your eyes tested
5. hairdresser	E. have your dogs vaccinated

Match a profession from 1 to 5 with something that you have done by that person or in that place.

Ejercicio resuelto

1. The mechanic changed the oil in my car.
2. My husband paints our house every year.

5. William, the veterinary surgeon in my area, is going to check my dog's stomach.

Rewrite these sentences using *have* or *get* .

Reflexiona

Have something done and ***Get something done*** are both used to refer to actions which are done for the subject rather than by the subject.



By [Seattle M. A](#) . Creative Commons.

Comprueba lo aprendido

Complete the sentences using *have* / *get* something done in the correct form tense:

1) My sister is going _____ at the new hairdresser's.

☐

a) to have her hair cut.

b) to cut her hair.

2) I _____ by my little brother yesterday.

☐

a) had washed my car

☐

b) had my car washed

3) Will Peter _____?

☐

a) have his guitar tuned?

☐

b) had his guitar tuned?



Basketball: Chicago Bulls

As you know Paco is very fond of sports. He loves basketball and he loves the Chicago Bulls.

Have you ever heard of the Chicago Bulls? Have you ever heard of Michael Jordan? Sure you have.

The **Chicago Bulls** are an American professional basketball team based in Chicago, Illinois, playing in the Central Division of the Eastern Conference in the National Basketball Association (NBA). The team was **founded** in 1966. They play their home games at the United Center. The team is well known for having one of the greatest dynasties in NBA history during the 1990s, winning six championships in 8 years with two three-peats. All six of those championship teams were **led** by Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen and coach



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The first
three

championship teams included the likes of Bill Cartwright, Horace Grant, John Paxson and B.J. Armstrong, while the latter three championship teams had Luc Longley, Steve Kerr, Ron Harper, Toni Kukoč and Dennis Rodman on the roster. The Bulls won an NBA record 72 games during the 1995–96 NBA season and are the only team in NBA history to win at least 70 games in a single season. During the 1990s, the Bulls helped spread the popularity of the NBA around the world. The 1998 NBA Finals, the Bulls' most recent championship appearance, was the most watched championship series in NBA history.



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Taken from [Wikipedia](#) .



Importante

The difference between *have and get something done* is that *have* is a bit more formal than *get* .

Have your car repaired soon if you don't want to ...

The verb *get* is more usual than *have* in the imperative form.

Get your hair cut now!

Watch this video to see more examples of the *causative have* structure.



Actividad de lectura



By [e walk](#) . Creative Commons.

Imagine that you become rich and could have all kinds of things done for you. Make up five sentences using the *causative have* , for example, you could say:



A very useful website to learn a lot about the *causative have structure* with extra links included.

If you consider that you need further practice, here you have some exercises:

Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Exercise 3
Exercise 4	Exercise 5	Exercise 6

A good way to learn English is to watch movies in the English language or even with subtitles in English. This helps you a lot with your understanding of the language. Here you can watch the trailers for Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* , Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Why don't you see if you can watch some movies in English?

For Whom the Bell Tolls	The Great Gatsby	Th

2. Paco enjoyed Chicago a lot, didn't he?(Question tags)

We're sure that you have heard lots of question tags in English. They are not difficult, are they? Read the exercises of this section carefully and you will be able to use question tags easily, won't you?



Springfield (Illinois State): Abraham Lincoln's resting place

Abraham Lincoln (February 12, 1809 – April 15, 1865) served as the 16th President of the United States from March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865. He successfully [led](#) his country through its greatest internal crisis, the American Civil War, preserving the Union and ending slavery. Before his election in 1860 as the first Republican president, Lincoln had been a country [lawyer](#), an Illinois state legislator, a member of the United States House of Representatives, and twice an unsuccessful candidate for election to the U.S. Senate. As an [outspoken](#) opponent of the expansion of slavery in the United States, Lincoln won the Republican Party nomination in 1860 and was elected president later that year. His [tenure](#) in office was occupied primarily with the [defeat](#) of the secessionist Confederate States of America in the American Civil War. He introduced measures that resulted in the abolition of slavery, [issuing](#) his Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and promoting the passage of the Thirteenth [Amendment](#) to the Constitution. Six days after the large-scale [surrender](#) of Confederate forces under General Robert E. Lee, Lincoln became the first American president to be assassinated .

Taken from [Wikipedia](#) .

Reflexiona

Question tags are very common in English

They are placed at the end of a sentence and they ask for confirmation. They mean: *Am I right?* or *Do you agree with me?*

Click on [this link](#) to see an explanation in Spanish.



Here's another [one](#).

Actividad de lectura

Listen to this video about question tags and say if the questions below are true or false :

1) Questions tags are added at the beginning of the sentence.

said.

Complete the sentences with the missing information:

- 4) If the main sentence is positive, the verb in the question tag is _____.
And if the main sentence is negative, the question tag is _____.
- 5) When the main sentence contains _____ (have, will, can, could, etc.), we repeat the auxiliary verb in the question tag.
- 6) When the main sentence doesn't contain an auxiliary verb, the question tag uses the verb _____ (in present simple) or _____ (in simple past) .
- 7) If the subject of the sentence is *nothing, everything, something* and *anything* , we use _____ as the subject in the tag.
- 8) With _____, we use tags **will you/can you, would you** .
For example: Help me with this, can you?

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) It's not raining now, _____?
- 2) Your friend Mary likes pizza, _____?
- 3) You don't know who the most intelligent person in the class is, _____?
- 4) Paco is visiting Chicago now, _____?
- 5) Come with me to the supermarket, _____?
- 6) His classmates haven't failed the exam, _____?

Write the correct question tag to finish the questions above.

Intonation in question tags

We can change the meaning of a tag question with our voice's intonation. With rising intonation, it sounds like a real question. But if our intonation falls, it sounds more like a statement that doesn't require a real answer:

	INTONATION		
<i>You don't know where Lincoln was born,</i>	<i>do you?</i>	/ rising	real question

Springfield is a beautiful town,

isn't it?

\ falling

**not a real
question**

Comprueba lo aprendido

Complete the sentences below with the appropriate question tag.

1) Paco is visiting Chicago, _____?

☐

a) isn't he?

☐

b) does he?

2) Your father shouldn't have said that, _____?

☐

a) would he?

☐

b) should he?

3) Your sister would have passed the test if she had studied harder,
_____?

☐

a) would she?

☐

b) wouldn't she?

4) The children weren't at school yesterday morning, _____?

☐

○

b) was they?



Information about the [question tags with explanations in Spanish](#) .

Try to do these exercises about question tags to improve your knowledge about this grammar point.

Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Exercise 3
Exercise 4	Exercise 5	Exercise 6

Have a look here to check some [information about the question tags in English](#) .

Watch this video about the President of the United States who abolished slavery in the States.

3. Paco has dinner at Schwa's (pronunciation of Schwa)

The **schwa** is the vowel sound in many lightly pronounced unaccented syllables in words of more than one syllable. It is sometimes signified by the pronunciation "uh" or symbolized by an upside-down rotated **e**. A **schwa** sound can be represented by any vowel. In the exercise below you can see some examples in common words:

Schwa in a	Schwa in e	Schwa in i	Schwa in o
			
By debsilver . C. Commons.	By Sabbath P . C. Commons.	By gruntzooki . C. Commons	By T. Hawk . C. Commons

alarm	ferocious	family	sailor	
-----------------------	---------------------------	------------------------	------------------------	--



Watch these videos about the vowel sound *schwa* .

You can listen to the explanations and then practice your pronunciation with the video on the left.

Besides, you can learn some differences in pronunciation with American English *schwa* with the video on the right.

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) doctor 2) banana 3) protect
4) tomorrow 5) difficult 6) survive
7) summer 8) level 9) theatre
10) pupil 11) measure 12) wizard

Look at the words above and decide where in the word the schwa sound occurs.

Reflexiona



The mid-central vowel sound (rounded or unrounded) in the middle of the vowel chart, stressed or unstressed. In IPA phonetic transcription, it is written as [ə]. In this case the term *mid-central vowel* may be used instead of *schwa* to avoid ambiguity.

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Actividad de lectura

Beyoncé Giselle Knowles was born on September 4, in 1981. She is often referred professionally under the mononym **Beyoncé**. She is an American singer, songwriter, record producer, actress and model.



By [Mr Azed](#) . Creative Commons.

The song Halo, by Beyoncé (2008)

QUESTIONS:

1) How many of these words contain the sound schwa?

make / never / again / shut / grace/ light / awakened / forget / feel / even /
know / doubt

2) Say where the sound schwa is in these words:

addicted / really / there / surround / away

Listen to the song and answer the questions above.

Comprueba lo aprendido

Take into account what you have learnt about the schwa sound and decide where this sound is in these words:

1) about



By [schwa242](#) . Creative Commons.

☐

a) a bout

☐

b) ab ou t

2) together

☐

a) tog e ther

☐

b) t o geth e r

3) difference

a) differenc e

○

b) differ e nce



Some curiosities about the Schwa sound

Did you know that the schwa ...

- 1) comes from an Hebrew word which means *no vowel sound* ?
- 2) is the most common vowel sound in English?
- 3) is represented by the upside down *e* letter?
- 4) may be found in any vowel in English?
- 5) is not only a vowel sound but also a [restaurant in Chicago](#) ? No, we aren't joking.



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This is a fascinating place where you can read and learn a lot of [interesting information related to the schwa sound](#).

4. Practise your English

Finally, we offer you a group of activities so that you can apply all you have learned in this topic. Click on the image below and good luck.



Here you can [download these exercises](#) if you want to.
If you want to work with them decompress and then click on the **INDEX** file.

Further practice

Topic 5 deals with three grammar points, which are the final ones in this unit: (1) have / get something done (2) question tags and (3) the vowel sound schwa /ə/. The activities proposed below will help you understand the form and uses of these structures. Pay attention to them and enjoy doing these tasks.

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) We use *causative have* when arranging for someone to do something for us.
- 2) The *causative have* structure implies that we do the things ourselves.
- 3) The *causative have* means that we ask somebody else to help us finish a project.



Say which of the statements above about the *causative have* form is true.

Ejercicio resuelto

1. The mechanic fixed my father's car last week.
2. Somebody paints my house every year.
3. The hairdresser has cut Paco's hair.
4. We redecorate our house once a year.
5. Antonio likes somebody to wash his car every Sunday.

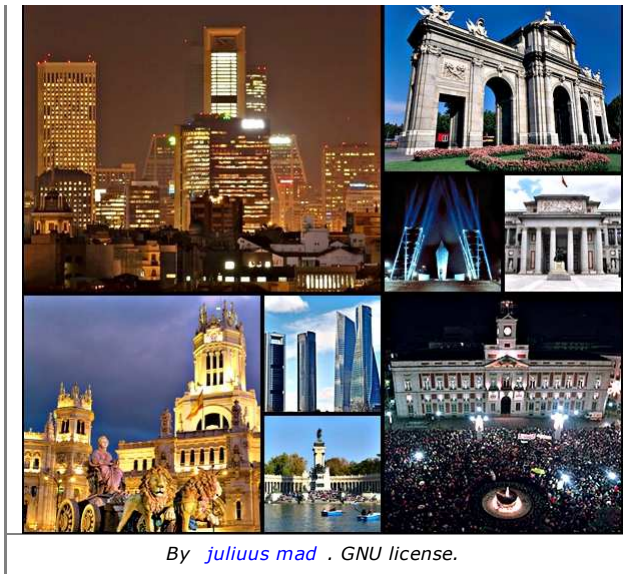
Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) Questions tags are added at the beginning of the sentence.
- 2) We use questions tags to check if something is true.
- 3) We don't use questions tags to ask the listener to agree with what we have said.
- 4) Question tags are placed at the end of the tag question.
- 5) When the main sentence contains an auxiliary verb, we repeat the auxiliary verb in the question tag.
- 6) When the main sentence doesn't contain an auxiliary verb (BE; HAVE) or modal verb (CAN; WILL; etc), the question tag uses the verb **do/does(n't)** or **did(n't)**.
- 7) If the subject of the sentence is *nothing, everything, something* and *anything*, we use **it** as the subject in the tag.

Say if the statements above about question tags are true or false.

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) You won't come with us to Madrid, _____?
- 2) Andrés is from Madrid, _____?
- 3) He has lived in that house for a long time, _____?
- 4) Your children like pizza a lot, _____?
- 5) Your sister played basketball before, _____?
- 6) He wasn't working when I phoned him, _____?
- 7) You wouldn't like to come to the supermarket with me, _____?
- 8) She doesn't go to the gym on Sundays, _____?
- 9) They are from Illinois, _____?
- 10) The students must study harder, _____?



question tag. Take into account the verb given in the sentence.

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) It may be found in any vowel in English.
- 2) It is not a very common vowel sound in English.
- 3) It is represented by the upside down e letter.
- 4) It can only be found in diphthongs.
- 5) It comes from an Hebrew word which means *no vowel sound* .
- 6) It is the most common vowel sound in English.
- 7) It comes from the Latin language.

Which of these statements about the vowel sound schwa are true?

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) doctor 2) banana 3) protect 4) tomorrow 5) difficult 6) survive
 7) summer 8) level 9) theatre 10) pupil 11) measure 12) wizard



Utiliza [este enlace](#) para escuchar su pronunciación.

Can you find the vowel sound schwa in these words?

Paco had had a dream about this before: Paco visits Chicago

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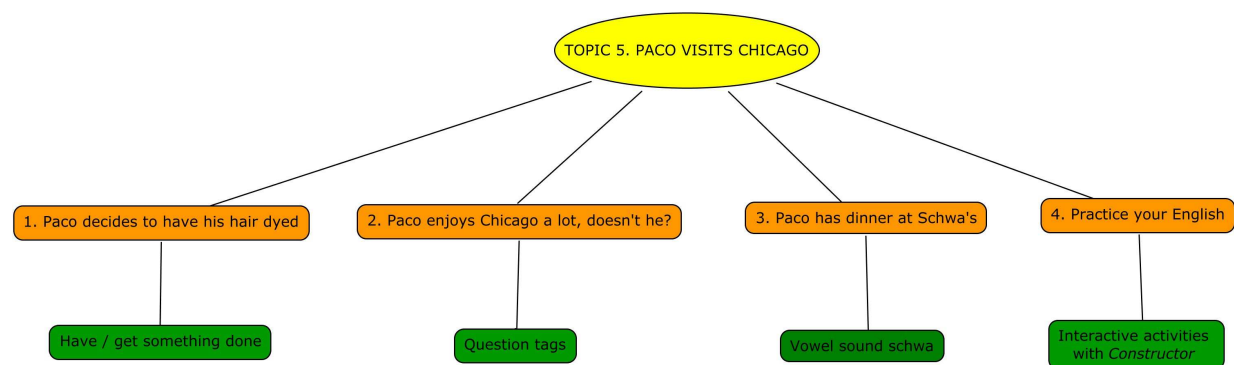
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Map



1. Paco decides to have his hair dyed (causative HAVE)

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By [U.S federal](#) doi

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But while he was waiting at the hairdresser's, he thought that he had never got his hair dyed, so ..., why not do it now?



By [AllyUnion](#) . GNU free documentation license.

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Look at this explanation of the causative HAVE:



Ejercicio resuelto

Paco would have liked to be a writer. Obviously not everyone can be a writer. Let's have a look at some other jobs.

1. optician	A. have your car repaired
2. veterinary surgeon	B. have your blood pressure tak
3. mechanic	C. have your hair cut
4. doctor	D. have your eyes tested
5. hairdresser	E. have your dogs vaccinated

Match a profession from 1 to 5 with something that you have done by that person or in that place.

Ejercicio resuelto

1. The mechanic changed the oil in my car.
2. My husband paints our house every year.

5. William, the veterinary surgeon in my area, is going to check my dog's stomach.

Rewrite these sentences using *have* or *get* .

Reflexiona

Have something done and ***Get something done*** are both used to refer to actions which are done for the subject rather than by the subject.



By [Seattle M. A](#) . Creative Commons.

Comprueba lo aprendido

Complete the sentences using *have* / *get* something done in the correct form tense:

1) My sister is going _____ at the new hairdresser's.

☐

a) to have her hair cut.

b) to cut her hair.

2) I _____ by my little brother yesterday.

☐

a) had washed my car

☐

b) had my car washed

3) Will Peter _____?

☐

a) have his guitar tuned?

☐

b) had his guitar tuned?



Basketball: Chicago Bulls

As you know Paco is very fond of sports. He loves basketball and he loves the Chicago Bulls.

Have you ever heard of the Chicago Bulls? Have you ever heard of Michael Jordan? Sure you have.

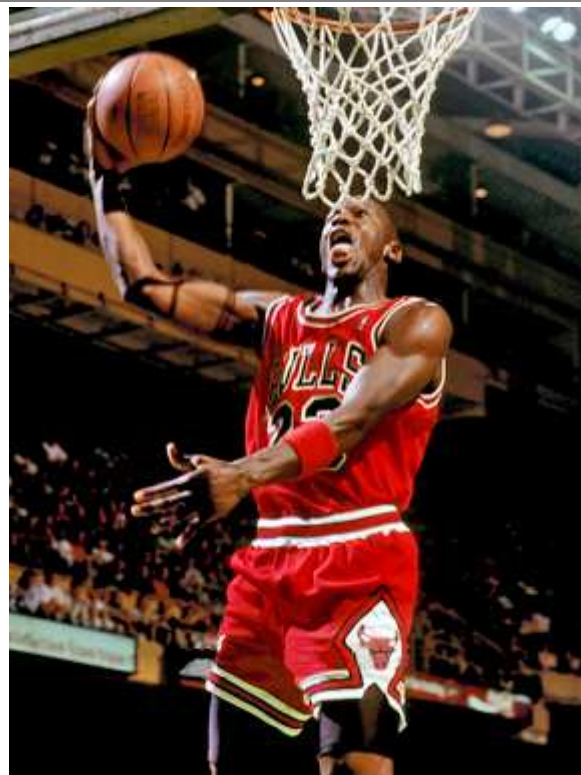
The **Chicago Bulls** are an American professional basketball team based in Chicago, Illinois, playing in the Central Division of the Eastern Conference in the National Basketball Association (NBA). The team was **founded** in 1966. They play their home games at the United Center. The team is well known for having one of the greatest dynasties in NBA history during the 1990s, winning six championships in 8 years with two three-peats. All six of those championship teams were **led** by Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen and coach



By [Gavindow](#) . GNU license.

The first three

championship teams included the likes of Bill Cartwright, Horace Grant, John Paxson and B.J. Armstrong, while the latter three championship teams had Luc Longley, Steve Kerr, Ron Harper, Toni Kukoč and Dennis Rodman on the roster. The Bulls won an NBA record 72 games during the 1995–96 NBA season and are the only team in NBA history to win at least 70 games in a single season. During the 1990s, the Bulls helped spread the popularity of the NBA around the world. The 1998 NBA Finals, the Bulls' most recent championship appearance, was the most watched championship series in NBA history.



By [Lipofsky](#) . GNU license.

Taken from [Wikipedia](#) .



Importante

The difference between *have and get something done* is that *have* is a bit more formal than *get*.

Have your car repaired soon if you don't want to ...

The verb *get* is more usual than *have* in the imperative form.

Get your hair cut now!

Watch this video to see more examples of the *causative have* structure.



Actividad de lectura



By [e walk](#) . Creative Commons.

Imagine that you become rich and could have all kinds of things done for you. Make up five sentences using the *causative have* , for example, you could say:



A very useful website to learn a lot about the *causative have structure* with extra links included.

If you consider that you need further practice, here you have some exercises:

Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Exercise 3
Exercise 4	Exercise 5	Exercise 6

A good way to learn English is to watch movies in the English language or even with subtitles in English. This helps you a lot with your understanding of the language. Here you can watch the trailers for Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* , Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Why don't you see if you can watch some movies in English?

For Whom the Bell Tolls	The Great Gatsby	Th

2. Paco enjoyed Chicago a lot, didn't he?(Question tags)

We're sure that you have heard lots of question tags in English. They are not difficult, are they? Read the exercises of this section carefully and you will be able to use question tags easily, won't you?



Springfield (Illinois State): Abraham Lincoln's resting place

Abraham Lincoln (February 12, 1809 – April 15, 1865) served as the 16th President of the United States from March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865. He successfully [led](#) his country through its greatest internal crisis, the American Civil War, preserving the Union and ending slavery. Before his election in 1860 as the first Republican president, Lincoln had been a country [lawyer](#), an Illinois state legislator, a member of the United States House of Representatives, and twice an unsuccessful candidate for election to the U.S. Senate. As an [outspoken](#) opponent of the expansion of slavery in the United States, Lincoln won the Republican Party nomination in 1860 and was elected president later that year. His [tenure](#) in office was occupied primarily with the [defeat](#) of the secessionist Confederate States of America in the American Civil War. He introduced measures that resulted in the abolition of slavery, [issuing](#) his Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and promoting the passage of the Thirteenth [Amendment](#) to the Constitution. Six days after the large-scale [surrender](#) of Confederate forces under General Robert E. Lee, Lincoln became the first American president to be assassinated .

Taken from [Wikipedia](#) .

Reflexiona

Question tags are very common in English

They are placed at the end of a sentence and they ask for confirmation. They mean: *Am I right?* or *Do you agree with me?*

Click on [this link](#) to see an explanation in Spanish.



Here's another [one](#).

Actividad de lectura

Listen to this video about question tags and say if the questions below are true or false :

1) Questions tags are added at the beginning of the sentence.

said.

Complete the sentences with the missing information:

- 4) If the main sentence is positive, the verb in the question tag is _____.
And if the main sentence is negative, the question tag is _____.
- 5) When the main sentence contains _____ (have, will, can, could, etc.), we repeat the auxiliary verb in the question tag.
- 6) When the main sentence doesn't contain an auxiliary verb, the question tag uses the verb _____ (in present simple) or _____ (in simple past) .
- 7) If the subject of the sentence is *nothing, everything, something* and *anything* , we use _____ as the subject in the tag.
- 8) With _____, we use tags **will you/can you, would you** .
For example: Help me with this, can you?

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) It's not raining now, _____?
- 2) Your friend Mary likes pizza, _____?
- 3) You don't know who the most intelligent person in the class is, _____?
- 4) Paco is visiting Chicago now, _____?
- 5) Come with me to the supermarket, _____?
- 6) His classmates haven't failed the exam, _____?

Write the correct question tag to finish the questions above.

Intonation in question tags

We can change the meaning of a tag question with our voice's intonation. With rising intonation, it sounds like a real question. But if our intonation falls, it sounds more like a statement that doesn't require a real answer:

	INTONATION		
<i>You don't know where Lincoln was born,</i>	<i>do you?</i>	/ rising	real question

Springfield is a beautiful town,

isn't it?

\ falling

**not a real
question**

Comprueba lo aprendido

Complete the sentences below with the appropriate question tag.

1) Paco is visiting Chicago, _____?

☐

a) isn't he?

☐

b) does he?

2) Your father shouldn't have said that, _____?

☐

a) would he?

☐

b) should he?

3) Your sister would have passed the test if she had studied harder,
_____?

☐

a) would she?

☐

b) wouldn't she?

4) The children weren't at school yesterday morning, _____?

☐

○

b) was they?



Information about the [question tags with explanations in Spanish](#) .

Try to do these exercises about question tags to improve your knowledge about this grammar point.

Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Exercise 3
Exercise 4	Exercise 5	Exercise 6

Have a look here to check some [information about the question tags in English](#) .

Watch this video about the President of the United States who abolished slavery in the States.

3. Paco has dinner at Schwa's (pronunciation of Schwa)

The **schwa** is the vowel sound in many lightly pronounced unaccented syllables in words of more than one syllable. It is sometimes signified by the pronunciation "uh" or symbolized by an upside-down rotated **e**. A **schwa** sound can be represented by any vowel. In the exercise below you can see some examples in common words:

Schwa in a	Schwa in e	Schwa in i	Schwa in o
			
By debsilver . C. Commons.	By Sabbath P . C. Commons.	By gruntzooki . C. Commons	By T. Hawk . C. Commons

alarm	ferocious	family	sailor	
-----------------------	---------------------------	------------------------	------------------------	--



Watch these videos about the vowel sound *schwa* .

You can listen to the explanations and then practice your pronunciation with the video on the left.

Besides, you can learn some differences in pronunciation with American English *schwa* with the video on the right.

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) doctor 2) banana 3) protect
4) tomorrow 5) difficult 6) survive
7) summer 8) level 9) theatre
10) pupil 11) measure 12) wizard

Look at the words above and decide where in the word the schwa sound occurs.

Reflexiona



The mid-central vowel sound (rounded or unrounded) in the middle of the vowel chart, stressed or unstressed. In IPA phonetic transcription, it is written as [ə]. In this case the term *mid-central vowel* may be used instead of *schwa* to avoid ambiguity.

By [Howcheng](#). Public domain.

Actividad de lectura

Beyoncé Giselle Knowles was born on September 4, in 1981. She is often referred professionally under the mononym **Beyoncé**. She is an American singer, songwriter, record producer, actress and model.



By [Mr Azed](#). Creative Commons.

The song Halo, by Beyoncé (2008)

QUESTIONS:

1) How many of these words contain the sound schwa?

make / never / again / shut / grace/ light / awakened / forget / feel / even /
know / doubt

2) Say where the sound schwa is in these words:

addicted / really / there / surround / away

Listen to the song and answer the questions above.

Comprueba lo aprendido

Take into account what you have learnt about the schwa sound and decide where this sound is in these words:

1) about



By [schwa242](#) . Creative Commons.

☐

a) a bout

☐

b) ab ou t

2) together

☐

a) tog e ther

☐

b) t o geth e r

3) difference

a) differenc e

○

b) differ e nce



Some curiosities about the Schwa sound

Did you know that the schwa ...

- 1) comes from an Hebrew word which means *no vowel sound* ?
- 2) is the most common vowel sound in English?
- 3) is represented by the upside down *e* letter?
- 4) may be found in any vowel in English?
- 5) is not only a vowel sound but also a [restaurant in Chicago](#) ? No, we aren't joking.



This is a fascinating place where you can read and learn a lot of [interesting information related to the schwa sound](#).

4. Practise your English

Finally, we offer you a group of activities so that you can apply all you have learned in this topic. Click on the image below and good luck.



Here you can [download these exercises](#) if you want to.
If you want to work with them decompress and then click on the **INDEX** file.

Further practice

Topic 5 deals with three grammar points, which are the final ones in this unit: (1) have / get something done (2) question tags and (3) the vowel sound schwa /ə/. The activities proposed below will help you understand the form and uses of these structures. Pay attention to them and enjoy doing these tasks.

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) We use *causative have* when arranging for someone to do something for us.
- 2) The *causative have* structure implies that we do the things ourselves.
- 3) The *causative have* means that we ask somebody else to help us finish a project.



Say which of the statements above about the *causative have* form is true.

Ejercicio resuelto

1. The mechanic fixed my father's car last week.
2. Somebody paints my house every year.
3. The hairdresser has cut Paco's hair.
4. We redecorate our house once a year.
5. Antonio likes somebody to wash his car every Sunday.

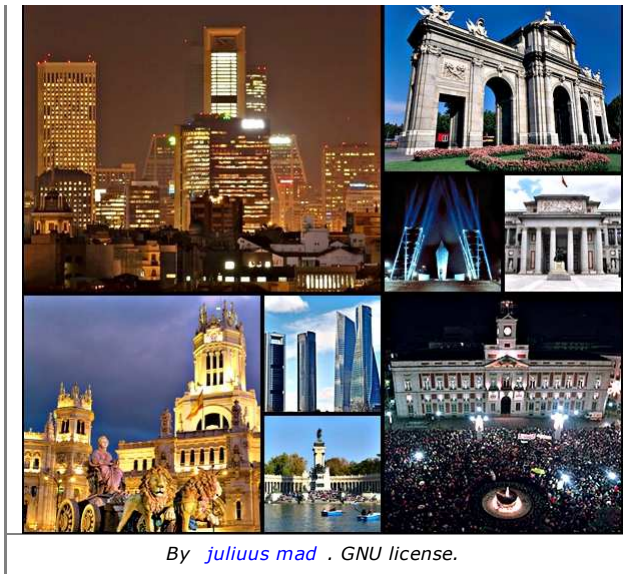
Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) Questions tags are added at the beginning of the sentence.
- 2) We use questions tags to check if something is true.
- 3) We don't use questions tags to ask the listener to agree with what we have said.
- 4) Question tags are placed at the end of the tag question.
- 5) When the main sentence contains an auxiliary verb, we repeat the auxiliary verb in the question tag.
- 6) When the main sentence doesn't contain an auxiliary verb (BE; HAVE) or modal verb (CAN; WILL; etc), the question tag uses the verb **do/does(n't)** or **did(n't)**.
- 7) If the subject of the sentence is *nothing, everything, something* and *anything*, we use **it** as the subject in the tag.

Say if the statements above about question tags are true or false.

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) You won't come with us to Madrid, _____?
- 2) Andrés is from Madrid, _____?
- 3) He has lived in that house for a long time, _____?
- 4) Your children like pizza a lot, _____?
- 5) Your sister played basketball before, _____?
- 6) He wasn't working when I phoned him, _____?
- 7) You wouldn't like to come to the supermarket with me, _____?
- 8) She doesn't go to the gym on Sundays, _____?
- 9) They are from Illinois, _____?
- 10) The students must study harder, _____?



question tag. Take into account the verb given in the sentence.

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) It may be found in any vowel in English.
- 2) It is not a very common vowel sound in English.
- 3) It is represented by the upside down e letter.
- 4) It can only be found in diphthongs.
- 5) It comes from an Hebrew word which means *no vowel sound* .
- 6) It is the most common vowel sound in English.
- 7) It comes from the Latin language.

Which of these statements about the vowel sound schwa are true?

Ejercicio resuelto

- 1) doctor 2) banana 3) protect 4) tomorrow 5) difficult 6) survive
 7) summer 8) level 9) theatre 10) pupil 11) measure 12) wizard



Utiliza [este enlace](#) para escuchar su pronunciación.

Can you find the vowel sound schwa in these words?