85 *have something done*

1 *have/get something done*

We use *have something done* (have + object + past participle) when somebody does something for us (something we want or ask them to do):

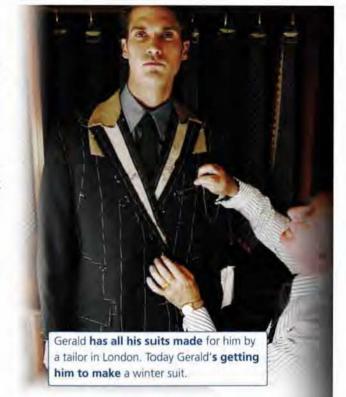*Gerald **has all his suits made** for him.*
(His tailor makes them.)
***We're going to have our kitchen painted**.*
(Decorators are going to do it.)

We can use this pattern with all tenses of *have* and make questions and negatives:
***Will** they **have their house painted** next year?*
*What **has** she **had done** in the garden?*
***Have** you **had your hair cut**?*
*We **haven't had our car repaired** yet.*
*We **didn't have our house painted** last year.*

Gerald **has all his suits made** for him by a tailor in London. Today Gerald's **getting him to make** a winter suit.

FORMALITY CHECK In informal English we can use *get something done* with the same meanings:
*Your hair's lovely. Where **do you get it cut**? Can I **get my car washed** here?*

We also use *have/get something done* when somebody does something to us that we didn't want or ask for, often something bad.
*Sergei **got his passport stolen** yesterday.* (= A thief stole it.)

⚠️ We always use *have* (not *get*) *something done* in the present perfect tense:
✗ *We've got our water supply disconnected.*
✓ *We've **had our water supply disconnected**.* (= The water company did it.)

2 *have somebody do something, get somebody to do something*

In formal English we use *have* + object + infinitive to talk about making someone do something:
*The customs officer **had me open** my suitcase.* (= He made me open my case.)
*I'm sorry about the mess in your room, sir. I'll **have someone clean** it immediately.*

In informal English we use *get* + object + *to* + infinitive with the same meaning:
*Gerald's **getting him to make** a suit. I **got the children to clear out** their rooms yesterday.*

If we tell a person to make something happen, we use the imperative:
*Teresa, **have the new patients fill in** forms, please.*
*When you go to the shop, **get them to give** your money back.*

The forms with *get* are more common in British English and the forms with *have* are more common in American English.

3 *need + -ing*

We can use an *-ing* form or infinitive after *need* in order to give a passive meaning:
*These dirty clothes **need to be washed**.* (= It is necessary for somebody to wash them.)
→ *These clothes **need washing**.*
*My hair is very long. It **needs to be cut**.* → *My hair **needs cutting**.*

More on *need* for necessity ➤ Unit 50