

# Must vs. have to

Both **Must** and **have to** express obligation or necessity, but there are some small differences:

- **Must** expresses the speaker's feelings, whereas **have to** expresses, above all, an impersonal idea:

**You must come.** You are obliged to come (I require that you come)

**You have to come.** You are obliged to come. (There's a rule requiring you to come)

**Must I wear this tie?** Am I obliged to wear this tie? (What do you think?)

**Do I have to wear this tie?** Am I obliged to wear this tie? (Is there a rule about ties?)

- **Have to** mainly expresses general obligations, while **must** is used for specific obligations:

**I have to brush my teeth twice a day.**

**I must tell you something.**

Important: To express obligation, duty or necessity in the future or the past, **must** and **need** are not used. They are replaced by **have to**:

**We must (need to) buy another ticket.**

**We had to buy another ticket yesterday.**

**We'll have to buy another ticket later.**

However, in their negative forms, **mustn't** and **don't have to** have completely different meanings:

- **Mustn't** expresses prohibition

**You mustn't drive.** You are prohibited to drive. You are not allowed to drive.

- **Don't have to** expresses the absence of obligation or necessity:

**You don't have to drive.** You are not obliged to drive (but you can if you want to).