

## English Vocabulary: 'leave' vs 'let' (PT: deixar)

The words 'leave' and 'let' are both '*deixar*' in Portuguese, but they have different meanings.

### 1) leave (leave / left / left)

a) We use 'leave' to mean "put something/somebody in a temporary place (deliberately or accidentally)".

- I always **leave** my car keys behind the front door.
- John **left** his laptop on the bus yesterday.
- Fred **left** his wife at the bank at 10am.
- Can you please **leave** the books on the table?
- Don't **leave** any food on your plate.

b) 'Leave' can also mean "go away from somewhere/somebody".

- Please don't **leave** me alone.
- I always **leave** home at 8am to go to work.
- John **left** his wife last week. She is devastated.

#### Some expressions with 'leave/left':

- leave behind      abandon      We had to **leave** some men **behind**.
- left off      stopped      I want to continue from where we **left off** in the last class.
- to be left over      (food)      **Is** there anything **left over** for me?
- leave it      forget it      **Leave it!** I want to go home.
- leave it with me      I can do it      No problem. **Leave it with me.**

### 2) let (let / let / let)

a) We use 'let' to mean "permission"

- Can you **let** me speak, please?
- **Let** me try again.
- **Let** me see!

b) or "prevent"

- Don't **let** the dog poop on the grass.
- My wife never **lets** me go to the pub alone.

c) or "offer help"

- **Let** me carry your bags. They look heavy.
- **Let** us do some of your work. You are overloaded.

#### Some other uses of 'let':

- let it be      don't change anything      Don't rock the boat. **Let it be!**
- let me know      tell me      **Let me know** when you arrive.
- let alone      much less      He can't walk, **let alone** run.
- let somebody go      set somebody free      If you really love her, **let her go**.
- let it go      forget it      **Let it go** – it's not worth it.
- Let's ...      (suggestion)      **Let's** go to the park.
- to let property      to rent property      I'm going to **let** my house.

Sometimes both "leave" and "let" are possible, but with different meanings. For example:

Let me alone.      This means "Go away – you are bothering me!"

Leave me alone.      This means "I want to be alone – I need some peace and quiet."

**Exercise:** Complete the sentences below with 'leave' or 'let' (conjugate as necessary):

1. \_\_\_\_\_ me alone! You are bothering me.
2. Please \_\_\_\_\_ me go – I won't tell the police!
3. My parents never \_\_\_\_\_ me do my homework in front of the TV.
4. I never want to \_\_\_\_\_ home – life is so easy here!
5. My son's apartment is available to \_\_\_\_\_. Are you interested?
6. Can you please \_\_\_\_\_ the envelopes on my desk? Thank you!
7. \_\_\_\_\_ me see your homework.
8. Please don't \_\_\_\_\_ the cat go into the kitchen.
9. Don't \_\_\_\_\_ the cat in the box for too long – it's cruel!
10. \_\_\_\_\_ order pizza tonight!
11. You should \_\_\_\_\_ the bird go free – I think it's cruel to keep it in a cage.
12. If you really love her, you should \_\_\_\_\_ her go.