

English Grammar: 'have' vs 'have got'

The verb 'to have' has an **informal** equivalent which is very common in everyday English: 'to have got'. It is only used in the "present simple". Here are some examples:

Possession:

Formal English

I have a dog.
He has a dog.
I don't have a dog.
He doesn't have a dog.
Do you have a dog?
Does he have a dog?
Don't you have a dog?
Doesn't he have a dog?

Informal English

I've got a dog.
He's got a dog.
I haven't got a dog.
He hasn't got a dog.
Have you got a dog?
Has he got a dog?
Haven't you got a dog?
Hasn't he got a dog?

American English

I got a dog.

Obligation:

Formal English

I have to go.
He has to go.
I don't have to go.
He doesn't have to go.
Do you have to go?
Does he have to go?
Don't you have to go?
Doesn't he have to go?

Informal English

I've got to go.
He's got to go.
I haven't got to go.
He hasn't got to go.
Have you got to go?
Has he got to go?
Haven't you got to go?
Hasn't he got to go?

American English

I gotta go. / Gotta go.
He's gotta go.
I don't gotta go.
He don't gotta go.
You gotta go?
He gotta go?
Haven't you gotta go?
Hasn't he gotta go?

Recommended video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZpae3Hh3o4> (11 mins)

Music suggestions:

You've got a Friend: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcJbzuyyp6VY> (5 mins)

I've got a Feeling: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKsrLjN5H6Y> (6 mins)

Here are some examples from American TV (Chicago PD):

What it should be:

“Oh, Jordan, I have to go.”



Oh, Jordan, I gotta go.



- All right.
What do we got?

What it should be:

“All right. What do we have?”



We don't gotta rush it.

What it should be:

“We don't have to rush it.”



Nah,
I just gotta see what I got,

What it should be:

“No, I just have to see what I have.”

Exercise. Rewrite the following sentences in formal (“correct”) English:

1. He's **got** a wig.

2. You've **got** an interesting point of view.

3. **Has** he **got** a new car?

4. **Haven't** they **got** two houses?

5. I've **got to** start early today.

6. **Have** you **got to** go already?

7. He's **gotta** lotta money.

8. They **gotta** go.

9.

