Causative verbs: Let, Make, Have, Get, Help

The verbs **let, make, have, get** and **help** are called ‘causative’ verbs because they cause something to happen. As such, these verbs are used in a causative sentence structure.

**Causative verb LET**

Meaning: allow someone to do something.

**Structure:** Let + person/thing + verb

Example sentences:

*We couldn’t let our daughter adopt a kitten because she’s allergic to cats.*

*My brother let me use his computer when mine broke down.*

*Sarah never lets anyone tell her what to do.*

**Causative verb MAKE**

Meaning: force or require someone to do something.

**Structure:** Make + person + verb

Example sentences:

*They make students exercise regularly.*

*John’s mum made him eat his dinner.*

*His parents tried to make him be a better person.*

**Causative verb HAVE**

Meaning: give someone the responsibility to do something.

**Structure:** Have + person + verb

Example sentences:

*We had a painter paint our apartment.*

*Sheila had a hairdresser do her hair.*

*Paul had a mechanic fix his car.*
Causative verb GET:
Meaning: convince/persuade someone to do something.

Structure: Get + person + to + verb

Example sentences:
Jane got her son to help her with the dishes.
She got her boyfriend to buy her an expensive ring.
I got my neighbour to help me carry my suitcase.

Causative verb HELP
Meaning: give aid to someone in doing something.

Structure: Help + person + (to) verb
Note: after “help” you can use the infinitive with to (to do) or bare infinitive (do).

Example sentences:
Helen helped me (to) do my homework.
A cup of coffee in the morning helps me (to) wake up.
My colleague helped me (to) write my CV.
Exercise

Fill in the gaps with causative verbs let, have, make, help and get and the verbs in brackets in the correct form:

1) I don't _____ my children _____ video games. (play)

2) The police ______ him _____ for the damage he caused. (pay)

3) Rob _______ his house _____ next weekend.. (paint)

4) Julia _____ her boyfriend ______ her a ring. (buy)

5) Sam ______ me ________ the grocery. (carry)

6) When we were little our parents used to _____ us _____ late on Saturdays. (stay up)

7) Please, try not to _____ her _____. (cry)

8) This quiz can ______ you ________ causative verbs better. (understand)

9) Laura never _____ people _____ her what to do. (tell)

10) My friend _____ me _____ her with her CV. (help)

11) Reading _____ you _______ easier. (fall asleep)

12) I ______ a plumber _____ my plumbing this morning. (fix)
Key:

1) I don't let my children play video games.

2) The police made him pay for the damage he caused.

3) Rob is having his house painted next weekend.

4) Julia got her boyfriend to buy her a ring.

5) Sam helped me (to) carry the grocery.

6) When we were little our parents used to let us stay up late on Saturdays.

7) Please, try not to make her cry.

8) This quiz can help you (to) understand causative verbs better.

9) Laura never lets people tell her what to do.

10) My friend got me (to) help her with her CV.

11) Reading helps you (to) fall asleep easier.

12) I had a plumber fix my plumblings this morning.