

A must and mustn't

You **must** do something = it is necessary that you do it:

- ☐ Don't tell anybody what I said. You **must keep** it a secret.
- ☐ We don't have much time. We **must hurry**.

You **mustn't** do something = don't do it:

- ☐ You **must** keep it a secret. You **mustn't** tell anyone. (= don't tell anyone)
- ☐ We **must** be very quiet. We **mustn't** make any noise.

B needn't and don't need to

You **needn't** do something = it's not necessary to do it (but you can if you want):

- ☐ We have plenty of time. We **needn't hurry**. (= it is not necessary to hurry)
- ☐ Joe can stay here. He **needn't come** with us. (= it is not necessary for him to come)

You can also use **don't/doesn't need to**:

- ☐ We **don't need to** hurry.

Note that we say '**don't need to** do', but '**needn't do**' (*without to*).

Compare **needn't** and **mustn't**:

- ☐ You **needn't** tell Steve. I can tell him myself. (= it is not necessary)
- ☐ You **mustn't** tell Steve. I don't want him to know. (= don't tell him)

C needn't have (done)

Study this example situation:



Paul and Sarah reserved a table at a restaurant.

But when they went to the restaurant, it was almost empty.

They **needn't have reserved** a table.

This means: they reserved a table, but now they know this was not necessary.

Compare **needn't** (do) and **needn't have** (done):

- ☐ Everything will be OK. You **needn't worry**. (it is not necessary)
- ☐ Everything was OK. You **needn't have worried**. (you worried, but it was not necessary)

D needn't have (done) and didn't need to (do)

He **needn't have done** something = he did it, but now we know that it was not necessary:

- ☐ Why did he get up at 5 o'clock? He **needn't have got** up so early. He could have stayed in bed longer.

He **didn't need to do** something = it was not necessary to do it. It doesn't matter whether he did it or not:

- ☐ He **didn't need to get** up early, so he didn't.
- ☐ He **didn't need to get** up early, but it was a beautiful morning, so he did.

You can also say 'He **didn't have to** get up' in these examples.

Exercises

32.1 Which goes with which? Find the sentences with a similar meaning.

- 1 You must be very quiet.
- 2 You must remember your password.
- 3 You must be brave.
- 4 You must be on time.
- 5 You must leave the furniture as it is.
- 6 You must go away.
- 7 You must forget what happened.

- a You mustn't stay here.
- b You mustn't be afraid.
- c You mustn't think about it.
- d You mustn't forget it.
- e You mustn't be late.
- f ~~You mustn't make any noise.~~
- g You mustn't move anything.

- 1 f
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

32.2 Which is correct?

- 1 We have plenty of time. We ~~mustn't~~ / needn't hurry. (needn't is correct)
- 2 I have to talk to Gary. I must / mustn't remember to call him.
- 3 I have to talk to Gary. I mustn't / needn't forget to call him.
- 4 There's plenty of time for you to decide. You mustn't / don't need to decide now.
- 5 These are important documents. We mustn't / needn't lose them.
- 6 You mustn't / needn't wait for me. You go on and I'll join you later.
- 7 This is a dangerous situation and we need to be careful. We mustn't / needn't do anything stupid.
- 8 I understand the situation perfectly. You mustn't / don't need to explain further.
- 9 A: What sort of house do you want to buy? Something big?
B: It mustn't / needn't be big – that's not so important. But it must / mustn't have a nice garden.

32.3 Complete the sentences. Use **needn't + verb**. Choose from:

come keep ~~leave~~ walk worry

- 1 We have plenty of time. We needn't leave yet.
- 2 I can manage the shopping alone. You with me.
- 3 We all the way home. We can get a taxi.
- 4 You can delete these emails. You them.
- 5 I'll be all right. You about me.

32.4 Write two sentences for each situation. Use **needn't have** in the first sentence and **could have** in the second (as in the example). For **could have**, see Unit 27.

- 1 Why did you rush? Why didn't you take your time?
You needn't have rushed. You could have taken your time.
- 2 Why did you walk home? Why didn't you take a taxi?
.....
- 3 Why did they stay at a hotel? Why didn't they stay with us?
.....
- 4 Why did she phone me at 3 am? Why didn't she wait until the morning?
.....
- 5 Why did you shout at me? Why weren't you more patient?
.....

32.5 Are these sentences OK? Change them where necessary.

- 1 We have plenty of time. We don't need hurry. We don't need to hurry.
- 2 Keep it a secret. You mustn't tell anybody. OK
- 3 You needn't to shout. I can hear you perfectly.
- 4 I needn't have gone out, so I stayed at home.
- 5 This train is direct. You don't need to change.
- 6 You mustn't lock the door. It's OK to leave it unlocked.
- 7 I needn't have said anything, so I kept quiet.
- 8 I needn't have said anything. I should have kept quiet.