

## 13 The causative

I'm **having my hair cut** tomorrow.

We **got our garden done** last week.

William should **have his car** cleaned. It's a mess!

We use the causative when somebody else does something for us. We often use it for things we pay other people to do. Like the passive (see pages 176-177), we use the causative when the person who does the action is unimportant or obvious or for emphasis. We form the causative using ...

- *have* in the right form + object + past participle

We can also use the verb *get* instead of *have*. *Get* is less formal. As with the passive voice, we can use *by* when we want to say who does the action.

You should have your arm looked at **by a doctor**.

*with* when we want to refer to the tool or equipment.

You look like you've had your hair cut **with a knife and fork!**

### ! BE CAREFUL!

This structure can also be used to refer to things that other people did/have done to us but which we didn't ask them to do, for example, stealing something of ours.

I've had my bag stolen. (= My bag has been stolen.)

### ☑ QUICK CHECK

- 1 When do we use the causative?
- 2 Which verb can be used to form the causative, apart from *have*?
- 3 Which is correct?  
*Get your hair cut./Get cut your hair.*

### Gradable and ungradable adjectives and adverbs

There are two different kinds of adjective and adverb. Words like *happy*, *big*, *angry*, *slowly*, *quickly*, etc. are gradable. This means we think of these ideas as a scale.

big    very big    extremely big    **incredibly big**

Words like *wonderful*, *impossible*, *perfect*, etc. are ungradable. We think of these as things you either are, or aren't. In other words you are either perfect or you aren't. We don't think of these ideas as being on a scale.

We use different words with gradable and ungradable adjectives and adverbs.

#### gradable adjectives and adverbs

James is ..... tall.

In this sentence, we can use words that refer to degree or amount.

very  
a little  
a bit  
rather  
quite  
really  
extremely  
incredibly

James is **quite** tall.

#### ungradable adjectives and adverbs

The match was ..... amazing.

In this sentence, we can use words that mean 'completely'.

absolutely

The match was **completely** amazing.

totally

### ! BE CAREFUL!

*Quite* with a gradable adjective means 'fairly'.

*Quite* with an ungradable adjective means 'completely'.

### ☑ QUICK CHECK

- 1 Which of these is gradable?  
*perfect/cool/wonderful*
- 2 Which of these is ungradable?  
*beautiful/impossible/tall*
- 3 Which of these do we use with ungradable adjectives?  
*really/absolutely/very*